

Waiting for an Interview: Mind Your Manners

It seems a shame that this even needs to be said, but here goes: If you're interviewing for a job, be nice to the receptionist.

In other words, you should be minding your manners. And not just with those you perceive as having the power to hire you. It is becoming a common practice for managers to inquire about candidates' behavior with everyone who meets them. Interviewers are looking for someone that they and other co-workers have to agree to spend at least eight hours a day, five days a week with.

If you are rude or condescending to people you think are "beneath" you, you need to get over your bad self.

According to Anne Fisher of *Fortune* magazine, you should follow these guidelines (gleaned from Annie Stevens and Greg Costanian of executive coaching firm Clear Rock), when you are waiting for an interview.

- Introduce yourself. Just be friendly in the same way you plan to once you get into the real interview.
- Don't ask the receptionist to make copies of anything for you. You should already have your copies. You should already be prepared. And you shouldn't expect the receptionist to be your personal assistant.
- You can accept a beverage, if offered, but never request one. Don't ask for a million accoutrements either. Think kindness, think simplicity.
- If you feel the need to make chitchat, be careful what you say. Don't offer opinions on things that could make you look bad – like the décor of the office, etc.
- Unbelievable that this has to be said as well, but don't talk on your cell phone while you're waiting for your interview. You could sound annoying, or just like a jerk.
- Say a cordial goodbye.

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