

The New Rules of Interviewing...

How to Make Yourself Stick

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Envision that you were able to successfully get an interview with the company of your dreams. How will you prepare yourself so that you can achieve the offer?

The traditional way of recruiting is to hop online and look up the most commonly asked interview questions. Once you have those questions, you create answers for them that you practice in your head. You'll also head off to one or two info sessions as well as career fairs where you'll learn about the company and what they do. You might even approach a recruiter and ask her the go-to question that all students ask: "So what is a typical work day like?" You won't mention your interview to any of your friends because you don't want to be embarrassed if you don't get the offer and you don't want to give them an edge by knowing that you are recruiting with the same firm; after all, they're your competitors now – not your friends.

That is not the approach that Gabriel Mizrahi, Consultant at Deloitte Consulting, took. He told every single one of his friends about the companies that he was interviewing with; he practiced with his friends 40 hours a week for two weeks straight to prepare himself for the case interview. Recruitment was not a solo mission for him; it was a chance for him to reach out to his friends and peers so that he could practice his interviewing and perfect the case. Most importantly, he mastered the intangibles.

75% of what you say is not the content of your words

Not only did he just practice interviewing day and night, but he went to ALL of the info sessions and career fairs so that he could make a good impression and build a relationship with everyone in the company. He befriended not just the recruiters, but all of the other UCLA undergraduates who were his "competitors." Together, they set up recruitment team sessions where they practiced together and gave each other positive feedback.

So if 25% of the interview is the content of your words, what is the other 75% made up of?

Making Yourself Stick

The 75% is made up of the intangibles that make you stick positively in the minds of company representatives. People make decisions based on their **emotional** feel and attachment to the decision being made. Think about the last big purchase that you made. You made that purchase because you wanted that product emotionally, and you could not be satisfied until you held it in your hand and knew that it now belongs to you. Now, you may have justified your purchase logically with “Well, I did just get a raise at work. I can afford it”, but ultimately you are just justifying a purchase made by the irrational side of your brain.

Emotion > Logic

Recruiters and company representatives make recruitment decisions in the exact same way that we all make purchasing decisions – they make a decision based on how they felt during the interview. They will not remember most of your interview answers, but they will remember if they felt that you were confident, if they made a connection with you, and if they liked you enough to work alongside you. You need to demonstrate not only how you can bring value to the company, but how you can perfectly fit within the company culture.

Making Yourself Stick will not only help you in a recruiting situation but in all the networking and socializing situations of your life. Throughout the following pages, we will teach you the secrets to taking control of the interview, to demonstrating that you are confident even when you are not, and to captivating people with what you say.

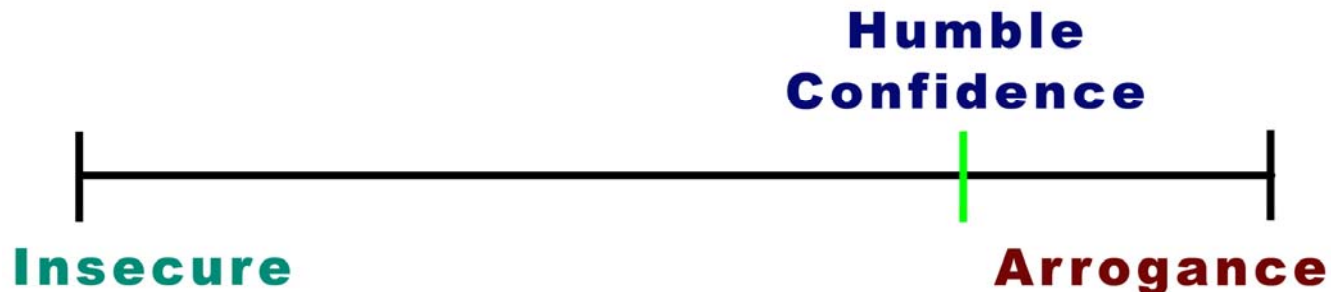
Make your first impression count

I have spoken with hundreds of recruiters and a majority agree that they know if they're going to hire you within the first 5 minutes.

