

How to fail a job interview: From limp handshakes to fashionable suits

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Nice and firm: Handshakes are important!

Is your interview suit too sharp or your handshake too limp? Then you will not be hired, experts say.

First impressions are important – and recruitment specialists have listed the most common gaffes.

One of the biggest is a weak handshake, which can give the impression you are fragile and lack confidence.

Looking too fashionable can be off-putting, but wearing outdated clothes is frowned upon too.

Obvious no-no's include chewing gum and leaving your phone on – or worse, answering it – but a surprising number of applicants make these basic blunders, according to the list.



Phone gaffe: Don't answer it!

Slumping, fidgeting or making banal chit-chat can fail you before you have even explained those gaps in your CV.

As for these, most prospective employers will be sympathetic – but be careful how you explain them or you could seem unemployable.

But at least your CV was free from spelling mistakes, or you are unlikely to have been invited to the interview in the first place, said London agency Front of House Recruitment.

To make a positive impression, Matt Weston of nationwide recruitment firm Robert Half said politeness is key – but that does not mean being quiet and introverted.



"Any questions for us?": Never, ever discuss salary at this stage

Mr Weston added: "Be memorable, be an outgoing individual. Stand up straight, give a good handshake. Look like you mean business."

Being prepared is important, and candidates should have a good look at the company's social media accounts, he said.

Follow up an interview with an email to show you are interested. And finally, never discuss salary or slate former employers, he warned.

The full list

- **A limp handshake** - First impressions count more than many professionals think. A weak handshake is one of the most common interview issues, with many candidates giving off the impression that they're fragile and unconfident based on their handshake.
- **Chewing gum** - Old habits seem to die hard. A surprising number of job applicants chew gum during their interviews, including many experienced professionals, lowering their chances of being accepted for their dream job.

- Ignoring the dress code - Flat shoes, extremely tall heels, false eyelashes and unusual attire send the wrong impression during job interviews. As well as unprofessional clothing, outdated or overly trendy clothing can affect your first impression and ruin an interview.
- Work history issues - Employers are understanding of work history gaps, particularly with the effects of the financial crisis indelibly imprinted on people's minds. However, some jobseekers make comments about their work history that make them seem like less desirable employees.
- Poor presentation - It's not just clothing that affects presentation - posture, grooming and behaviour all have an impact. A surprisingly large number of job applicants send a bad impression to their interviewers by making mistakes like sitting with their bags on their laps.
- CV spelling mistakes - Nothing ruins a professional CV like a spelling error. Spelling and grammar mistakes are often all it takes to get your CV tossed to the bottom of the pile, even if the rest of its content shows that you're well suited to the job.
- Answering the phone - It might seem like obvious smartphone etiquette to switch your phone off before an interview, but many people still forget to. Letting your phone ring in an interview - particularly if you stop to answer it - is one of the most serious interview mistakes.
- Poor body language - Posture and body language have a huge impact on the way interviewers view your skills, confidence and competence. Slumped shoulders and excessive fidgeting are considered two of the biggest body language-related interview faux pas.
- Unusual comments - Unusual, unnecessary comments - such as comments about a reception area being very busy or quiet - can change an interviewer's perception of you. Comments like these can be perceived as being rude about the company, not dealing with their visitors or not being busy enough!! A surprisingly large number of jobseekers fail the interview this way before it even begins.

- Rude behaviour - Rude, noisy or arrogant behaviour is another cause of many interviews going wrong before they even start. Along with any of the problems listed above, a bad attitude is often all it takes to change a possible “yes” into a definite “no”.