



## ON CAREERS

## 50 Worst of the Worst (and Most Common) Job Interview Mistakes

By KAREN BURNS

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Karen Burns

You may have heard the horror stories—job hunters who take phone calls or text during an interview, or bring out a sandwich and start chomping, or brush their hair, or worse. You wouldn't do any of those things, would you? Of course not.

[See [the best careers for 2010](#).]

But there are tons of other job interview no-no's you may not have thought of. Or that you've forgotten. The job hunting trail is long and arduous, and a little refresher course can't hurt. So for your edification and enjoyment, here are 50 (yes, 50!) of the worst and most common job interview mistakes:

[See [how to answer 10 tricky interview questions](#).]

1. Arriving late.
2. Arriving too early.
3. Lighting up a cigarette, or smelling like a cigarette.
4. Bad-mouthing your last boss.
5. Lying about your skills/experience/knowledge.
6. Wearing the wrong (for this workplace!) clothes.
7. Forgetting the name of the person you're interviewing with.
8. Wearing a ton of perfume or aftershave.
9. Wearing sunglasses.
10. Wearing a Bluetooth earpiece.
11. Failing to research the employer in advance.
12. Failing to demonstrate enthusiasm.
13. Inquiring about benefits too soon.
14. Talking about salary requirements too soon.
15. Being unable to explain how your strengths and abilities apply to the job in question.
16. Failing to make a strong case for why you are the best person for this job.
17. Forgetting to bring a copy of your résumé and/or portfolio.
18. Failing to remember what you wrote on your own résumé.
19. Asking too many questions.
20. Asking no questions at all.
21. Being unprepared to answer the standard questions.
22. Failing to listen carefully to what the interviewer is saying.
23. Talking more than half the time.
24. Interrupting your interviewer.
25. Neglecting to match the communication style of your interviewer.
26. Yawning.
27. Slouching.
28. Bringing along a friend, or your mother.
29. Chewing gum, tobacco, your pen, your hair.
30. Laughing, giggling, whistling, humming, lip-smacking.
31. Saying "you know," "like," "I guess," and "um."
32. Name-dropping or bragging or sounding like a know-it-all.
33. Asking to use the bathroom.
34. Being falsely or exaggeratedly modest.
35. Shaking hands too weakly, or too firmly.
36. Failing to make eye contact (or making continuous eye contact).
37. Taking a seat before your interviewer does.
38. Becoming angry or defensive.
39. Complaining that you were kept waiting.
40. Complaining about anything!
41. Speaking rudely to the receptionist.
42. Letting your nervousness show.
43. Overexplaining why you lost your last job.
44. Being too familiar and jokey.
45. Sounding desperate.
46. Checking the time.
47. Oversharing.
48. Sounding rehearsed.
49. Leaving your cell phone on.
50. Failing to ask for the job.

**Karen Burns** is the author of the illustrated career advice book [The Amazing Adventures of Working Girl: Real-Life Career Advice You Can Actually Use](#), recently released by Running Press. She blogs at [www.karenburnsworkinggirl.com](http://www.karenburnsworkinggirl.com).

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