5 minutes is all you get!

Think about it; that's barely enough time to get past the initial handshake, small talk, and the standard "tell me about yourself" question. Your first impression needs to WOW the interviewer so that she will want to hear the rest of what you have to say. It takes an awfully long time to erase a bad first impression, so make sure you do everything in your power to make a good one.

When a person first meets you, you want them to feel your Humble Confidence. Humble Confidence is the point where people feel you know what you're talking about. It is when people feel your strong presence and are confident that you can do things right and take charge. However, before you cross into arrogance – which is when you give off the feeling that you're better than everyone else – you need to add a dash of humility. You need to demonstrate that you are willing and eager to learn from the company and the person you are interviewing with. It's all about the way you carry yourself. Speak with sincerity, truly ask and care about what the other person does, show your value by teaching them something new, and most importantly, acknowledge them when they teach you something new.



Smile

Who would you rather hang around with: a person who is always happy or a person who is always sad? Obviously it's a no brainer, but we often forget the simplest and most intuitive things when we get nervous.

People who don't get jobs, don't smile.

Smiling is intuitive. We all know that we should be wearing one so that it seems like we're having a good time. The problem is that nerves get to us, we tighten up, and our smiles fade to a very serious tone. So let me just stress the importance of smiling until you have one plastered on your face at all times while recruiting.

Smiling makes you feel personable and friendly while making your stories and interview answers much more appealing. Professionals make recruitment decisions based on their emotions, so you want to leave them a happy and friendly impression. Practice with a friend until you give off a positive and friendly feel during all of your interview answers.

The Handshake

Another standard practice that often gets overlooked. A limp handshake shows that you're unconfident, nervous, and gives the interviewer the feeling that you would not be a good person to put in front of a client. A handshake that is too firm shows arrogance and is seen as a challenge. You want the interviewer to like you, and if you crush his hand, he'll instantly start off disliking you.

Your handshake should be like your confidence – firm and welcoming.

Your First Words

The traditional way of recruiting is to keep to yourself and respect the space of your interviewer. You don't want to give too much away, be too abrasive, or have the interviewer think you're kissing up to him. After all, you hate all those people that "hog" the company representative during info sessions and suck up like crazy.

Respect rules, not boundaries

The rules are to be respectful, sincere, and polite. The hierarchical boundaries do not exist, and you should make the move to establish the relationship.

The goal of the interview is to show that you can bring value to the company and that you can fit within the company culture. You need to open up and openly express interest in the activities of your interviewer. You can express interest without "sucking up" by being good hearted and sincere. Sincerity goes a long way and the interviewer will open up when she realizes that you truly have an interest in her hobbies and activities.

You should instantly initiate a friendly conversation at the moment you meet your interviewer. It could be as simple as, "So how was your weekend?" If you find that you and the interviewer have something in common, then you can start building a relationship outside of the recruitment boundaries. Your ultimate goal is to **establish a relationship** with the interviewer so that she fights for you come decision time. Instantly start and take control of the conversation; do not wait for the interviewer to lead the conversation. The pressure is on you to show that you fit within the culture.

The Importance of Your Voice

The more you practice your interviewing answers, the more comfortable you will become at telling your stories. This comfort comes with a price. You begin to add more and more information to each story that you want to get out to your interviewer as quickly as possible. You'll begin speaking very fast so that it shows that you have a lot of content and that you know what you're talking about. It's good that you have a lot to talk about, but you must realize that the more you talk, the less the interviewer will remember.

Professionals interview hundreds of students throughout a season and often hear the same stories over and over again. The key to being sticky is to control the pace and tone of your voice.

Voice Pace

Speak slowly and clearly. I know that you have a lot of information that you want to get out in a short period of time; however, the way to be remembered is to choose your words carefully, and emphasize specific parts of your stories so that the message sticks to your interviewer. Practice stripping down all of your stories to its core content. Once you find that core, begin building your story, adding only that which will further emphasize the point that you are trying to make.

