



INTERVIEWING 101: THREE CRUCIAL MISTAKES CANDIDATES MAKE

As a recruiter, I work hard to place the right candidates in interviews at companies that would be a great fit for them. Yet when it comes time for employers to make hiring decisions, they pass over candidates with great qualifications and experience. Why? It often comes down to the interview process. Over the years, I've watched candidates make the same mistakes in interviews, giving a negative impression and sinking their chances. Based on my years of experience in the field, here are three major errors that you should avoid at your next job interview.

1. Failing to Prepare

One of the easiest and most common ways to blow a job interview is to simply fail to prepare. If you walk into a job interview without some basic knowledge of the company, you will have a hard time convincing anyone that they should hire you. If you're interviewing with an energy company, for example, you need to know exactly what types of work the company does so you don't risk making an offhand comment that disparages part of their business. Spend an hour or two the night before the interview doing some straightforward research, including the position and background of your interviewer(s), the company's structure, organization, recent news releases and financial information, and any other pertinent facts about the business that you can find. Having this core knowledge can help you ask insightful questions about the job itself. It will also aid you in answering the interviewer's questions in a thoughtful manner, and in avoiding blunders.

2. Not Answering the Question Asked

At a job interview, many candidates are understandably nervous. They may have prepared answers to likely questions and reviewed the parts of their resume and career that they want to highlight. But at times, interviewees are so focused on what they want to get across that they fail to answer the question asked. If an interviewer asks why you want to leave your job, for example, it is not an ideal time to talk about a project that you successfully completed. Find a balance between getting your main points across and actually responding to the question. Listen carefully, and consider what the interviewer is asking — then answer appropriately. Never cut an interviewer off, and stay focused on what is being asked.

3. Talking Too Much

When you're anxious, it's easy to ramble. But at an interview, going on and on can cause an interviewer to lose interest — and to reject you as a potential candidate. It is great to be enthusiastic about a subject and show a love for your chosen profession. But if you talk too much, the chances of a call back diminish. If you think that you've been speaking too long, stop talking, and simply ask the interviewer if you have answered their question. It's an easy way to get back on track and revive your chances of landing the job.

Steering clear of these mistakes can make the difference between getting hired and getting passed over by hiring managers. By preparing for your interview, answering the question asked and editing yourself, you will have a lot more success when you're searching for that next job!