

Elevate your Interview Game in 5 Easy Steps

By: Elaina McMillan
Director of Talent Acquisition

We've all been there. Staring down the barrel of a job interview. Uncertain of the expectation, the competition, the chemistry. Sometimes it's just unnerving enough to come off slightly less charming, confident, and capable than we truly are. But fear not, here are 5 proven techniques to be a rockstar on your career first date.

1. Do Your Research. You've got a better shot at crushing it if you know who you're playing with. Learn as much as you can about the company and culture. Search for their Mission, Vision and/or Value Statements. Use social media to take a peek at who will be interviewing you. You'll feel significantly more prepared if you know as much about the company (and maybe even the interviewer) as they do about you.

2. Have Great Questions. Never ask a question just to ask a question. Especially when asking thoughtful questions can have such a positive impact. We all know the, "Do you have any questions?" question is coming, so be prepared. Use this inevitable moment to stand out and shine. Be creative. Proactive. And whatever you do, don't be predictable. It's okay to turn the tables on the interviewer here. Questions like, "What would your competitor say about you?," or, "How will you measure the success of the person in this position?" are relevant and interesting questions that can also help determine if the job is a good fit for YOU. The only question you should not initiate in a first interview, is one of compensation. The premature launch of this inquiry is like someone going in for a kiss before the food arrives. Too soon.

3. Get Grounded. Never jump into an interview without doing this first. Trust me, I've done my R&D. If you're not grounded, you are almost certainly in your head. The latter is dangerous because it's where judgment lives. When you interview from here you are not being present, and therefore, a lot less likely to connect. And for those who tend to be overly analytical, this step is even more important. Take a few moments before an interview to get grounded with this simple, yet powerful practice;



Begin by taking a deep and satisfying breath. Next, focus on feeling your feet on the ground. Really feel them - strong, sturdy, and connected to the earth beneath you. Now take a deep and intentional breath, this time imagine that you are inhaling calm confidence and exhaling self-doubt. One more time, another deep and mindful breath to lock it in. Boom.

4. Fill Your Head with Good Things. Having an attitude that causes people to want to be around you is not something to step over. Research shows that having a positive mindset will make you more appealing, which is imperative for a job interview. The person interviewing you will be drawn to a candidate with an affable disposition, especially considering they would spend more time with you than the people they love. The most authentic way to appear open, interested, and enthusiastic is to focus on the things that make you happy. Every thought releases brain chemicals. When you fill your head with good things you produce serotonin and decrease cortisol, which creates a sense of well-being and allows you to show up as your best self.

5. Remember the Basics. When meeting in person, never underestimate the power of a bright smile, good eye contact, active listening, and a firm (but not aggressive) hand shake. It seems obvious, but you'd be surprised how often these tried and true practices get dropped out.

By using these simple techniques, you will upgrade your interview game. You'll feel more confident about your presentation, your possibilities, and your future, which will upgrade your interview game. See how that works?

Elaina McMillan is the Director of Talent Acquisition for Gibson Arnold & Associates, a leader in legal recruiting. She is also a certified clinical hypnotherapist and motivational speaker who has spent the last 20 years empowering people to show up and play big in the areas of life that matter most to them.