Most students speak too fast, causing them to throw in a lot of "Umms" and "Likes" in their speech. Slow down, use pauses, and create simple, concrete, and succinct stories. This is a team effort and requires that you get all of your friends involved. Ask them to stop you every time you say an "Umm" or a "Like." Trust me, this will greatly pay off and make your speech sound much more professional.

Voice Tone

Your voice tone gets higher when you get nervous. In order to portray the feeling and emotion of your confidence, you will need to lower the tone of your voice. I do not mean that you should speak in a monotone voice; on the contrary, you should speak emotionally and passionately about your stories with a lower tone of voice. Speak with your personality so that the interviewer will feel that you fit in with their culture. Lower your tone so that they feel confident placing you in front of a client.

If your voice is naturally deep and monotone, then you have to do the opposite of lowering your voice. You need to put life and passion into your voice so that your stories are engaging and exciting. If you don't make your stories sound interesting, then the interviewer will not find them interesting.

Hand Gesture Strategy

You do not have a PowerPoint Presentation or a whiteboard during an interview. The only tools to compliment your words are your hands.

Many students do not realize what their mannerisms and gestures are during an interview. When you practice with a friend, make sure that she focuses on how you're moving your hands and how you use them while telling a story. Here are the strategies that will greatly improve your hand gesture effectiveness:

1. Use both hands

Two heads are better than one; two hands are better than one. It looks strange when you actively use one hand and leave the other one dead on your lap. Practice using both hands in unison to make your stories much more captivating and sticky.

2. Use fluid motions and strong emphasizing motions

A fluid motion with your hands along with your speech makes you feel more confident and calm. It helps to set up a situation and lay out the structure and framework of your answer. Use strong, emphasizing motions when you want to drive a point home. The combination of fluid motions and strong, emphasizing motions allow your story to stick more concretely in the mind of the interviewer.

Very fast, jerky movements give off the impression of nervousness or unimportance. Shoulder shrugs and open palms facing up make you feel as if you don't know what you're talking about and that you're unsure about your answer.

3. Everything in moderation

Using hand gestures is great, but overusing hand gestures makes them lose their significance. You do not have to use your hands as tools just because you have them. Just like your speech, use your hands in a controlled manner that adds to your answers. The simpler and more concise that your hand movements are, the stickier your stories will be.

Body Language

Your body language is constantly throwing subconscious messages to your interviewer that she is registering whether she realizes it or not. Practice with a friend so that she can give you feedback on your mannerisms and how you can improve them. Remember, your body language is very important and you must practice it in order to get it down right.

Mirroring and Calibration

My friend Michael walked into the interview room with a huge smile on his face. He was lively, dramatic, and added positive emotion to all of his stories. The problem was that his interviewer was the exact opposite of what Michael was portraying. The interviewer was arrogant, serious, and domineering. Michael quickly adjusted and **calibrated** his persona to **mirror** that of his interviewer. Michael spoke in a more serious tone, with more "I's" instead of "We's", and matched his interviewer's confidence by not backing down to the interviewer's sharp comments.

Mirror the Interviewer

People want to work with people who match their personalities. If you're interviewing with a lively girl who absolutely loves art and international cultures, you need to adjust the way you speak and your stories so that she feels you have similar qualities and characteristics. Similarly, if you're interviewing with an arrogant man who just wants to get straight to the point with no "fluff" involved with your answer, then you need to be short, quick, and concise with your answers while giving off a similar arrogant feel that you know exactly what you're talking about. Always remember, however, to keep that humble confidence.

My friend Alex has a very strong, professional feel with eyes that can pierce into your soul. He was naturally a perfect fit for McKinsey because McKinsey consultants have an arrogant and impressive aura about them that fit with Alex's personality. Bain, on the other hand, has a much friendlier and welcoming feel. Alex worked with us so that his presence was softer, and as a result, he felt friendlier with his interview with Bain. He practiced smiling throughout his interview answers, playfully adding a joke or two while carrying the conversation so he could sincerely find out more about his interviewer. He was able to mirror Bain's culture perfectly even though his natural personality is that of a pillar.

