3 Nonverbal Mistakes to Avoid in Your Next Interview by Jimmie Flores

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Youâ€™ve worked hard to become a finalist for an excellent employment opportunity. Your skills and work experience are a good match. However, you are now one of three finalists who are asked to interview for the position. Your body of work is important in the selection process, but your interview skills will carry just as much weight, if not more.

You must be prepared. You must know that body language says a lot about you, and your ability to lead. When interviewed by a committee, you can expect all eyes on you, and your nonverbal actions.

#1: A fake smile can kill your chances.

Upon meeting the interviewer, show a warm smile. Remember, the smile has to be real. You want to avoid a nervous smile, one that disappears from your face in less than a second. Even worse, is the smile that remains frozen on you for what seems like an eternity.

A genuine smile is an excellent icebreaker. You give the impression that you are comfortable and approachable. The interviewer will feel the positive vibes, and you will get started on the right foot.

#2: Clasping your hands or crossing arms is a sign that you are closed-minded.

Salespeople are taught to hand something to a prospect who has his arms crossed. By holding something in their hands, they can no longer cross their arms, and might be more receptive to the message.

Clasping your hands communicates lack of interest. A palm-to-palm gesture signals that you lack confidence. Do your best to avoid this type of nonverbal communication because it can make the interview session uncomfortable.

Itâ€™s recommended that you have your hands opened and relaxed. A calm appearance communicates confidence, control, and trustworthiness.

#3: Steepling your fingers suggests arrogance.

Steepling your fingers may lead the interviewer to feel that you are a know-it-all. In essence, youâ€™ve changed the dynamics of the interview. It might appear that you are attempting to control the process, and that might threaten others, especially if you are being interviewed by a future manager.

More work today is done by consensus-building, and not in an autocratic manner. The interviewer is aware of nonverbal cues that make you the wrong choice for the position. The less you use your fingers and hands during the interview, the less likely you are to send the wrong message.

More than anything, you need to be yourself in the interview. While you should be prepared, you should avoid having a canned response or nonverbal gesture for every possible event. A well-crafted script is fine, but interviewers want to know you as a person. They are interested in both your content and method of response.

The interview is a test. You are being graded. Remember that you can pass the test, and still fall short of a job offer. To enhance your chances of becoming the finalist for the position, be aware of your body language. The majority (up to 85%) of our communication is non-verbal, which means

that we must allocate the necessary time to the delivery of the message. By understanding the impact of our body language during an interview, we improve our performance, which ultimately leads to more job offers.

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