

Interviewing for a Job—The Main Event

Today's *Career Headlines* is your last for this unusual school year. Enjoy your summer and stay safe. Look for us again in the fall.

Whether you are hired depends on the interview

Up until the interview, you've been doing the preliminary work to becoming hired. You searched for good jobs, wrote an outstanding résumé and completed applications fully and carefully. Now you're ready to sell yourself in a face-to-face conversation with the interviewer. With the interview, you'll either win the job or be eliminated from the competition.

The moment you enter a prospective employer's space, you're on stage. The way you look, communicate verbally, use body language, and prove how you match the job will be evaluated in the first few seconds. While you may be able to change an interviewer's mind later, a bad first impression is a hard hurdle to clear.

The employer's purpose in an interview

During an interview, an employer wants to get to know you, so he or she can decide whether to take a chance on you as an employee. The interviewer plans to:

- size you up
- listen to you speak
- watch your body language
- learn your level of confidence
- evaluate your background, education, and skills



Interviewers say they form impressions of applicants by "image, attitude, and communication skills." They form a strong opinion in the time it takes applicants to walk across the room, say "Hello," and sit down.

Image and Appearance	Attitude	Communication Skills
Conservative look. Leave your trendy clothes and shoes at home.	Give off positive signals. Smile at appropriate times.	Make eye contact. Show you are confident.
No heavy jewelry, piercings, visible tattoos	Be outgoing, but humble. Avoid arrogance or shyness.	Emphasize your strengths and avoid your weaknesses.
Well-groomed, natural color hair	Show enthusiasm for the employing company and job.	Show positive body language. Don't slump, smirk, or frown.
Clean teeth, hands, and breath No body odor	Speak in terms of opportunities, not problems.	Avoid slang and overusing "like," "awesome," and similar words.
Pressed shirts, pants, blouse, coat	Do not criticize previous employers.	Speak well of former employers.

Action: Analyze yourself according to each column of the chart. What will be your biggest challenges when interviewing.

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