





Around the Coffee Table with Dale Jodoin

If We Want Seniors to Stay Home, Why Do We Make It So Hard?

By Dale Jodoin
Columnist

Oshawa is a union town. We know what a picket line looks like. For generations Those are fair questions. We saw how We hear it all the time. Seniors want to stay in their own homes. Governments want that too. It helps seniors keep their independence and stay connected to their community. But there is something missing from this conversation. Not every senior is in a wheelchair. Not every senior has dementia or needs someone looking after them every day. Many seniors are still fairly fit. They cook. They clean. They shop. They go for coffee. They take the bus. They visit family. They work around the house. But maybe they have a bad hip. Maybe it is a knee that needs replacing. Suddenly, something as simple as going downtown can become a challenge. I understand this more than I once did. When you have trouble with a hip or knee, you begin noticing things you never noticed before. You notice how far away the next bench is. You notice stairs. You notice narrow spaces. And if you use a walker, you really notice washrooms. Think about going into a restaurant. The accessible stall is being used, so you try the regular stall. How do you get yourself and a walker through that little door? Sometimes you cannot. The same thing happens with public transit. Durham Region Transit has accessible buses, ramps and spaces for mobility devices. That is important. But getting onto the bus is only part of the trip. Can you move through it safely? Can you get a seat? What happens when the bus is crowded and you are trying to turn a walker around? Then there is the waiting for surgery. Canada has a benchmark of 26 weeks for hip and knee replacement surgery. Yet many Canadians wait beyond that benchmark. During that time, life continues. You still need groceries. You still have appointments. You still want to see your grandchildren. Most importantly, you want to keep moving. That is where Oshawa and other cities can make a difference. We need more benches along walking routes. A bench might not seem important to a healthy 30 year old. To somebody with a painful hip, that bench might be what allows them to walk another block. We need bus stops where people can sit. We need sidewalks kept clear, especially during an Oshawa winter. We need public washrooms that people using walkers can actually use. Pedestrian crossings also deserve another look. Is there enough time for someone with a walker to safely cross a busy street? And what about our parks? We should have more exercise equipment designed for older adults. Many seniors want to exercise. They are not asking for somebody to do everything for them. They are trying to remain independent. Perhaps city councillors and planners should spend a few hours with seniors who use walkers. Take the bus with them. Walk several blocks. Try the washroom. Wait at a bus stop. Try it again in January when there is snow on the ground. You might learn more doing that than reading another hundred page report. There is also a financial side to this. Helping someone remain active and independent may help them stay in their home longer. Isolation and inactivity can take away confidence surprisingly quickly. Sometimes independence comes down to very small things. A bench. A cleared sidewalk. A safe washroom. A place on the bus. We keep telling seniors to stay active, stay healthy and stay in their own homes. Fine. Now we have to help make that possible. So here is the question I would put around the kitchen table. If Oshawa truly wants to be an age-friendly city, are we willing to walk beside our seniors and see the city through their eyes. Because if a person can live independently in their own home but cannot safely get around their own community, we still have work to do.

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Since You Can't Read Your Interviewer's Mind, Is a Beverage Really Worth Risking Your First Impression?

Less Canada, More Foreign Capital: The Hypocrisy of Carney's Quest for Foreign Investment

By Nick Kossovan

Given economic realities—from inflation and trade tariffs to AI-driven restructurings that are erasing white-collar entry-level roles—you'd think job seekers would have bigger concerns than turning the internet into a battleground over a Gen Z applicant walking into an interview with an iced coffee. Arguing that personal comfort should trump workplace professionalism conveniently ignores the first rule of employment: the employer issuing the paycheck decides what's acceptable. Once you strip away the social media virtue-signalling, what's left to debate? An interviewer either cares about that beverage or doesn't; it's that simple. Deciding what counts as a dealbreaker or which of two equally qualified candidates is a better fit is entirely the hiring manager's prerogative. Since you can't read minds, err on the side of caution and leave the drink outside. Unless, of course, you aren't particularly serious about landing the job, in which case feel free to walk into the interview with a Venti Caramel Macchiato. The issue isn't the drink; it's the human tendency, shared by all of us, to interpret observable behaviours as evidence of professionalism. Your dress, mannerisms, and whether you're carrying a drink will be noticed and, therefore, subject to bias. Think carefully about the optics you present to your interviewer and what they may assume based on what you show. An interview is an exercise in managing assumptions; that responsibility is entirely yours. Holding a drink unnecessarily exposes you to assumptions about your character that may not work in your favour.

- Casual indifference: You treat high-stakes meetings like a casual errand between the hardware store and the dry cleaner.
- Poor time management: You couldn't manage your morning schedule well enough to finish your beverage before the interview.
- Subtle entitlement: You expect employers to accommodate your personal relaxation habits within their workplace.
- Weak self-awareness: You disregard how physical props and handheld distractions undermine your professionalism.

No two hiring managers evaluate candidates the same way. Each applies their biases, standards, and elimination filters to hiring decisions. Personally, I gravitate toward candidates with a touch of swagger, those who signal confidence. Another manager, however, might see that same swagger as arrogance and view the candidate as unmanageable. This unpredictability makes relying on luck extremely risky. You have no idea what your interviewer prefers. As Will Rogers famously noted, "You never get a second chance to make a first impression." Consider this the golden rule of interviewing. Job seekers often ask me why recruiters and hiring managers obsess over microscopic details rather than technical competency, experience, and aptitude. The answer: your resume gets you in the door, but your behaviour strongly influences whether they want you to join their company. With nothing else to go on, interviewers rely on your demeanour to gauge maturity, assess cultural fit, and determine your manageability. Years of observation taught me that corporate workplaces are, for the most part, stages; much of the activity is theatrical. My actions speak before I do, and that image is everything, instantly opening or closing doors. Treat an interview like a casual coffee catch-up, and don't be surprised when you get a "We've decided to pursue other candidates" email. Beyond perception, carrying a drink introduces physical risks. You have to find a surface to set it down. You may leave a condensation ring on the boardroom table, spill it onto documents, or offer a cold, clammy handshake. Why introduce these risks to a critical conversation? I recommend extending this caution: Don't drink anything one hour before an interview, and don't eat three hours prior. "Nature calling" often happens at the worst possible time; discomfort interferes with posture, poise, and focus. Managing your narrative intentionally is key to controlling your interviews or any room you find yourself in. First impressions form within seven seconds of contact. The key to winning those seven seconds is to follow three rules:

- Rule 1: Arrive unencumbered. Leave all physical baggage outside the interview room. Keep your hands completely free and ready to shake your interviewer's hand.
- Rule 2: Project intentional composure. Stand tall, maintain steady eye contact, and offer a firm handshake. True confidence is quiet, deliberate, and free of handheld props or nervous fidgeting.
- Rule 3: Respect the domain. Signal to your interviewer that you are fully attentive to their time and evaluation of you.

You can't control your interviewer's biases or predict whether they favour humility or swagger. However, you own every variable you bring into the room. I've never rejected a candidate simply for bringing a drink, a pet (happened twice), or a stress toy (happened once) to the interview. For me, none of those are automatic dealbreakers. Real dealbreakers include not knowing the company, ignoring the job scope, dodging questions, failing skills assessment, or showing zero curiosity. While I don't personally understand "iced coffee"—coffee is meant to be hot—a cold caffeinated drink won't, for me, single-handedly eliminate an otherwise qualified candidate. However, I speak only for myself. Still, why give your interviewer a reason to eliminate you? Dress the part, leave the distractions outside the interview room, and focus solely on proving your value.

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