



# Interviews: Express for Success!

22 tips to help you sound as good as you look.

When it comes to creating a good first impression, “dress for success,” proper attire, and appearance are at the top of every job seeker’s list. Yet, what you say and how you deliver your message at that interview or networking event are just as critical, if not more so. For career success, here’s a quick checklist to help you communicate your soundtrack, professionalism, and fit with clarity and fidelity.

- 1. Know your material.** Being prepared is the best defense against nervousness. Do your homework, practice, and master your résumé details so you sound confident and provide optimal responses.
- 2. Refine your speaking skills.** If it’s any comfort, actors work with voice coaches to improve accents, vocal quality, and delivery for the best performance.
- 3. Convey enthusiasm.** If you don’t sound excited about the job opportunity, the employer will likely go with someone who does.
- 4. Be polite and engaging.** Small talk and social pleasantries help create and sustain introductory connections, especially during networking events.
- 5. Broaden your vocabulary.** Add to your audio arsenal. The right words at the right time can enhance your position in any situation.
- 6. Know the lingo.** Speak the industry’s language to demonstrate your knowledge base and fit.
- 7. “Um” and “like” are not words.** Drop the verbal fillers. You’ll sound poised and polished.
- 8. Assert, not ask.** Your statements shouldn’t sound like questions. Watch your inflections. Be definitive; communicate authority, not uncertainty.
- 9. Stand tall.** Doing so opens up your diaphragm for better breathing, projection, and voice control, especially during phone interviews and public interactions.
- 10. Pace yourself.** Nervousness can make you speak faster or sound desperate. Make a conscious effort to slow down and speak clearly—you’ll have more time to think and feel more in control.
- 11. Don’t interrupt.** This is a no-brainer. LISTEN first,

and carefully—it’s courtesy and will help you provide the most appropriate response.

- 12. Repeat and clarify.** Not sure you fully grasped what was asked the first time? Repeat or rephrase the question to confirm you understood. Don’t be afraid to ask, “Did I answer your question?”
- 13. Be concise and precise.** Get to the point; don’t ramble. The interviewer is looking for clear answers. Communicate what you know without creating confusion or wasting time.
- 14. Expand upon your credentials.** Don’t rehash your résumé; the interviewer already has a copy. Rather, offer details that further enhance your achievements and skills and support your goals.
- 15. Know what to ask.** Prepare a list of smart questions to ask the interviewer.
- 16. Watch your mouth.** No swearing, off-color jokes, or controversial topics like politics and religion. Apologize for any verbal missteps.
- 17. Don’t lie.** Ever. Being labeled a fraud will effectively sink your candidacy.
- 18. Stay positive.** Don’t badmouth former employers or colleagues.
- 19. Mum on money.** Let the interviewer raise the issue of pay and benefits first; then provide an informed response.
- 20. Stay on course.** Don’t ask the interviewer personal questions not relevant to the situation. The same goes for sharing *your* personal information. Remember, you’re being scrutinized.
- 21. Focus on the other party.** Provide value; offer responses that address and meet the organization’s needs, not yours.
- 22. Thank everyone, and ask about the next steps.** Nail the interview by expressing appreciation and your continued interest in filling the opportunity.



## **i** n a nutshell:

To impress for career success, sync your message and delivery with your carefully groomed image:

- **Be prepared and enthusiastic**
- **Be sincere, engaging, authentic, and appreciative**
- **Hone your delivery skills, industry language, and vocab**
- **Stay on point and relevant**
- **Listen carefully, clarify where needed, and answer concisely**
- **Be professional, take the high road; be friendly, not familiar**
- **Make it about the employer**

Look and sound the part: style with substance confirms you’re the complete package and a perfect fit for the job!