

CareerBuilder Releases Annual List of Strangest Interview and Body Language Mistakes

- Around half of employers know if a candidate is a good fit within the first five minutes
- Survey identifies five instant deal breakers that can cost you the job

CHICAGO, Jan. 12, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- Interviews are vulnerable times. There aren't many things more nerve-wracking than walking into a room of people you desperately want to impress. In a new survey from CareerBuilder, employers shared the most memorable job interview mistakes candidates have made and how body language can hinder their chances of moving forward in the interview process.

According to the nationwide survey, conducted online by Harris Poll on behalf of CareerBuilder from November 16 to December 6, 2016 among more than 2,600 hiring and human resource managers, it doesn't take long for a hiring manager to make a decision. Around half of employers (51 percent) know within the first five minutes of an interview if a candidate is a good fit for a position — on par with last year (50 percent).

"The best solution to minimize pre-interview anxiety is solid preparation," said Rosemary Haefner, chief human resources officer for CareerBuilder. "If you don't read about the company and research your role thoroughly, you could magnify your fear of interviewing poorly and lose the opportunity."

The Strangest Things People Have Done in Job Interviews

When asked to share the most unusual things job candidates have done during the interview process, employers and hiring managers recalled the following:

- Candidate asked to step away to call his wife to ask her if the starting salary was enough before he agreed to continue with the interview.
- Candidate asked where the nearest bar was located.
- Candidate brought his childhood toys to the interview.
- Candidate ate a pizza he brought with him (and didn't offer to share).
- Candidate asked interviewer why her aura didn't like the candidate.
- Candidate invited interviewer to dinner afterwards.
- Candidate stated that if the interviewer wanted to get to heaven, she would hire him.
- Candidate ate crumbs off the table.
- Candidate said her hair was perfect when asked why she should become part of the team.
- Candidate sang to a song on the radio playing overhead.
- Candidate bragged about the fact that they were in the local newspaper for allegedly stealing a treadmill from an older woman's house.
- Candidate put on and took off her sunglasses repeatedly.

Body Language: Master Your Mannerisms

In a job interview, it's likely that your body language will have more of a positive impact on your success than anything you say. When asked to identify the biggest body language mistakes job seekers make during an interview, hiring managers named the following:

1. Failing to make eye contact: 67 percent
2. Failing to smile: 39 percent
3. Playing with something on the table: 34 percent

4. Fidgeting too much in their seats: 32 percent
5. Crossing their arms over their chests: 32 percent
6. Having bad posture: 31 percent
7. Playing with their hair or touching their faces: 28 percent
8. Having a weak handshake: 22 percent
9. Using too many hand gestures: 13 percent
10. Having a handshake that was too strong: 9 percent

Easiest Ways to Ruin a Job Interview

What are the absolute worst things you can do when interviewing for a job? Here are five instant deal breakers, according to employers:

1. Candidate is caught lying about something: 66 percent
2. Candidate answers a cellphone or text during the interview: 64 percent
3. Candidate appears arrogant or entitled: 59 percent
4. Candidate dresses inappropriately: 49 percent
5. Candidate appears to have a lack of accountability: 48 percent

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the U.S. by Harris Poll on behalf of CareerBuilder among 2,605 hiring and human resource managers ages 18 and over (employed full-time, not self-employed, including 2,391 in the private sector) between November 16 and December 6, 2016. With a pure probability sample of 2,605, one could say with a 95 percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 1.92 percentage points.

About CareerBuilder®

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