



## UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF “LIKEABILITY”

Research shows that hiring managers tend to hire candidates they like. This might sound obvious, but an understanding of this statement and the concept we call “likeability” can have a major impact on your job search. There are some obvious ways that may increase the chances that you’ll be liked such as smiling, being pleasant, and having a positive attitude. Here are some additional ways that aren’t as obvious, yet critical during an interview session:



**Be solutions oriented:** Always remember that organizations hire because they have a need. When researching a job opportunity, try to identify that specific need and align your qualifications (education, skills, and experience) to be the solution. No one likes it when someone drops a problem in their lap, however, the individual who brings a solution along with the problem will differentiate themselves in a positive manner with the boss. Use interviewing examples that highlight you as a person who identifies solutions and your chances of being liked by the hiring manager should increase.

**Listen:** This is critical during the hiring process, but especially during an interview. Failure to listen can lead to disaster during the question portion of the interview, but it’s just as important when receiving instructions from the organization and when engaging in conversations with a potential boss or coworker. Successful communication is always two-way and many job seekers just want to talk. Slow down, relax, and listen during the hiring process.

**Show respect:** This one can get overlooked by many job seekers and it can really make a difference in how the deciding official relates to and likes you. You don’t have to be excessively formal by using their surnames, sir, or ma’am for the duration. I recommend at least one formal reference and suggest this at the beginning of the interview. Good managers will pick-up on this and may ask that you call them by their first name. If this request is made, you should use their name for 95% of your remaining time. At the conclusion of your session, use the formal title again which makes it clear that you’re aware of their stature.

**Compliment others:** Everyone likes a sincere compliment which can be as simple as a comment regarding a family picture, degree, sports memorabilia, or something that’s worthy of positive comment. Under no circumstances should you provide an insincere or inappropriate compliment – these usually backfire and do more harm than good. The key is to keep it sincere, simple, and appropriate.

**Sense of humor:** In most cases, humor should be used sparingly during an interview to avoid coming across as a clown or jokester. When done properly, humor can diffuse tense situations, help make an endearing connection, and increase your chances of being liked and remembered over the competition. Just use caution and make sure your humor is appropriate and simple. Avoid sensitive topics and don’t go overboard.

