

Why Should You Mirror the Interviewer's Communication Style?

Have you ever heard of isopraxis? You could look up a long definition that includes social neuroscience and neuron mirroring. But what it boils down to is that people bond by **imitating** or **adopting** another person's **behavior** or **attitude**. It is an important concept for interviewing because the most effective interviews will be ones where you mirror the interviewer's communication style.

Establishing **rapport** with an interviewer is not always easy because you are nervous and trying to impress. Instead of acting like your normal self, there's a good chance you are acting counter to your personality. For example, someone tells you to be energetic and enthusiastic so you try to force excitement throughout the interview and end up being overbearing and intimidating to the interviewer. The end result is that you make a poor first impression which taints the rest of the interview.

The Man or Woman in the Mirror

A solution to this problem is to mirror the interviewer's style. You can take your cue from the interview and then act in a similar manner. Because you are showing the same **behavior** and **attitude** as the interviewer, a more **comfortable** and normal communication pattern can be established. That is how you can make a great first impression.

- If the interviewer is extraverted and talkative then you should be extraverted in the sense that you show energy and outgoing enthusiasm
- If the interviewer is introverted then you should contain your enthusiasm and present yourself as a calm and quiet person
- If the interviewer is strictly business then you need to only talk about professional matters and speak succinctly
- If the interviewer is a joking comfortable type of person then you can ask about personal interests while showing a friendly demeanor
- If the interviewer is direct then you need to be direct too and not waste the interviewer's time sharing information that has no relevance to the job

The goal of this approach is to make a **connection** with the interviewer from the start. The first impression you make can impact the rest of the interview and the events after the interview too. In other words, the first impression can actually drive the opinions of the interviewer no matter what you say during the interview.

Wearing a Halo

There is even a term for this effect. It is called the **halo effect** which means that humans have a tendency to rely on first impressions to form subsequent opinions about **statements** or **behaviors**. If you make a good first impression then the interviewer will look at your behavior during the interview in a **positive** manner.

A first impression is made by the sum of many factors including the way you are **dressed**, your **initial approach** and your **attitude**. *It is possible to overcome a poor first impression but why make one when it creates a lot of stress?* Additional stress is the last thing you need.

Go For the First Impression

It is important to realize that you may decide you don't think you can work with the company's staff based on the type of personalities you come across during the interview. It is quite possible the **personal** and **professional** qualities of the interviewer and anyone else you meet during the interview phase don't match up with the type of people you are most comfortable working with. In that case, continue to act in a professional manner and turn down the position if it is offered.

Just remember **isopraxis** and the **halo effect** as you start your interview. From the very beginning of the interview you want to make a **good impression**, and the best way to succeed is by mirroring the interviewer's communication style.

The article: *"How to Answer Difficult Questions in an Interview?"* will give you additional information on ensuring success in your job search.

Regal Resumes has services that can help you prepare for an interview whether it is in-person or on the telephone. See our services page to learn more about how we can assist you in this process.