



## THE POWER OF PASSION DURING THE HIRING PROCESS



During the hiring process, it's not just what you say that matters, it's how you say it. In many cases, how you say something carries equal if not greater meaning. According to the research of Dr. Albert Mehrabian, face-to-face communication is composed of both verbal and non-verbal elements. In this context, the verbal element of communication is represented by the actual words used and the non-verbal element includes things such as tone of voice, body language, and facial expressions. According to Dr. Mehrabian, the verbal component (words used) represent just under 10% of meaning and non-verbal elements (tone of voice, body language, and facial expressions) provide slightly more than 90% of meaning when communicat-

ing face-to-face. This is especially true when communicating feelings or attitudes, and more important in the process when verbal and non-verbal elements are inconsistent. Said another way, when someone's words don't match with their tone of voice, body language, and/or facial expressions, the listener tends to believe the non-verbal elements more than the words used. Think about how many ways you can say "I love you" and the different meanings this would have depending upon your tone of voice, body language, and facial expressions. Screaming these words while making a fist and looking angry would communicate a much different meaning than when said in a slow and warm tone with open arms and a seductive smile...right? Same words, yet a much different meaning.

During the hiring process, recruiters and hiring managers look for candidates that really want to do the job they need to fill. Demonstrating your passion for the position, organization, or industry are significant discriminators in the process. However, please don't interpret this to mean that passion alone will get you the job offer..... you still must have the basic qualifications (education, skills and/

or experience) needed to be successful. Think of passion more as extra credit during the hiring process, with the actual amount available dependent upon the position, organization, and hiring manager/recruiter you're working with. In some cases, the extra credit can elevate one candidate above others that have greater qualifications. Passion can also make a difference between several candidates with similar qualifications. This happens all the time and we explain both how and why in greater detail during our workshops.

In short, we recommend that you prepare and practice for an upcoming interview so that you might leverage the power of passion. Use the correct amount of non-verbal communication elements to compliment and reinforce your words. Use the correct tone and voice tempo, body language such as hand gestures and smile....yes, you're allowed to smile during the interview! Make it clear that you want to be a member of their organization, are excited for the chance to interview, and will bring this same passion to the job. This approach will make a difference in how you're viewed and could make a positive impact on your chances of getting the job offer.



# POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Another way to differentiate yourself in a positive manner during the hiring process is to have a positive attitude. While this is related to passion, there is a difference that needs to be understood. We described being passionate as a burning desire to fill a specific position, work within an organization or industry. Attitude is more about the way you see the world; it's having a pleasant disposition despite the situation, an ability to focus on success versus failure, and willingness to do what it takes to accomplish a goal or achieve a milestone despite obstacles. You might be passionate about something, yet will change your mind or objective when difficulties arise. Having a positive attitude allows you to rise above challenges and keep your focus upon the objective. As with passion, recruiters and hiring managers look for individuals that maintain a positive attitude despite the environment and remain committed to the goal. They award extra credit during the hiring process when this trait is successfully demonstrated, however, can often see through when someone is pretending to have a positive attitude. Don't interpret that statement to mean that you should be dishonest during the process and exhibit a false perception of your attitude. Always be yourself, however think ahead, prepare, and practice before your interview. Develop examples which highlight your ability to remain positive despite challenging situations. Think about how you didn't allow obstacles to impact the end result and how to best communicate this to a recruiter or hiring manager. Re-



## ask the hiring manager

What if they ask me about a negative experience with a former boss, co-worker or teacher?

**Answer:** This is another great question that we're often asked during workshops, career fairs, and in one-on-one coaching sessions. As mentioned in this and previous newsletters, your response must be framed in a positive manner. Everyone has encountered a difficult boss, co-worker, teacher or someone else in their lives, so don't feel like you're atypical. It's not the fact that you've dealt with these types of individuals, it's what you did about it. If you vent or speak negatively about these individuals during an interview, the recruiter or hiring manager may conclude that you have difficulty working or relating with others which is always viewed as a negative. Your task is to frame your answer in a positive manner and focus on the positive aspects from these interactions. You should think about how you reacted and possibly grown as a result. Here's an example of how you might start your response to a question about working for a difficult boss which frames your answer in a positive manner; "I've worked for bosses where I've learned tremendous lessons, including what to do and what not to do....."

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call that face-to-face communication is roughly 90% non-verbal and 10% verbal and use this insight to your advantage. Smile while telling about how you've overcome adversity. Use hand gestures to empha-

size your point, change your tone of voice to reflect and emphasize both a challenge and success. Finally, smile again when you highlight the positive impact achieved by your actions.

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

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