



HAPPEN

Wrap It Up Right

Can a strong first impression in an interview be off set by a lacklustre ending?

Too often, I've seen fatigue – and often just plain relief – set in at the close of an extended interview, and it closes with a decided thud. Not the best way to counterbalance the strength of your opening. Here's an ideal time to keep your wits about you and orchestrate a finale that will leave them suitably impressed.

You'll want to start by sensing that the close is about to happen. You may have clarified interview length at the outset by asking, "How much time do we have?" You can also gauge the clock by simply being alert to changes in the interviewer's voice, shift in body language or tone and direction of their questions. Seize the opportunity by checking in with, "Do we have time for a couple of quick questions?" and launch into the dynamite duo you've been saving up for the occasion.

You can also venture a comment at the close of an interview such as, "As I understand it, the role really demands... (name the skills you believe it will take to be successful). Where I believe I will add the highest value is by ... (name the areas that align best with your own capabilities). " If you are confident by nature, you could ask a closing-type question to ferret out objections such as, "Based on our discussion, how do you see me fitting into the role at this point?" Key here is to work with the interviewer's comments without becoming defensive to reinforce the positive and deal realistically with any downside they mention. Far better to find out what their thoughts really are at this stage, than blissfully sail off into the sunset thinking you aced the meeting, when there are unaddressed gaps that may eliminate you simply because they were unaddressed.

With a little practice you may even come to enjoy designing your own original closing comments in your interviews. So, seize the moment and orchestrate the impression you want to leave behind.

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