

TRANSCRIPT

PODCAST #11: YOU CAN ASK ME ANYTHING: 7 TIPS FOR INTERVIEWING WELL EVERY TIME

VOICE-OVER: Hello. I'm Business Development Coach Robin Hensley. Welcome to this edition of your Raising the Bar podcast with Executive Coach Mariette Edwards of Star Maker Enterprises. Mariette and I have teamed up to bring you even more information and resources to help you reach your business development goals. And now, here's Mariette . . .

MARIETTE: Following up on our interviewing series, this edition of the Raising the Bar podcast will focus on interviewing from the candidate's point of view. If you are in the job market and getting ready for an interview, stay tuned. I'll be giving you some tips about interviewing that may surprise you.

Hello and welcome to this edition of the Raising the Bar podcast. I'm Mariette Edwards and today we'll be talking about interviewing how to's.

There are literally hundreds of pages of advice online on how to interview. You can find help on everything from questions to practice answering to what questions to ask your interviewer. We're going to head in a somewhat different direction today with a few tips from my work with private clients that have helped better position them to interview well every time.

Just a reminder, if you're a regular to this podcast, that I spent twenty years plus or minus on the other side of the desk as an HR executive so I was the one asking you the questions. But just getting the answers right is not enough. Your interviewer is sizing you up from the minute you walk in the room so there are some questions about you that will never be asked. The way you look, dress and act will have already answered some questions your interviewer has--like will you fit into the organization? Are you too formal or too casual for the company and the job opening? Ask yourself if anything about you sends up a red flag about your ability to do the work. That includes talking too much or not enough, using slang or poor grammar, slurring your words or being difficult to understand, being impolite, too aggressive or too passive. With that said, let's move on to the interview itself.

1. **Never argue for your limitations.** If you've been out of work for awhile, it's easy to start thinking in terms of what's missing in your background or experience. Arguing for your limitations will never bring you the work you seek. Focus instead on how you can position your unique skills and abilities to support a potential employer's goals. Pay particular attention to the things that are so easy for you that they seem unimportant. I was speaking with a young fellow not long ago who had been laid off from his job at a large consulting firm. His education and work experience were exceptional so I was surprised to learn he had been out of work for eight months. "Why so long?" I asked

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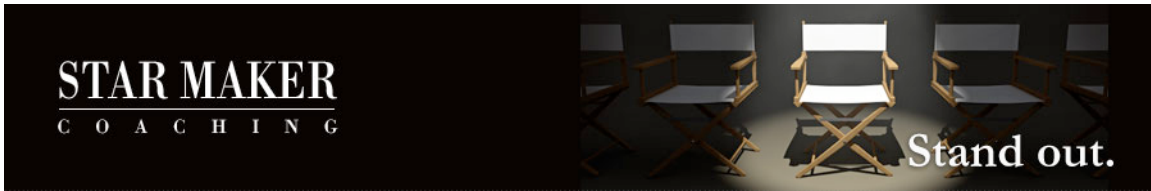
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him. He launched into a list of things he couldn't do, experience he didn't have and technology he didn't know. All of these plus "the economy" were why he was still looking. It wasn't until I asked him what he wanted to do in his next job that a glimmer of passion entered his voice. This fellow was a natural relationship builder and communicator yet he could not see that his gift for communication is what could set him apart in the technical world he traveled in. Ask yourself what sets you apart, what makes you different and practice talking about that when you craft your answer to that dreaded, "Tell me about yourself" question.

2. **Think of yourself in terms of results.** Businesses buy solutions. Learn to talk about the solutions and results you produced in past employment. Go a step further and gather up all the solutions and results you have accomplished in your volunteer work, in school or in pursuing your passion for sports or other hobbies you may have.
3. **Ask good questions.** Believe it or not, asking the right question at the right time can set you apart and communicate your depth of experience and your commitment to delivering a stellar performance for this potential new employer. Your questions should be open ended, thought provoking and position you in terms of results. Avoid directive questions that signal the answer you are looking for or require a yes/no response. Ask yourself, "What are the biggest questions I can ask in response to this opportunity?" For example, "What are the organization's most important goals?" "How do you see this position impacting on the achievement of those goals?" "If I were offered the opportunity to work with your organization, what would you like me to accomplish in my first 90 days?" For more on questions, stop by the free resources page on my website at www.starmakercoaching.com where you can download my "Ten Questions To Ask On Your Interview". They will give you more ideas on questions you can ask.
4. **Do what politicians do.** You don't have to answer the question you're asked, answer the question you want to answer. Granted, there is an art to this that you will have to practice. Observing political interviews will give you a good idea of how you can change the direction of the conversation by inserting a new topic.
5. **Know when to stop talking!** Think sound bites. Don't go on and on and on and on about anything. Your interviewer will have tuned you out after a few sentences. Give clear, precise answers that are easy to follow.
6. **Set an intention for the interview.** What's your goal? Often when I'm working with a client, our goal is to get to the next round. Set a goal and write it down. That will help you focus your attention on what is most important.
7. **Practice. Practice. Practice.** Do not, I repeat, DO NOT, plan on winging it when you get to the interview. You have got to practice your interviewing skills out loud with someone else. Video feedback is also a powerful tool. I recommend clients take that extra step if they are consistently interviewing but failing to land an offer. There could be something else going in the way they are interviewing that they are just not aware of.



Finally, I know things are tough out there and you may be getting discouraged but remember the motto of that valiant crew of Galaxy Quest... "Never give up. Never surrender." You never know what could be just around the corner for you if you will just keep going.

Well, that's it for this edition. Until next time, I'm Mariette Edwards for Raising the Bar.

VOICE-OVER: This is Business Development Coach Robin Hensley. You have been listening to a Raising The Bar program with Executive Coach Mariette Edwards. For a full transcript, stop by the Business To Business Magazine website at btobmagazine.com, go to my website at raisingthebar.com or the website for Mariette Edwards at starmakercoaching.com.

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