



when she does. Looming above the interviewer will make her nervous. When given a choice of seats, choose the one closest to the interviewer, unless it will put you right on top of her. Don't ask or dillydally about which chair is appropriate—it's awkward, and suggests that you regard the interview as a test rather than a meeting.

**Privacy:** Be friendly with each interviewer, but not chummy. Unless she brings it up, pictures of her family and other such items aren't topics for conversation, as some job-hunting books suggest. Certain parts of the office are also off limits, like the area behind the interviewer's desk. Even if you're kept waiting alone, stay where you belong. Likewise, the only documentation that could possibly concern you are the magazines left for visitors and the pictures that the company has hung on the walls.

During the interview, maintaining the necessary amount of eye contact should be easy if you really think about what the interviewer is saying, rather than the frightening fact that you're looking intently at one another. When you speak, a thoughtful look away now and then can be effective, but not if it doesn't come naturally. Try to speak to your interviewer's eyes. Also, keep your

hands (and feet) away from your mouth when you talk.

Don't fidget, if you can help it. When I was job hunting, I once spent an entire interview playing with an ashtray, something I didn't realize until the very end. By that point it was too late.

Taking notes during the interview isn't a good idea. It will make you look like a nerd. Only write down what you need to know and won't be able to remember, such as telephone numbers.

**Names:** Two factors have recently thrown the axiom of "always use last names" into doubt. First, the typical interviewer probably isn't a gray-haired codger, particularly since she may currently hold the job you're after. It seems silly to call someone "Mr." or "Ms." if she's only 22 years old and one year your senior. Second, many companies are publicly boasting about their new "collegial corporate culture," in which first names are always used. My bosses were called "JoAnne" and "Betsy," and the head of our division was simply "Mike," despite the fact that he earned 20 times my salary. It seems a bit strange to refer to your interviewer by a name that he never hears on the job.

First names, therefore, are certainly

appropriate for interviewers who appear to be 25 or younger, especially if their titles are fairly equivalent to the one you seek. For older and more senior interviewers, use "Mr." or "Ms." without fear. Most will tell you to use their first names anyway, but you have to watch out for those who would prefer the added respect.

Using an interviewer's name in conversation is effective if done once, but becomes transparent if done repeatedly. The proper time to show an interviewer that you remembered his name is in greeting and leaving. Otherwise, they'll know what you're up to.

Remembering names, unfortunately, is quite important. Interviewers, passing you in the hall, will greet you by name. If you've forgotten theirs, it's almost impossible to hide it. There are many tricks for remembering names. The key is getting the name to register during the introduction, while you're worried about your handshake. An extra effort may be necessary.

**Habits:** Don't smoke, don't ask to smoke and don't even let anyone know that you smoke, even if they do also. Smoking pollutes

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