

Retro-Networking™

5 Ways Retro-Networking™ Can Help You Make a Good First Impression

By Vicky Oliver

Social networking is a great way to meet new colleagues, clients, and customers. But there's another way: retro-networking™. Retro-networking is all about finding new and interesting ways to forge professional connections with people face-to-face — people who can further your career or business. And because retro-networking doesn't get as much buzz as social networking does, it's actually surprisingly effective. When you need to make a killer first impression in a job interview, here are five retro-networking techniques that will help.

Most hiring managers make up their minds about a candidate in less than a minute. It's scary, but true. That snapshot impression you make really matters, and once you make it, it's likely to stick. Here are 5 ways to make a good first impression:

- 1. Good strong eye contact.** If you don't know what color your interviewers eyes are after you've met her in person, you haven't maintained enough eye contact. Look at her, but don't stare her down. That's considered rude.
- 2. A gratitude attitude.** Everyone hates being interviewed, that's only natural. But if you can rise above that initial awkward feeling and convey heartfelt gratitude for even being in the consideration pile, you will connect better with the person you meet.
- 3. A firm handshake.** Don't crunch the person's hand too hard, but don't be too limp with your shake either. Your handshake should convey that you're happy to be meeting in person.
- 4. A small (very small) reservoir of small talk.** You may have to use it. If so, it really helps if you've picked up a newspaper recently and can chat about something current that's not business related. Other possible topics: something interesting that you did recently, like a cultural event or sports event you attended.

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5. Being present. Half of life is showing up. The other half is being there, in the present, and not distracted. With today's dependence on mobile devices, this can be harder than you imagine. Stay focused. Leave the iPad behind and even your cell. While you are being interviewed, your attention **MUST** stay on the interviewer.

Vicky Oliver is the author of five best-selling career development books:
301 Smart Answers To Tough Interview Questions; The Millionaire's Handbook;
301 Smart Answers To Tough Business Etiquette Questions; Power Sales Words;
and Bad Bosses, Crazy Coworkers & Other Office Idiots.

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