

The Interview: Presenting Yourself

By Brooke Heath

It's the day of your interview. You may be feeling a little anxiety, but try to use it to your advantage. Think of the interview as being less like an interrogation and more like a presentation. The interview is a great opportunity to present yourself to potential employers, convincing them that you are the best person for the job.

Body Language

Even before you begin to speak, your body language will make an impression on the person or people conducting the interview. Be sure to greet the interviewer and/or panel with a nice, firm handshake.

When you sit down in your chair, be sure to have good posture, and maintain this posture throughout your interview. Slouching during the interview may indicate that you are bored with the interview or interviewer-never a good way to land a job. Instead, sit straight up and lean forward slightly. This shows that you are open and interested in what is being said.

It's also important to keep your arms open during the interview. Folding your arms over your body indicates insecurity or defensiveness.

Eye contact is another crucial element in an interview. Look the person in the eye when he or she is speaking, and also when you are responding. If you are interviewing with a panel, look each person in the eye while you are speaking. This demonstrates confidence.

Be Confident But Not Cocky

If you don't seem convinced in your interview that you are the right person for the job, your potential employer won't be convinced. It's important to behave confidently during your interview. But on the other hand, no one likes a show-off, so find a happy medium between being shy and being cocky.

In a Manner of Speaking...

Confidence can also be reflected in your manner of speaking. Make sure that you speak in a controlled manner and don't rush your responses. Feel free to take short pauses in between sentences. This will not only help your interviewers understand what you are saying but also give you a second to think about what you will say next.

Make it a Conversation

Interviews do not always have to be formal question-and-answer sessions. Turn your interview into a conversation. Answer your questions with more than a simple "yes" or "no." If the question is about whether you can work well under minimal supervision, don't just say "yes." Give an example of a time you worked with minimal supervision. Also, prepare a list of questions that you have for the interviewer(s). This shows that you have taken an interest

in the company and can see yourself in the position. Make sure the questions you ask are also open-ended. For example, you might ask, "Can you tell me about the people I would be working with?" or "Can you tell me what the average day for this position would entail?"

Make the Sale!

Your interview may be your only opportunity to show these people why you should get the job. Treat the interview as you would a sales pitch in which the products you are pitching are yourself and your abilities!