

THE JOURNAL OF COMMERCE

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Top 10 Ways to Interview your way to the Unemployment Line

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You're in the middle of an interview and realize all is not going well. "I'm not getting this job," you think. "But who cares? It wasn't such a good job anyway. The hiring manager's a jerk, the office is too far away and I'd probably get a low-ball offer. Who needs their lousy job?" OK, that's the left side (devil!) in you talking. The right side (angel) is saying, "Was it something I said or did? Should I have answered questions with more or less detail? Was I paying attention?" The problem is, you may never know, because feedback is a rare commodity.

There are, however, at least 10 things you can do to avoid a self-imposed disaster.

1. Negative Talk Means You'll Walk. The minute you complain about a former employer or boss, you have sealed your fate. It's back to the unemployment line.
2. Money Talks. Yeah, like the loudmouth in the movie theater. Never bring up money first.
3. Me, Me, Me. Interview from the prospective employer's perspective, not yours. Talk about what you can do for them, not what they can do for you.
4. Underdressed. This is not a beach visit. This is a dress rehearsal for your future. Dress for success — yes, that typically means business attire no matter what the position!
5. Talk Too Much/Not Listening. Keep your answers short and on point. Pay attention to verbal and non-verbal feedback or you'll be answering questions at the state unemployment office.
6. Eye Contact. It's uncomfortable, maybe, but there's great strength in this human interaction. Show no fear!
7. Monkey See, Monkey Do, Monkey Lose. Always keep it professional, even if the interviewer doesn't — no foul language, smoking, burping or chewing gum!
8. Unprepared. Like the Boy Scout motto, always come prepared. Do the company/interviewer research before the interview!
9. Exaggerating on Your Resume. Don't get caught exaggerating. Make clear the difference between areas of expertise and areas where you only have some knowledge — or risk your credibility.
10. Late Fate. Don't be late unless you call ahead or you might as well not show up at all — better head back to the unemployment office. The coffee is usually good.

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