

When Saying Too Much in the Job Interview Works Against You

In job interviews:

- **Do you talk too much, too little or say just the right amount to land you the job?**
- **Do you say the right things to the most appropriate people or shoot yourself in the foot?**

What you say and who you share it with during the job interview process can work for or against you. There is no magic formula to follow to get the right balance, but rather an ability to read the interviewer and be discerning about who you share what information with about your abilities.

When most of us leave the interview we play back in our minds the interview questions asked and how we responded. Did we give the right answers? Were we too brief in our responses or did we prattle on too much? Did we come across as too shy or too confident? and so on. Ultimately, we wonder if we came across as the right person for the job. Rarely do we question if we shared the appropriate information with the appropriate person. We simply automatically assume we are doing the right thing by selling ourselves and our abilities to all that we interview with. Remember, not every interviewer is created equal!

Read the Interviewer's Body Language

During the interview it is advisable to read the [body language](#) and listen to the language used by the interviewer and respond accordingly. Mirroring how they engage with you is more likely to result in a favorable outcome. This includes the language and tone that they adopt. If they are fairly reserved and softly spoken they may not respond as well to someone who is overly gregarious as to someone who has a similar mild-mannered approach. Remember that people tend to like and ultimately hire those like themselves, so temper your personal style to the interviewer where possible. For example, while you may be a confident person in the interview, which one would assume is a good thing, it can work against you if the interviewer is not a self-confident and well-adjusted person themselves. If you come across too confident and experienced they may see you as a threat to them and their job – hence you don't get hired. Being likeable and in some instances non-threatening to the status quo can land you the job, which will guide how you behave and respond in the interview. As covered in a previous blog post [“Why we need to like the ones we work with and how this impacts hiring decisions”](#) most of us hire those we like, that we can see making agreeable colleagues.



One other area that is not often considered in job interviews is to assess the interviewer's own point of view and their position related to the one you are being interviewed for. Knowing who to display your expertise and knowledge to is crucial. It is more likely that those more senior to you are going to be more receptive to a confident and go-getter than perhaps someone who is your peer or at a similar level that you may eventually be competing with for promotions etc. So consider adapting your interviews responses to the decision-making level or seniority of the interviewer.

The Interview is an Intense Judging Process

While there is no doubt that you need to be yourself during the interview, it is important to remember that interviews themselves are highly unnatural situations. The interviewer is making rapid judgments about you and may have preconceived opinions of you before you have even met. Hence, everything you can do to mitigate negative judgments being formed is advisable. Throughout the interview decisions are being formed based on your appearance, language, body language, question responses and your overall manner throughout the meeting. No wonder very few people enjoy being interviewed; even the most seasoned interviewer generally dislikes being on the other side.

Coming Across with the Right Balance of Confidence and Expertise

Getting the right balance in how you come across, particularly through how you answer the interview questions, is a tough balancing act. It is unlikely that they will hire you if you are too shy and reserved and correspondingly if you are so full of energy and confidence that you are completely over the top. Either extreme is not desirable during the interview process. However, I will qualify this by saying it has very little impact once you are in the job; these extremes of personalities can certainly work well in the workplace but they tend to not work well in the interview process. Generally, round one (and sometimes round two) interviews are conducted by those at a more junior or peer level; it's only at the end that you meet with the real decision-makers higher up in the organization. It is at this level you can unleash your expertise and really sell yourself without hesitation. Only the most evolved of us are happy to hire someone who has the potential to outshine us.

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