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## 26 commandments for personal interviews

Rakesh Kumar, Tawanpreet Kaur | March 02, 2005

**Y**ou have fared well in the written test and the group discussion.

You are just a step away from admission to your dream programme -- the personal interview.

A panel of management experts, a battery of questions. Are you perspiring already?

Well, a personal interview could actually be challenging and fun if you just relax and remain focused. Think of it as a conversation between the interview panel and yourself, so enjoy it thoroughly.

To begin with, there are four main focus areas in any personal interview:

- Personal details
- Academic details
- Your background
- Current affairs
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### **Commandments for every personal interview**

Even after months of preparation, some candidates do not perform well inside the interview room.

The trick is to follow the below commandments practice them during mock interview sessions diligently. You are sure to crack the personal interview.

1. Whenever the interviewer asks any questions, listen carefully. Do not interrupt him midway. Ask for a clarification if the question is not clear. Wait a second or two before you answer. And don't dive into the answer!
2. Speak clearly. Don't speak very slowly. Be loud enough so that the interviewers don't have to strain their ears.
3. Brevity is the hallmark of a good communicator. An over-talkative or verbose person is disliked and misjudged instantly, so keep it short.
4. If you don't know an answer, be honest. The interviewer will respect your integrity and honesty. Never exaggerate.

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5. Never boast about your achievements. Don't be overconfident -- it is often misinterpreted by interviewers for arrogance.
6. Don't get into an argument with the interviewer on any topic. Restrain yourself, please!
7. Remember your manners. Project an air of humility and be polite.
8. Project enthusiasm. The interviewer usually pays more attention if you display enthusiasm in whatever you say.
9. Maintain a cheerful disposition throughout the interview, because a pleasant countenance holds the interviewers' interest.
10. Maintain perfect eye contact with all panel members; make sure you address them all. This shows your self-confidence and honesty.
11. Avoid using slang. It may not be understood and will certainly not be appreciated.
12. Avoid frequent use of words and phrases like, 'I mean'; 'You know'; 'I know'; 'Well'; 'As such'; 'Fine'; 'Basically', etc.
13. When questions are asked in English, reply in English only. Do not use Hindi or any other languages. Avoid using Hindi words like *matlab*, *ki*, *maine*, etc.
14. Feel free to ask questions if necessary. It is quite in order and much appreciated by interviewers.
15. Last but not the least, be natural. Many interviewees adopt a stance that is not their natural self. Interviewers find it amusing when a candidate launches into a new accent that s/he cannot sustain consistently through the interview or adopts a mannerism that is inconsistent with their own personality.

It is best to talk naturally. You come across as genuine.

- [Are you good at group discussions?](#)

### **Mind your body language!**

1. Do not keep shifting your position.
2. Your posture during the interview adds to or diminishes your personality. Be a little conscious of your posture and gestures. They convey a lot about your personality.
3. Sit straight. Keep your body still. You may, of course, use your hand gestures freely.
4. Avoid these mannerisms at all costs:

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- Playing with your tie
- Theatrical gestures
- Shaking legs
- Sitting with your arms slung over the back of the adjoining chair

### **Post interview etiquette**

1. Make sure you thank the interviewers as a mark of respect for the time they have spared for you.
2. As you rise and are about to leave, make sure you collect up your pen/ pencil/ all other stationery.
3. After getting up, place your chair in its original position.

### **The last word**

1. Some institutes (like the Faculty of Management Studies) ask you to deliver an extempore speech suddenly while the interview is going on. Be mentally prepared for the same.
2. Competition will be very tough. Every mistake you commit will turn into an advantage for the other candidates. Hence, be very particular about your preparation. Do not leave anything to chance or the last minute.
3. Remember you have to sell yourself in an interview.
4. Be very particular about what you write in your resume. Check and re-check your resume for facts, spelling errors, etc. Ensure that there are no grammatical errors in the descriptive type questions in the sheet.

Use these hints, and say goodbye to your interview phobia!

### **DON'T MISS!**

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**Rakesh Kumar, an industrial engineer and alumni from IIM-Calcutta, heads content research at [Top Careers and You](#) , which prepares students for MBA, MCA, GRE, GMAT. Tawanpreet Kaur has trained students for personal interviews over the years. Her area of expertise includes personality enhancement and verbal ability.**



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