

6 WAYS TO STAND OUT

IN THE INTERVIEW

Be warned. These methods aren't a free lunch. To be exceptional during the interview, you have to do extra preparation before your interview.

Why?

Did you ever watch Steve Jobs introduce a product? He's captivating. He and his product team also invested more than a hundred, if not hundreds of hours preparing for each presentation.

And Nancy Duarte, communications expert behind Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth*, advises that a great one hour presentation requires 90 hours of prep work, 30 for research, 30 to create the presentation, and 30 to practice delivering.

Okay, so most of us don't have that much time to get ready for an interview. Yet, you get the idea. If you invest the time, you will see the results.

Now to these six methods. Any single one of these methods, when done well, can make you stand apart.

1. Build a personal relationship with the interviewer.

So your interviewer will have asked a lot of questions to a lot of candidates. You can change the conversation by asking them questions as well.

No, you don't want to ask them about their biggest failure and how to overcome it. Instead, do some research. Find out about their professional accomplishments. Learn where they have been published or quoted. Learn what makes them unique.

Then ask them questions about these areas. Also, connect their experience to your own experience.

2. Make the interviewer feel great.

Have you ever spent time with someone who just makes you feel good? Don't you want to spend more time with that person afterwards?

What if you could be that person during the job interview?

How? First, you need to be positive throughout the conversation. Express excitement for the job and the company. Express excitement to work with that person specifically.

Give specific reasons for that enthusiasm. Pay the interviewer and the company compliments for specific things that sincerely impress you. Say please and thank you and express gratitude for being there.

Ask very positive questions, like "What have you enjoyed most about working here?" and "If I were part of your team, what can I do to make sure you earn a gold star in your next performance review?"

3. Have a plan.

What if you could walk into the interviewer and hand that person a document that shows every step you would take in the position starting out, how those actions will benefit the company, and the reasons you will be successful? That is some pretty powerful sauce.

Now some people advocate a 30-60-90 day plan, but today's employers don't want to wait 90 days before you start creating results. They want

to know how you can create value for them tomorrow. So focus on immediate impact.

To build this plan, research the job carefully. Learn about how your role fits into a team. Then, identify areas of potential value and be ready to present it. (Don't get into the weeds of implementation, as that can be a turn-off).

4. Be ready for every single question.

When you can confidently answer every single question an interviewer throws at you, you will impress them hands down.

To get there, carefully research what questions were asked by this employer before and what questions are asked in this specific type of job. Think about curve ball questions that could trip you up.

Then work through answers for every single one and practice past the point where you sound robotic until you can fluidly answer every question.

5. Have compelling stories that draw in your interviewer.

Do you know why so many people love the original Star Wars movie or the Princess Bride? Besides stellar characters and some memorable lines, both are carefully crafted stories. (They actually work through a story template that all great myths follow. You can learn more from author Joseph Campbell.)

So how do you tell great stories?

Sure, the 5W's are an okay place to start (Who, What, Where, When, Why). But if you want to draw them in, you need to create at least a little emotional interest. Identify a problem early on that seduces your interviewer, then how worked towards a solution, and finally how that problem was solved. (Yes, every crime show does this.)

6. Teach the interviewer.

Interviewers expect every interview to be about evaluation. Yet, if you make it an opportunity for education, they will be excited to learn and be grateful for the change.

What can you teach the interviewer that would interest them?

Here are a couple of examples: If you were working in sales and marketing, think about how you can gather unique research about their customers that they would find valuable. If you are in technology, research, think about new technologies that they would find relevant and valuable to their work.

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