

Etiquette updated on Jan 2025

Go for a mock exercise before the real talk at the job table

Hone your interview etiquette..... Churn the right mix of deportment, attitude and dressing skills for a great job talk!

Never make the big mistake of treating an interview lightly. It's not an impromptu thing where you depend on your improvisation skills. An interview requires careful thought and planning before you take it. Keeping in mind some basic attitudes and presentation techniques will help you sail through it with panache.

So, if you thought that going for an interview just meant pulling your best suit out of the wardrobe and updating your resume, please think again. You are forgetting the other essentials: body language, basic etiquette and attitude.

Remember that you are actually selling an entire package and the packaging, in this case, is as relevant as the product inside. Ultimately you are presenting yourself as a valuable professional to a new job environment. And you can't do that without minding the basic interview etiquette to get you ahead of the rest of the pack.

An interview is the sum total of many parts. It's not just what you say but how you say it that matters equally. So, it's good to brush up on more than just your training skills when you do go in for an interview.

Attire

How you dress for an interview is perhaps as relevant as the way you lay out your resume. Says Nina Kochar of Upgrade Management Services, an organization which coaches' executives in the basic rules of corporate etiquette: "A person who is sloppy in appearance shows a sloppy personality, so you have to be decently dressed." Of course, decently dressed does not necessarily mean being dressed to the gills. In most cases, this would mean you would wear long sleeved shirts and a pair of formal trousers. In fact, Nina Kochar does not recommend suits, especially for younger people. "A lot of young people do not have the money to invest in suits, consequently, they wear ill-fitting or borrowed suits and that looks even worse. A tie, shirt and pant should do the trick for most junior level positions."

Most HR experts would also tell you to mind the accessories like ties, belts and shoes. To be sure, badly matched shoes and ties can have a jarring effect on an interviewer. Similarly, please avoid heavy Jewellery or personal accessories as they would look incongruous on you.

Entrance And Introduction

Even though most of us are primed for the basic grilling that we would face during the interview, we seldom pay attention to the way we enter an interview room or how we introduce ourselves. Says Subhashish Mitra, deputy manager, Essar Cell phones: "A lot of people do not think it important to knock properly while entering the interview room. They assume that as an interview is taking place, the panel will be expecting them. To my mind this is a very major faux pas which really jars."

In fact, the best way to enter an interview is to knock, ask for permission to enter and then wait for a while before you actually sit down. Few interviewees know this but the interview panel needs a little quiet time to discuss the previous candidate before they get around to the next one. So, your silence till you actually get

seated would be very valuable. Try and keep a bag with you for all your papers and certificates; make sure this bag is as unobtrusive as possible.

Attitude And Response

This is a grey area for most interview candidates. While dressing up and resume writing are skills you can go for a mock exercise before the real talk at the job table handle with a little practice, cultivating the right attitude as an interviewee requires a lot of patience and reading between the lines. The usual complaint of most interviewers is that few interviewees are able to stir perhaps the best thing you can do for getting your answer right. Most interviewers like to give a lead to the candidate in the way they ask the question, so it's entirely up to you to note facial expressions and the tone of the words.

Do you show your certificates immediately to the interview panel?

Not till you are asked actually. You might already have sent in your resume, so you shouldn't try and offload all your achievements and skills onto the panel till a turn in the interview leads to such a situation.

Try and take cues from the tonal variations, facial expressions and thrust of questions from the interview panel. That in itself will give you a clue as to where this interview is heading.

Ten things that an interviewer looks in you!

1. Family Background
2. Education
3. Experience
4. Stability
5. Initiative
6. General Ability
7. Interpersonal Skills
8. Confidence
9. Aptitude
10. Pleasant Looks

How one wished that an interview were a simple meeting of minds and hearts. Just one casual meeting where an employee's future gets sealed. Unfortunately, it's not something as pre-ordained as you would like it to be; it's a pre-meditated exercise which fetches your dividends only if your homework is done right.