

9. Believe It or Not: Your Attitude and Enthusiasm Just Might Get You the Job

JUST THE FACTS: According to many sources, the enthusiasm you display on a job interview can make the difference between getting the job and not getting the job. Some even say that attitude can account for up more than 40% of your rating! This activity will focus on the different attitudes that can be (and have been) displayed during a job interview. In a job interview, enthusiasm comes across as showing a genuine interest in the job.



Time

30 - 40 minutes



Materials

- Activity 9
- You will need three actors/actresses. One will play the interviewer, one will play the positive job applicant, and one will play the not-so-positive job applicant
- If possible, the not-so-positive job applicant could use props such as a cell phone, chewing gum, boxer shorts showing, and anything else that might be perceived as unprofessional

Note: You may choose not to use the role-play scripts - and instead have participants answer the questions in their own way – understanding that one person interviews very well, while the other doesn't (to the extreme). This is a good strategy for non-readers or those with limited reading proficiency.



Directions

Ask participants: Did you know that often an employer will decide within the first 30 seconds if an applicant is right for the job?

What do you think can come across in 30 seconds? Why is the first 30 seconds so important? Elicit responses. Obviously, this means you need to be on top of your game going into the interview.

Ask for volunteers to read a role play script about job interviews. Allow volunteer actors/actresses a few minutes to review the scripts. Explain to each “interviewee” that they should be “over the top” and that the “good” interviewee should be really, really good; and the “bad” interviewer should be really, really bad.



Conclusion

Discuss with participants the fact that these examples are both ends of the extreme. What are some of the takeaways from either observing or participating in this role play?

Depending on how the interviewees “acted,” there is a good chance that both interviewees demonstrated enthusiasm - and even if it wasn’t “spoken,” interviewee #2 certainly was excited about his/her tattoos and ability to eat rocky road ice cream. Talk about the difference between both types of enthusiasm.

Participants may wish to act out another interview scenario (with or without the script), if time allows.



Journaling Activity

You have a friend who is getting ready for a job interview. This friend is not feeling too positive lately, and you want to help her get ready for this interview. What are some things you might do to help your friend prepare?



Extension Activity

Divide the larger group into smaller groups of three or four. Instruct each group to write another role play demonstrating positive attitude and “focused” enthusiasm. This role play can focus, again, on an interview, or can be an example of a situation that might happen on-the-job. Each group should have the opportunity to act out their role play.

Activity 9. Interview Role Play

INTERVIEWER'S SCRIPT

"Good morning, my name is [Mr. or Ms.] _____ and I will be conducting your interview this morning." *Extend your hand to shake hands with the applicant.* "Please have a seat."

"We are interviewing for the position of a restaurant host/hostess. We are looking for someone with good customer service and communication skills, someone who is dependable and gets along with others. This person will be the first person to greet guests when they come into our restaurant, so it is very important to us that the host displays a positive and welcoming attitude."

"Now, I have some questions to ask you."

"Did you bring a copy of your resume?"

"Tell me a little bit about yourself."

"What are your strengths?"

"What are your weaknesses?"

"Why do you want to work here?"

"Tell me about a recent job or volunteer position you had."

"Why did you leave that position?"

"Do you have any questions for me?"

Activity 9. Interview Role Play

INTERVIEWEE SCRIPT 1

Q: "Did you bring a copy of your resume?"

Yes, sir (or ma'am), I did. *[You open up a folder you brought with you to the interview (where you have copies of your resume). You hand one copy to the interviewer.]*

Q: "Tell me a little bit about yourself."

I have lived in [your city or state] all of my life, I love being around people, and I love learning new things. Right now, I'm learning a new language because I think it is important to be able to communicate with a variety of people. I also like doing physical work and enjoy gardening and landscaping. I'm quite proud of my yard.

Q: "What are your strengths?"

I'm a really good listener. Don't get me wrong, I'm a good talker too, but I think listening skills are even more important. I'm also a good organizer. It doesn't make any difference if it is organizing my closet or a trip with my family; I love all the planning and organizing that goes into it.

Q: "What are your weaknesses?"

I like things to go according to my plans so when something comes up that may make my plans go off schedule it sometimes stresses me out. But what I have learned about myself is that coming up with a plan B helps a lot! So, if I plan ahead for potential problems, then I don't stress out at all because I have a good idea of what to do next.

Q: "Why do you want to work here?"

As I said earlier, I love being around people and in this job I'd get to meet every person that walks through the door. Your restaurant has a good reputation for quality food and service and that's the type of restaurant I'd be proud to work in. I think my qualities will fit nicely here.

Q: "Tell me about a recent job or volunteer position you had."

I worked in a cafeteria serving food. Sometimes I worked in the kitchen but I really loved working as a server. I got to meet a lot of people. Some days were easier than others. I set a goal for myself to smile at everyone I served, especially those people who seemed upset or depressed. It may seem like a boring job to some people but not me.

Q: "Why did you leave that position?"

I left because I had started school and couldn't do both school and work at the same time.

Q: "Do you have any questions for me?"

Your staff has a great reputation for customer service, so I thought perhaps I'd ask if you have a training program you put your staff through to achieve that?

Before you leave:

I also have a list of references for you. *[Hand the interviewer a sheet of paper.]* Thank you for the interview; it was a pleasure to meet you. *[Offer a professional, firm handshake - and a smile.]*