

In a recent CareerBuilder poll, more than 3,000 hiring managers and HR professionals were asked to identify the biggest mistakes new college graduates make during the application and interview process. Based on the percentage of respondents who gave each answer, these are the top 8 dumbass moves among new grads (not to mention a few other age groups...ahem).

#### 1. Acting bored or cocky (69%)

This sounds familiar. We had someone interviewing at Pongo recently who seemed pretty good, but two or three people used the word "cocky" to describe the person's attitude. (Our managers, like those at many companies, solicit opinions from everybody who comes in contact with a job candidate, not just those in the interview room – hint, hint.) If you're a new grad, it's important to realize that you may have been the coolest kid on campus a few months ago, but today you're an unproven beginner. A positive, respectful attitude is one way to set yourself apart. Confident = good. Cocky = bad.

#### 2. Not dressing appropriately (65%)

Your interview attire, like your attitude, says a lot about whether you're serious about proving yourself, or just think you're entitled to the job because you're you. Your clothing should be clean, pressed, and modest. As they say in middle school, no visible boxers, bellies, or boobs.

#### 3. Coming to the interview with no knowledge of the company (59%)

There's no excuse for not researching an organization that's considering hiring you. They have a web site; use it to learn what they do, who they are, what they specialize in. Google the executives' names (after all, they'll be Googling you; see #8, below).

#### 4. Not turning off cell phones or electronic devices (57%)

Frankly, I'm surprised this isn't No. 1. If you accidentally leave your phone on and it rings during the interview, don't get flustered and start babbling, "OMG, I can't believe I did that!" Offer a brief, sincere apology, turn off the phone (without checking who it is), then carry on professionally as if nothing happened.

#### 5. Not asking good questions during the interview (50%)

If you don't ask anything, you must not be interested. That's what the hiring manager will assume. This is a place where you supposedly want to spend most of your waking hours for the next couple years or more. You must want to know something. Besides, there are certain questions you should always ask.

6. Asking what the pay is before the company considered them for the job (39%)

Mentioning salary in a first interview is like asking your crush what s/he plans to spend on you during your relationship – before you've even agreed on a second date. You have to flirt and make sure they're attracted to you before you ask about a financial commitment. (No, not literally! That'd be a whole other dumbass move.)

7. Spamming employers with the same resume and/or cover letter (23%)

This guy John really, really wants to work for Company A, so he applies for every job opening Company A posts, whether he's qualified or not. Annoyed by John's never-ending resume spam, Company A's recruiters unofficially blacklist him (although if asked, they'll deny it). Don't be like John. Tailor your resume for the one or two jobs at your target company that align with your skills.

8. Failure to remove unprofessional photos/content from social networking pages, Web pages, blogs, etc. (20%)

Dude, you will be Googled. Employers today use every means at their disposal to uncover red flags that might foretell a bad hire. So, hide all Internet evidence of your past (and present) indiscretions.

The transition from college to the real world is tough, and our mistakes are good teachers. Committing one of these eight blunders doesn't mean you're doomed, nor does avoiding them guarantee you'll get the job. But generally speaking, it's fair to say less dumbass leads to more job offers.