

# 10 things to NEVER say

... in interviews  
... in meetings  
... with your boss  
... with coworkers



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## Interviews

### **Don't say:**

"I don't really have a weakness."

### **Do say:**

"I take a lot of pride in my work. In the past, this would lead me to try to do everything myself. I've since learned how to delegate thoughtfully to drive better outcomes, not just faster results."

"I used to struggle with having difficult conversations. That said, I've learned that respectful candor actually builds trust, so I now lean into this more with confidence and it's helped me grow as a leader."



## Interviews

### **Don't say:**

"I left my last job to find something better."

### **Do say:**

"My previous role helped me build a strong foundation in my skill sets. Now I'm ready for a challenge that allows me take on more ownership."

"I reached a point where I was no longer being challenged in ways that aligned with my long-term goals. I'm motivated by growth, impact, and learning and I knew staying too comfortable could hold me back from reaching my potential."



## Interviews

### **Don't say:**

"I just want a stable job."

### **Do say:**

"I value stability, but what I'm really looking for is consistency with purpose. I'm excited about this role where I can contribute meaningfully, grow sustainably, and be part of a team that's building toward something bigger."

How do you envision the team structure shifting in this regard over the next 2-3 years?"



## Meetings

### **Don't say:**

“This feels like a waste of time.”

### **Do say:**

“I'm wondering if we're solving the right problem. Can we revisit the purpose of this project again to quickly realign?”

“I want to make sure we're using this time effectively. Would it be helpful to review the outcomes we're aiming for together?”



## Meetings

### **Don't say:**

"That's not my problem."

### **Do say:**

"I want to be mindful of where I can add the most value here. Would it be helpful for me to weigh in, or should I stay focused on [X]?"

"I want to make sure the right person is owning this. Let me check who's best positioned to take it on and we can go from there."



## Meetings

### **Don't say:**

“We’ve already tried that. It won’t work.”

### **Do say:**

“We explored something similar before. I’m happy to share what we learned and how we might approach it differently this time.”

“That approach has been tested before, and it didn’t land as expected. If we’re thinking about it differently, I’m open to exploring how it could work better this time.”



## Boss

### **Don't say:**

"I don't have time for that."

### **Do say:**

"I want to give that the attention it deserves. Can we look at priorities together to make sure I'm focusing where it matters most?"

"I'd like to deliver without compromising the quality of my projects. If this is now a bigger priority, I may need to shift something else. Happy to walk through that with you."



## Boss

### **Don't say:**

"I didn't think to update you."

### **Do say:**

"I moved quickly on this and should have flagged it sooner. Here's a quick recap so we're fully in sync on next steps."

"I realized I moved ahead without looping you in, that's on me. Here's where things stand now, and I'll make sure you're in the loop earlier next time."



## Coworkers

### **Don't say:**

"That's not my fault."

### **Do say:**

"Let's figure out where the disconnect happened so we can fix it and prevent it next time. I can help troubleshoot this."

"I wasn't directly involved in that piece, but I can help resolve it and gather any other information to move this forward."



## Coworkers

### **Don't say:**

“Ugh, we’ve already been over this.”

### **Do say:**

“Let’s do a quick recap to make sure we’re still on the same page. I can further clarify anything that’s still unclear.”

“I remember we covered this last week. Let me know what part feels unclear so we can walk through it together a last time.”



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