

Common Interviewing Mistakes

1) Failure to put applicant at ease

Warm greeting, supply glass of water or other refreshment, short "small talk," outline the interview process, warm, interested tone of voice, positive non-verbals, use applicant's name, show approval and respect. Use careful self-disclosure.

2) Signaling expected answers

Allowing the context of the question to signal desired answer. "How do you feel about reporting to a younger person?" Loading a question with emotional signals. "How do you handle frustrating set-backs?" Use behavior-based interview questions; "Tell me about an example when you..."

3) Failure to listen actively

Use door openers, reflection, paraphrase, reinforcements. Use follow-up questions. Prevent meeting interruptions such as phone calls or staff questions, of non-emergency nature.

4) Talking too much

Interview is not a balanced social conversation. Focus on information gathering. Restrict most question answering and recruiting to end of interview.

5) Lack of follow-on questions

Get back to loose ends. Jot down reminder notes to guide you back. Seek clear understanding, full explanations.

6) Conducted without prior planning

Develop semi-structured outline. Review application and job description.

7) Too short; insufficient information

Good interviews take time. Schedule second interview if needed.

8) Affected by personal bias

Consciously guard against them. This is hard work.