

How to project yourself in an interview

With the final matric exams a thing of the past, one of the main challenges school-leavers are now facing is their first job interview. The following question arises: I haven't been for an interview before and I am nervous. There one coming up next week! How I can show my interviewer I can be an asset to their company?



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The fact that you were able to secure an interview shows that the company has seen something of value in the CV you have submitted.

According to Neville De Lucia, director at Dale Carnegie Training Gauteng: "No matter what the circumstances are for getting the interview, it is important to note that securing an interview is only half the effort. Once the door is open, we need to portray our internal confidence and competencies externally."

The objective is for you to indicate how you are a fit to the potential employer's corporate environment.

Below are some key considerations before you step into the HR manager's office:

1. **Show your assertiveness.** Interviewers want potential candidates that are assertive, because they are problem-solvers and able to tackle projects with ease. Assertive is not a synonym for extrovert! It simply means speaking up and voicing your opinion when it is uncomfortable to do so. Give examples of how you overcame obstacles in your school environment, or at a present or past job you had as a scholar.
2. **Voice your skills.** Your current skills shown on paper are what got you to the door of the interview. Now is the time to voice your skills with examples. Show the interviewers you have all these skills and are capable of learning things quickly. With the diverse cultures we have in South Africa, it is important to communicate these in a calm and confident manner, without coming across as arrogant.
3. **Listen.** Your interviewer will tell you about the job description and their corporate atmosphere, listen attentively and show you are interested.
4. **Ask questions.** Always ask a question or two during the interview. They want to know you are inquisitive and not afraid to ask questions.
5. **Relax.** Before the interview starts, make small talk with the interviewer to put yourself at ease. You could talk about a sport that interests you, the summer holiday you have just had or a big event that just happened.