

Things you shouldn't do in a JOB INTERVIEW

Getting a job, especially one of the sought-after ones, involves a good amount of strategy and effort just to get through the multiple stages of application and assessment. This makes it all the more disappointing to almost make it, but mess things up in an interview – usually the last stage to clear before you get an offer. To avoid such anti-climaxes, here are a few things you should not do in an interview.

GIVE IMPRECISE ANSWERS, EVEN TO ICEBREAKING QUESTIONS

Everything you say during an interview counts. Even if the interviewer is asking a question just to get you to relax, your answer shouldn't completely stray from the point. For instance, the answer to how your university experience was, should not be a bare list of courses you took. Instead, the focus should be on your unique experience of being a university student and, possibly, the impact it had on you.

Trying to tackle a pointed question with a long-winded, vague answer is not helpful. It doesn't just make it obvious you don't have the answer, but also casts doubt on your ability to understand a question and be concise.

BRING UP CONFLICT, UNLESS YOU HAVE A GREAT EXAMPLE OF HAVING RESOLVED ONE

A typical interview lasts for less than an hour. In such little time, it's hardly possible for an employer to understand the motivations and complexity behind life choices you have made. If something in your life is complicated and makes you look conflict prone, don't bring it up. In absence of enough context, conflict will almost always paint you in a negative light.

The only good way to discuss conflict in an interview is to show that you have faced one and handled it well. In competency based interviews, employers often ask for examples of situations where you handled a problem. These might be good places to tell your story, highlighting your strength as a mediator.

PROVIDE GENERIC REASONS FOR WANTING TO JOIN A COMPANY

A lot of training and grooming goes into a recruitment, and employers want to make sure these efforts don't go to waste. During



interviews, they try to understand your level of commitment and genuine interest in the organization.

Answers like "the people are cool" or "the company is a good one by any standards," to why you want to join an organization are weak responses. These things can be said about many organizations, and doesn't tell the interviewer

why you want to join her/his one in particular. If your employer doesn't see a reason you want to join the organization, s/he will likely not be convinced about your commitment.

USE IRRELEVANT PERSONAL EXAMPLES

Although it's not entirely wrong to draw

examples from your personal experiences, these examples do not carry as much weight as ones from your academic or professional life. For instance, if you have described yourself as a collaborative person, talk about team projects where you have excelled by coordinating with others. An irrelevant personal example like how you and your friends collaborated to throw someone a birthday party should ideally not be used here.

Using such examples may give the impression that you really have no better evidence of your skills, or that you simply cannot think on your feet and come up with something better.

BE SOMBRE OR IMPATIENT

It's okay to tactfully highlight your accomplishments in an interview. But, if you blurt them out in one breath or forcefully bring them into the conversation, you seem both brash and overly eager to prove that you're talented. Instead, let the interview follow its natural course. Your CV has all the details anyway and you can always steer the conversation towards your strengths with a little patience.

It's also important to not let your bad mood or stress level find their way into the interview room. Maybe you had a rough morning. Maybe being stuck in traffic made you panic about reaching late. Regardless of what you're feeling, make a conscious effort to smile, seem pleasant and engage. If your interviewer cracks a joke, a polite smile is a much better response than a blank stare.

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THE BOSSMAN

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APPRENTICESHIP VS. INTERNSHIP

The job market is becoming more and more competitive, with even entry level jobs requiring previous work experience. So doing part-time internships has become quite the norm among undergrad students. Be it for adding an edge to your CV, or for skill development, all kinds of internships are available and you only need to look for it.

Of late, apprenticeships have come up to the fore besides internships to provide students a more hands-on experience to prepare them for their future job. I'll help you weigh the features and benefits offered by both of these platforms as they work in different ways.

What are they?

Internships are short term, temporary work experiences offered by public and private organisations. They offer on-the-job experience of working in a particular role in a specific sector, under a direct supervisor or line manager. Many internships do not offer a lot of in-depth work experience but rather, generic and surface level ones such as managing and planning tasks, sorting papers, making presentations, being an assistant to the boss etc. But these do help you gain a lot of insights that boost your long term career prospects. It is more educational, rather than being a training role. An apprenticeship program on the other hand, is a formal employment platform that provides training for a specific job. By making employees sign a contract with the company, these programs usually recruit those who already know which career they are going to settle for. Like internships, apprenticeships help to learn specific skills during the length of the program, by the end of which, the apprentice gains all formal qualifications required to work in their chosen field. It usually begins with an orientation and induction training, and moves on to a mix of on-the-job training, and formal classroom-based learning.

How long do they take to complete?

Typically lasting for a few weeks to mostly 3 months (sometimes more), internships are done mostly by students for either a semester or a summer. Thereafter they move on, or get an extension on their contract. An apprenticeship can take years to complete and requires a full-time commitment. These programs usu-

ally last from 1-6 years with targeted practical careers such as construction and manufacturing waiting at the end.

How does each pay?

An internship program may or may not be paid. In this sense, you might say that internships give you the chance to learn before you earn, as their focus is on showing you what it would be like to work in a specific work environment before you choose a career. At best, they offer college credits, small stipends, or something to add to your resume.

Unlike internships, apprenticeship trainings are always paid. This may be one of the reasons why apprenticeships are so competitive. Although you won't be banking six figures in the first year, you are definitely going to earn more than an intern.

What are the employment prospects?

Internships are more learning-focused, so these don't offer immediate or direct job placements. They do boost placement opportunities, and add relevant experience to your resume. In some cases, they can be used to expand your network of contacts.

On the contrary, for an apprentice, after successful completion of the program one receives a certificate of completion, and an almost guaranteed high paying job in the industry. This placement is almost certain, as the employer has already invested on the trainee and wouldn't want them to switch jobs.

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Making a DIFFERENCE

Bangladesh is rapidly moving towards middle income status by 2021. Our businesses definitely offer immense opportunities for the growing economy and this diversity needs a stage for the stories untold. See Bangladesh make its mark on the global map as Making a Difference brings you our proudest success stories from across the country.

FINDING PART-TIME JOBS AS A STUDENT

When you're a young and naive freshman, you keep seeing seniors doing all these ECAs and jobs, and you wonder how to find similar opportunities. It's great to have a part-time job while you're an undergrad student - you get some extra cash for pocketmoney, and you can save up a lot of money by the time you graduate. But the trouble is, paid internships in good organisations are tough to find.

KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR ALUMNI GROUP

If your university has a Facebook group with present and former students, you'll see people posting about vacancies in their companies quite often. So turn on notifications and use the alumni network.

CHECK THOSE BULLETIN BOARDS

We forget to check those notice boards, unless a teacher publishes grades there. But you will find everything from job postings to beauty pageant pamphlets on there if you look.

TALK TO THE TEACHERS

Many university teachers have their own consultation projects, and they regularly hire associates. Ask your teachers if they have any openings, and send them your CV for consideration.

