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INTERVIEWING IS A CONTACT SPORT: 7 WAYS TO SLAM-DUNK YOUR INTERVIEW

Meeting a potential boss for the first time?

Here are seven ways to assure success.

1. Present a relaxed professional image.

Be sure to arrive early and breathe deeply as you walk up the street and into the building. Sit upright but not stiff or twisted like a pretzel. Take up space by placing your forearms on the arms of the chair not in your lap. Stand tall and walk confidently into the interviewer's office.

2. Maintain eye contact with your interviewers.

Show an interest in your listeners by looking at their nose, ears, mouth or overall face when speaking to them. Don't look down or into your listener's eyes with a 'deer in the headlights' look.

3. Speak slowly and with a calm, pleasant vocal tone.

Unfortunately, when nervous, women especially, speak at a higher pitch by tensing their vocal folds which can result in a nasal, shrill tone. Try to relax your throat and vocal folds by allowing air into and out of your lower rib cage in a slow, relaxed manner.

4. Finish the ends of your sentences and pronounce all parts of many syllable words.

Say the ends of words and all parts of many-syllable words, such as saying 'going to' rather than 'gonna' and 'government' instead of 'govment', to slow you down when speaking. Be sure to say the last word of a comment clearly so that your volume does not trail off at the end of an utterance.

5. Know your personal and professional messages.

Do your homework by learning about the company, its products, market and policies. Develop messages that are aligned with the requirements for the job that you want. Know your strengths and what you bring to the company. Fine tune your messages by practicing them out loud. Be prepared for non-typical interview questions.

6. Pause effectively between thoughts.

Pause rather than use "fillers" or non-words to bide time until you are certain of your message. Fillers distract from your message. It's better to be silent and pause when uncertain of your message, even if it feels uncomfortable. Ask for clarification if you are unsure of the interviewer's question.

7. Remain confident and natural.

Confidence comes from authentic communication. If you lack a given skill, be honest and willing to learn. You are developing a relationship