



Job Interview Insights: How to Make a Positive First Impression

While job interviews can be nerve-wracking experiences, it's important to find your footing fast. In a recent [Accountemps survey](#) of more than 500 human resources managers, 60 percent of respondents said it takes just 10 minutes or less to form an opinion of an interviewee.

Here are tips on getting off to a strong start:

Suit up. Even though dress codes have relaxed in recent years at many companies, interview etiquette still dictates you dress up. A polished appearance provides instant credibility. Even if you're interviewing at an organization with a casual culture, play it safe and dress a step above what you think is expected.

Mind your manners. The interviewer isn't the only person you need to impress. Managers frequently ask other employees for their impressions of prospective hires. Be friendly and polite to everyone you encounter from the moment you walk in the door. And display good etiquette while waiting. Translation: Put away the smartphone.

Follow the interviewer's lead. Some interviewers enjoy small talk, while others like to cut to the chase. Take your conversational cues from the employer. As soon as the hiring manager appears ready to talk business, offer a copy of your resume. Volunteer to walk him or her through the document, steering the discussion toward your qualifications, work experience and achievements most relevant to the opportunity.

Come prepared. Make sure you prep for common questions, such as, "Why do you want to work here?" Research the company online before your interview and tap your network for additional insights. Then, couch your answers in the context of how you'd use your top skills, traits and abilities to help the firm.

The job interview is your chance to show employers that you're a perfect match for their organization. Hiring managers look at your behavior during the interview as a barometer of how you'd act and perform on the job. Put your best foot forward by being prepared, poised and polite.

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