

SEE YOURSELF AS OTHERS SEE YOU

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How can you improve your interviewing skills and ensure that you are communicating the right signals to an interviewer? We recommend you make use of your video camera as your in-house communications coach.

The camera will show you how you come across to others, let you hear yourself, and allow you to see your mannerisms and style. Video feedback is a great self-corrector.

This is not a startling new idea. Television news anchors and athletes have been using this technique for years to improve their performance. Bill Liss, an Atlanta business reporter for one of our local television stations reviews his tapes daily. "I came from a business background, and I knew I had a lot to learn about how I came across on the air," he said. School and professional sports teams' coaches are always encouraging their athletes to "review the videotapes."

This technique is easier than you would imagine. Simply set up your video camera in a quiet room and place a comfortable chair an appropriate distance from the lens. Now place a few key objects around the room that you can use to practice making eye-contact. Have a prepared list of interview questions that you will answer. Now dress for the interview practice as you would for the actual interview.

When ready, start the camera, sit down and begin answering the questions on your list. When finished, take a short break, and then come back and review your tape.

- ❖ Are you as animated in your practice video as you want to be?
- ❖ Turn off the sound and focus on body language and mannerisms. Are you open and natural or are your elbows hinged to your sides? Are you making eye contact with the interviewer?
- ❖ Watch the tape in fast-forward and you will be able to immediately pick up and distractions like rocking or busy hands.
- ❖ Recheck eye contact. Was it long enough to make the interviewer feel involved and important?
- ❖ Look for distractions. Did you unconsciously jiggle change or play with your hair?
- ❖ Turn the sound up and face away from the monitor so that you can focus only on your voice. Do you sound bored, enthusiastic, or scared?

Now go back and re-tape yourself. You may even take a few risks by role-playing on camera. This will allow you to depart from your normal delivery and develop some new delivery techniques.

- ❖ Pretend to be a television lawyer defending a client.
- ❖ Pretend to be a drill sergeant addressing the troops.
- ❖ Try the role of a coach motivating a team.

Watch for the increased confidence as you play these various roles. Look for better projection and intensity as you pretend to be the drill sergeant, and the passion and motivation when you're the coach.

With practice and continual review of the tapes you will fine-tune your interview skills and increase your chances of securing the offer.



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