Engage the Interviewer

Engaging the interviewer means that you are captivating her with your words, stories, hand motions, and body language. She feels your answers instead of simply logically understanding what you are saying. An engaged interviewer is taken through a story. They eagerly await the outcome of your team project, how you dealt with a disruptive team member, or how you overcame your biggest challenge.

Make your interview answers interesting. If you don't make them sound interesting, the interviewer will get bored and her mind will start to wander. Remember, the emotions that the interviewer feels while speaking with you are more important than the actual stories themselves.

Eye Contact

The first step to engaging your interviewer is to maintain quality eye contact. I often get asked the question: "Isn't it weird to constantly stare into the eyes of the interviewer? It's very hard for me and it feels kind of creepy." The answer is that there are times to keep your eyes engaged with the eyes of the interviewer, and there are times when you can look away for a brief second.

Keep your eyes locked when...

1) You are telling an answer

You want to keep the interviewer engaged while you tell a story. The way to keep her attention is to lock her eyes with yours. More importantly, locking your eyes with her eyes also lets you calibrate your story according to her attention span.

If you dart your eyes, you will give off the feeling that you don't know what you're talking about and that you're lying. More importantly, you need to see if the interviewer is darting her eyes. If she is, then she is obviously not captivated by you or your story. Begin adjusting your excitement level by bringing it up a notch so that she feels the excitement, joy, and passion that you have for your accomplishments. If your level is already at the excitement stage, bring it down a notch so that you feel more and become more formal.

2) The interviewer is speaking to you

You want the interviewer to feel like you're interested in what she has to say and that you're actively listening to her. Darting your eyes while the interviewer is speaking is a sign of disrespect and that you are not interested in her or her company. Look into her eyes and nod accordingly to show that you understand what she is saying.

Look away when...

1) You're taking some time to gather your answer

When you are asked a question to which you have not prepared an answer, take some time to gather your thoughts before you start blurting things out. This is the time when it's ok to look slightly down or to the side to show that you are actively gathering your thoughts. Staring into the eyes of your interviewer in silence gives off the feeling that you didn't understand her question, and it creates an awkward feeling in the room. Take your time, look slightly away, and gather your thoughts.

I still feel uncomfortable, what should I do?

If you still feel uncomfortable, break your eye contact apart into segments. Look at the forehead, nose, or neck of the interviewer. This allows you to still keep your head in the engaged position but also eases you from keeping constant eye contact with your interviewer.

You will notice that I write “stories” when I talk about interview answers. This is because stories are fun, conversational, and most importantly:

Stories Stick

When you talk with your best friend, you speak in statements and stories. An interview by nature is a question then answer, question then answer. You must break out of the typical question then answer format by creating a story with your answers. For example:

Interviewer: “So tell me about a time that you started something new.”

Me: “During my Winter quarter of 07 at UCLA, I established UCLA’s first consulting focused organization – Bruin Consulting. We had 12 board members, and we took it upon ourselves to start the monumental task of creating a stronger business presence at UCLA. I organized two board meetings every week so that we could discuss, argue, and fiercely debate how we would create a stronger business presence. Some of my board said that we should give recruitment tutoring lessons to individual students; it was a good idea, but we would never reach outside of the university this way. Other board members suggested that we

should invite professional speakers every week to speak at UCLA; again, a great idea but every professional organization was doing the same thing. And then, it dawned upon me. What motivates students to try their hardest to gain recognition? A competition does. What are other schools currently organizing and participating in that UCLA Undergraduates are missing - a case competition. We decided to organize the first UCLA Undergraduate Case Competition. Case competitions require students to work in teams and are not limited to a specific year or major. Most importantly, they allow us to invite other schools to compete at our competition, and in turn, be invited to other case competitions which will accomplish our goal of creating a national business presence at UCLA.

