



BEING HUMBLE DURING THE HIRING PROCESS

From a young age, many Americans are taught values such as respect and humility which have made an enduring impact upon their personal and professional lives. This is especially true among those from Mid-Western states where sharing credit for success and downplaying individual contributions are often encouraged and expected. While these values are the norm in parts of our society, you need to understand that humility should be kept in-check during the hiring process. Hiring managers value teamwork, however don't make the mistake of giving credit to a group that might not have achieved the same results without your contributions, expertise or leadership. In the worst case scenario, I've witnessed job seekers give credit to luck in their responses to interview questions and believe that hiring managers



understand they are just being humble. To be clear, you should never cite luck as the reason for success or diminish your individual contributions during the hiring process. I've witnessed exceptional candidates fail their interviews by citing luck or implying they were just a part of a great team. During post-interview discussions, these candidates admitted they were being humble and believed in sharing credit with others. They further believed the hiring manager understood the situ-

ation and would credit them as the catalyst for success. Please don't go through the effort of getting an interview to only make this avoidable mistake. On the other hand, don't go overboard and appear to be arrogant when explaining your accomplishments. There's a balance which must be communicated in this process. We discuss this balance at our workshop and help candidates understand the value of preparation and practice to ensure the correct message is delivered.



DO YOU HAVE A WEAKNESS?

Let's be clear – everyone has at least one weakness and everyone has failed. It's common to be asked about a weakness or failure and you must be ready to discuss these during the interview process. The key is to frame your response in a way that demonstrates learning and growth versus simply acknowledging a weakness or failure and not using this as an opportunity for improvement. There are two additional considerations when thinking about a weakness. The first is to ensure the weakness isn't a personality or character issue such as having a hard time telling the truth. Regardless of how you might attempt to frame this as an opportunity for improvement, it won't matter. The second is to ensure the weakness or failure isn't something that would be considered an essential skill for the position of interest. For example, fear of public speaking might not be the best choice if you're interviewing for a teaching or sales position. Failure to prepare for a public speaking event, however, might be a good example of an experience (failure) that caused you to learn and grow. As a result of this failure (learning experience) you now have a process by which you prepare for public speaking events, have gained confidence and are now much better at public speaking. Our last comment about weakness and failure examples – these must be honest and believable. A failure like being eliminated from the International Space Station crew member training because your IQ exceeded normal standards might sound interesting, however it's probably not likely to have occurred. In this case, your honesty and integrity comes into question which is an entirely different weakness which we discuss in-depth at our workshops.



ask the hiring manager

I know that I should arrive early for my interview, but I'm not sure how early I should arrive. What's your advice?

Answer: Another great question that we're happy to answer. The short answer is that you should arrive between 5-10 minutes before your scheduled time. Anything earlier risks catching the individual or panel off-guard and anything shorter risks being late. Please don't interpret this to mean that being on-time is bad. However, arriving at the exact starting time risks your being rushed and walking directly into the interview with an increased level of tension or stress. After arriving 5-10 minutes early, we suggest that you immediately head to the bathroom and conduct a self-check. Check your attire and hair in the mirror, take a deep breath, think through your elevator speech and key messages, and get a drink of water on the way out. After this, you can approach the interview relaxed, knowing that you look and feel your best.

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UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

Our team is currently working on the Winter/Spring 2014 schedule. At present, we plan to be at several locations in the Ohio region:

- Northern Cincinnati (Mason / Sharonville)
- Southern Cincinnati and Northern KY
- UC / Xavier / NKY
- Miami University
- Wright-State University / Wright Patter
- The Ohio State University
- Ohio University
- Bowling Green State University
- The University of Toledo
- Kent State University
- University of Akron

Sign-up to received our monthly email and receive a promotion code for use at an upcoming workshop.

Specific dates/times are TBD as of the publishing of this newsletter and we'll update the website when specifics have been confirmed.

Please email us at service@interviewskills101.com if you have questions regarding the upcoming schedule. We hope to see you at one of our seminars with the goal of preparing you for the most important day of your career, the interview day...because without a successful interview, you won't get your ideal job.

