

## **That All-Important Job Interview: 10 Ways to it**

*Job candidates with excellent credentials can occasionally fall for the fallacy that showing up at the interview and answering questions is all that is required to get a job offer.*

Even if the company is recruiting you, it is important to realise that you can easily blow your chances if you do the following:

**1 Act disinterested.** You are expected to demonstrate curiosity and enthusiasm when you come to an interview.

**2 Don't do your homework.** You can't ask intelligent questions if you don't know anything about the potential employer's industry, operations and performance. A close look at the company's annual report and Web site is an absolute minimum before the interview. Don't ask questions that are plainly answered in these publications.

**3 Talk too much.** When responding to a question or making a comment, get to the point. Nothing demonstrates your lack of self-confidence more than endless commentary that goes nowhere.

**4 Talk too little.** You are expected to be an active participant in the interview, not simply a head-nodder. One-word answers brand you as uninterested, nervous or uppity.

**5 Display bad manners.**

**6 Run down your current or past employer.** Badmouthing your present boss is perhaps the ultimate interview offense. Recruiters and employers know that if you air your dirty laundry about your current company, you're likely to be unhappy in your next position as well.

Even if you're convinced your boss is a criminal, stick to your own accomplishments and the company's resulting performance when discussing your current situation.

**7 Take credit for things you didn't do.** While it's important to explain your role in accomplishing results, don't overstate your authority or responsibility. Anything you claim to have done will be thoroughly checked with current or former colleagues, clients or bosses. And avoid saying "I" as much as possible. No one in a corporate environment does things single-handedly.

**8 Hide holes in your resumes.** Periods of unemployment, dates and degrees are all simple to detect. Address resume gaps or other potential concerns directly and have a good explanation about why they made sense and what you learned from them.

**9 Show lack of confidence in the prospective employer.** It is ok to express concerns about some aspect of the potential employer's strategy, product line or operations – particularly if you

can suggest another approach that works better. But don't let the interview devolve into a critique session. Employers want managers who are excited by opportunities, not dismissive of past mistakes.

10 **Negotiate too early.** If you raise the issue of remuneration, it's clear to recruiters and employers that your primary interest is money, not opportunity. Wait until they bring up the topic, and don't negotiate during the interview. Take a day to formulate your response.