



# AVOID EMBARRASSING JOB INTERVIEW MISTAKES

TOP RECRUITER ROXANNE CALDER LETS US IN ON SOME DOOZIES, AND HOW TO RECOVER FROM THEM EVERY TIME

It's the stuff of nightmares – you've prepped for a job interview, you're wearing your business best with head held high, you confidently enter into answering questions only to completely blow it. You're not alone.

According to recruiter Roxanne Calder, who has sat in on countless job interviews over 25 years, some candidates still surprise her with the mistakes they make that can so easily be avoided.

"Here's the thing: you can stuff up an interview and still be offered the role," says Roxanne. "It's how you handle the situation that counts. I've seen people run absurdly late, utter swear words and wear an outfit

covered with toddler vomit – and these people still got the job."

Here are a few common interview scenarios and ways to avoid the situation or recover when things don't go your way.

## EYES ON THE PRIZE THE DISASTER

The candidate took a phone call mid-interview with a "sorry, I need to take this call", then left the room and never came back. We sat there waiting silently for 20 minutes. Pre-phone call, the interview was going well. Had they apologised and explained why the call was necessary, the job was theirs. Instead, they thought they

had blown it and couldn't face returning to the interview.

## ROXANNE'S TIP

Turn mobiles off, without exception. It shows respect, manners and awareness of boundaries. But, if it happens to ring, apologise and turn it off. I would suggest a quick apology again at the end of the interview.

## WHEN YOUR MIND GOES BLANK

### THE DISASTER

Not knowing how to answer a question is a common occurrence. As is having your mind go blank. What not to do

**DON'T MAKE THESE MISTAKES**

- Don't set up to work remotely in the reception area with a laptop, and don't ask around for a phone charger.
- Don't push the button to close the lift door on the person who is about to interview you.
- Don't take a handful of mints from the bowl of the interview table for the road.
- Don't go for an interview in the same week as being front-page news in a court case.



**Remember to turn your phone to silent when going into an interview. It's a sign of respect.**

you can practise. This will also allow your tongue to relax – I'm not joking. Your tongue can get nervous too, it's attached to the rest of your body.

**LOADED UP THE DISASTER**

Don't bring baggage to the interview – physical and mental. So, no gym gear, shopping bags or coffees. It may be viewed as being unprofessional. Equally, if you feel negative about a previous workplace, learn how to leave the emotional baggage behind. Communicating without anguish or passive aggressive tones is essential in setting the right impression.

**ROXANNE'S TIP**

If you are disgruntled about a previous experience, practise talking about it without resentment or emotion. Ask a trusted advisor to listen to how you are communicating. Communication is not just words. Look at inconsistencies in your body language, eye contact and tone of voice.

The good news is, despite nerves, most go well. Interviews have long moved away from "what can you do for me" to a comfortable two-way exchange. To have the best fit, engagement and longevity in a role, both you and the employer need to be happy. If you can, enjoy your interview and let them see you and the value you have to offer.

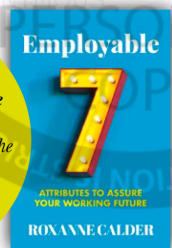
is become defensive. It's one trait no-one wants to see at an interview. Also, don't go to the other spectrum and over-apologise. Instead, simply say: "I don't know the answer," and ask to return to the question later. It will give you some breathing space. Keep going and don't give up! It's common for people to psych themselves out of the job they are about to be offered.

**ROXANNE'S TIP**

Think of the outstanding achievements and contributions you have made. Write them down and practise saying them out loud. They will be front of mind when answering questions. Just before your interview, go to a quiet place where

Words: Andrea Black

Roxanne Calder, author of *Employable – 7 Attributes to Assure Your Working Future* (Major Street, \$29.95), is the founder and managing director of recruitment agency, EST10. est10.com.au



**TACKLE SEPARATION ANXIETY IN DOGS**

**RETURNING TO THE OFFICE? TRY THESE STRATEGIES TO GET YOUR PET USED TO BEING ALONE AGAIN**



**MAKE IT GRADUAL**

Help your dog get used to spending time alone by leaving them for just 10 minutes w York St, Sydney ith their favourite treat. Gradually increase the time in 10-minute increments. Have them surrounded by their favourite toys as well, so they have a pleasant association with getting used to being alone.

York St, Sydney

**CURB YOUR ENTHUSIASM**

It's important to be calm when leaving the pup and arriving back home. That way, your dog knows there's nothing to get anxious or excited about and will adapt better to you not being there.

**PET MINDERS**

If you're spending a lot of time out of the home, it's a good idea to consider doggy day care or getting a pet-sitter/dog-walker to be with them. Pooches are social animals and need interaction.



Consider getting a dog-walker if you plan on being away often.