This story is compelling and engages the interviewer because she eagerly awaits the outcome of the story. I set up the story with a need, a pain that undergraduates at UCLA had. I then described our methodology for finding the solution to the pain. I ask her questions such as, "What motivates students..." so that she feels like she is a part of my story and not just listening to it.

So now you have excellent eye contact and are telling stories to your interviewer. The final engagement strategy is to turn the interview into a conversation.

Lectures are boring!

There's a reason why you fall asleep in class; a lecture is a one-way street. We usually don't participate in the lecture which leads us to doze off and daydream about something much more exciting.

Similarly, if the interviewer is only asking you a question and then listening to your answer, there will come a point in your interview when she'll start daydreaming about what she's going to do after she gets off of work. In contrast, a fully engaged interview is a two-way street where you are answering her questions, adding comments, and asking her about her experiences. She in turn gives her input as well. In order to fully engage the interviewer, you will need to make her add comments and tell things about herself so that you can make a connection.

Here is an example of turning an interview question into a conversation. Let's say the interviewer asks me a question. I respond by telling her a story about how I had to multi-task efficiently during the quarter that I was pledging for Delta Sigma Pi. I can easily turn this into a conversation after I tell her my answer by asking her, "Did you join any Sororities or Fraternities while you were in college?" **It is that simple.** This could create a conversation in multiple ways. I've even had an interviewer ask me how she could be in a Fraternity, and I follow by explaining that Delta Sigma Pi is a coed business fraternity.

Connecting with the Interviewer

If you can establish a connection with the interviewer, then you have an extremely high chance of getting to the next round or getting the offer.

Connecting with the interviewer means establishing a relationship outside of the recruiting or job related field. Connect through sports, traveling, music, or anything else that you two share in common.

This is why it is so crucial to turn the interview into a conversation. You need the interviewer to throw out hints of things that interest her. The best and most effective way of doing this is during the "Tell me about yourself" question.

Goodies are your best friend

Goodies are your interests, hobbies, passions and anything at all that is interesting about you. After telling your interests, quickly transition and ask the interviewer about hers: "So what do you love to do when you're not in the office." This is an instant invitation to find something in common; once you find it, build upon your common interests and establish the relationship.

The next step is the follow-up. When you follow up, you want to stress the relationship that you guys were able to establish. "It is so great that we've both been to Peru. I have attached a link to the travel agency that I used for the Inca Trail. Next time you go to South America, you need to go to Macchu Picchu." Remember, it is all about the emotions and feeling that the interviewer felt during your interview. Establish a connection that is outside of the recruitment scope, and you will have left a meaningful and positive impression.

These new rules will get you your dream job!

Thank you very much for reading my Ebook. Go out there and try these strategies out for yourself. Remember, recruiting is a team sport, so please share this Ebook with all of your friends so that you can practice together.

Here are some more tips and strategies that you can use throughout your interviewing season. Enjoy!

More Ebooks by Jun Loayza:

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[Optimize Your Resume](#)

Podcasts by Jun Loayza:

[The New Rules of Interviewing: A Walk-through for Your First Interview](#)

About the Author

Jun Loayza is the Cofounder and Chief Marketing Officer of Future Delivery where he is building FD World - a virtual world that makes THIS world more productive. Think of it as the fusion between Second Life, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

He is also building FD Career, which is a user-generated, user-friendly version of vault.com. FD Career is the go to place for personal and professional development.

Jun grew up in Orange County California and graduated from the University of California Los Angeles with a degree in Economics and Philosophy. He founded Bruin Consulting – UCLA's first consulting focused organization – and established UCLA's first Undergraduate Case Competition. Jun was also the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of The Veridical Group – a small business consulting firm based in Los Angeles. Jun was a consultant at Navigant Consulting and is a brother of the International Fraternity of Delta Sigma Pi.

For more recruitment strategies, go to www.FDcareer.com.

