Ways to Strike Out When Interviewing

A recent survey was conducted among 150 companies to discover why a candidate who is capable of handling a job is not hired. The responses all relate to the crucial interview period. Listed below are inevitable ways to "strike out". If you really want the job, be careful to avoid them all!

- **POOR PERSONAL APPEARANCE:**
  - A company will be more likely to hire someone who is well groomed and will represent their company in good light.

- **LACK OF INTEREST AND ENTHUSIASM:**
  - A passive and indifferent attitude is instantly recognized as "I don't care if I get this job." Sincere interest and enthusiasm about the position is essential.

- **TOO MUCH EMPHASIS ON MONEY:**
  - Your interviewing goal is to sell yourself to the interviewer and to get an offer of employment. Salary discussion is secondary.

- **CONDEMNATION OF PAST EMPLOYER:**
  - Present facts only surrounding past positions. Interviewers will be sensitive to comments about past employers. Too much information may come across as gossip.

- **TALKING TOO MUCH:**
  - Answer questions as asked without being abrupt; expand only to the point that the interviewer has a clear understanding of what you mean. Unnecessary conversation wastes time.

- **WEAK HANDSHAKE:**
  - The interviewer’s first impressions are lasting impressions. A firm handshake shows confidence in yourself and your abilities.

- **REFUSAL TO TRAVEL AND/OR RELOCATE:**
  - Always be open for discussion concerning travel and relocation. The employer may be talking future plans, not present.

- **BEING LATE FOR THE INTERVIEW:**
  - Tardiness is a sign of irresponsibility. This demonstrates a lack of interest, and what the employer can expect in the future.

- **FAILURE TO SEEM INTERESTED ABOUT THE POSITION:**
  - An interviewer will be impressed by an eager and inquisitive mind. Don't hesitate to ask questions concerning the company or the position you are interviewing for.

- **NO DEFINITE CAREER OBJECTIVES:**
  - Don't be caught off guard! Try to anticipate questions you will be asked and have answers prepared in advance. Uncertainty and disorganization show you do not know what your goals are.
• **OVERBEARING, CONCEITED, KNOW IT ALL ATTITUDE:**
  o An up front, confident discussion of talents and achievements is more likely to work in your favor, than incessant bragging about yourself.

• **INABILITY TO EXPRESS YOURSELF CLEARLY:**
  o Don't let your mouth get ahead of your mind. Take a moment to think and construct your answers to questions, before rushing into a vague and senseless reply. Interviewers will carefully watch and listen to your communicative skills.

• **LACK OF CONFIDENCE AND POISE:**
  o Everyone will be somewhat nervous during the interview, this is to be expected. However, preparation to handle the interview will come across as confidence in your ability to handle the job.

• **TOO MUCH CONCERN ABOUT RAPID PROMOTION IS A TURN-OFF:**
  o Few people are able to automatically jump to the top of the ladder. Let the interviewer know that you are willing to learn the business from the ground up.

• **LACK OF LONG-TERM COMMITMENT:**
  o An employer will not waste his time with you unless you convince him that the position in question is THE ONE that you want to make as your career. A "merely shopping around" attitude on your part displays lack of interest.

• **LACK OF INTEREST IN THE COMPANY OR PRODUCTS:**
  o It will be obvious to the interviewer that you will not be able to effectively contribute to the company or industry if you have no real interest in its products and/or services.

• **INTOLERANT PREJUDICES:**
  o They tend to narrow your perspective and could easily keep you from performing to your fullest potential in the position.

• **INABILITY TO TAKE CRITICISM:**
  o Take it without flinching and in a constructive manner. Agree that you need to work on whatever is being criticized and promise to improve in that area.

• **SECOND-GUESSING THE INTERVIEWER:**
  o Let the questions be asked before you answer. Do not volunteer irrelevant information. Over-aggressiveness does not gain favor with interviewer.

• **LOW MORAL STANDARDS:**
  o Personal ethics parallel business ethics. If your personal morals are questionable, your business ethics will be viewed in a similar manner. Although you only work 8 hours a day, you represent your employer 24 hours a day.

• **DISPLAYS AND LAZINESS:**
  o No one wants an employee who is afraid of hard work. Show a desire to earn your salary.

• **LACK OF EYE CONTACT:**
  o Failure to look at the interviewer when conversing will cause the interviewer to doubt your sincerity. Direct eye contact will assist in supporting your statements.

If your behavior reflects any of the above "strike out" areas, you can count on not attaining your goal - the issuance of an offer of employment. The interview is often the deciding factor about whether or not to hire. Make sure that you are ready, mentally and physically for that all-important meeting.