Top 10 Interview Mistakes

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1. **Inappropriate Attire** – clothing plays a big role in your first impression. Don’t wear something that will distract interviewers from what you have to say. Dress conservatively, suits are preferable.

2. **Nervous Ticks** – be mindful of repetitive or distracting body language you may exhibit under pressure and take steps to avoid such distractions. Participating in a videotaped mock interview can help you recognize and correct these potential problems.

3. **Cell Phone Etiquette** – you obviously wouldn’t take a call during an interview but be aware that vibrating phones can be just as disruptive. LEAVE THE PHONE IN THE CAR.

4. **No Questions Asked** – job seekers should always prepare a list of questions for the interviewer. The more research you have done about the company, the more relevant your questions will be.

5. **Poor Eye Contact** – hold it too long and it becomes an awkward stare, not holding it long enough can make you appear nervous. Take your cue from the interviewer. If she meets your gaze while asking you a question, make sure you meet hers when answering.

6. **Exaggerating Experience** – be honest about your experience and try to highlight how your actual experience can contribute to the company’s needs. For students fresh out of school, mention the skills you acquired through your academic requirements. Exaggeration can lead to problems, but if you have the opportunity to promote skills you have, take it!

7. **Leaving Things Out** – make a list of 2 or 3 points you think are most important to convey to the interviewer. If you haven’t had an opportunity to mention them during the interview then bring them up at the end. Say something like, “Before I get to my questions there are a few things I wanted to mention…”

8. **Listing Demands** – making demands of an employer in the first interview is a huge mistake. Explaining what days you can’t work and why won’t improve your chances of getting a job.

9. **Vocalized Pauses & Slang** – when pausing to consider a question, be aware of the dreaded vocalized pauses, “umm…uhh...err.” Also make sure you’re aware of any inappropriate slang. Remember this is a professional communication exchange. Participating in a videotaped mock interview can help you recognize and correct these potential problems.

10. **Arriving Late (or too early)** – strolling in 10 minutes late will probably guarantee that you won’t get the job, but arriving too early can send that message that you’re desperate or have poor planning skills. Fifteen (15) minutes early is pretty safe.