



# OPINION

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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## How to ace an interview

Looking for a job can be an excruciating experience. Our happiness, self-esteem, family relationships are often so closely tied to having a job, that being unemployed can cause severe depression, helplessness, and anxiety.

Fortunately, research has shown the job interview itself can influence the hiring process even more than one's background and experience.

There are several things one can do to improve the chances of getting the job. Some have to do with style and some have to do with content.

In terms of style, it is important, first, to look at the interviewer much of the time, not down at the desk or over his shoulder. Looking a person in the eye conveys confidence. Second, it is important to be lively, not emotionally flat — vary the pacing, loudness, and emotional tone of your voice — as it displays interest, as well as being at ease in difficult interpersonal situations.

Third, it is helpful to speak fluently; eliminate "er", "uh", "well", and the like, because it suggests you might be unsure of yourself, easily swayed and dominated by others.

Finally, it is essential to smile. Smiling is so important because it tells so much — how comfortable you are socially; how non-threatening you are, even in a very competitive situation; how you might get along with co-workers. Smiling can take the sting out of a conflict, and put others at ease. It exudes self-assuredness and strength and it is attractive to other people.

These components of style are crucial, because the interviewer will assume that the style shown here is the same style that will be shown in the workplace. Therefore, if any elements of style are difficult for an applicant, they must be practiced and rehearsed before the interview.

In terms of content, several questions must be answered. Many of these questions will not, however, be asked directly by the interviewer, so the applicant must know what the real questions are, and initiate topics of conversation that will answer them.



### PSYCHOLOGY IN THE '90s

with DR. ARNOLD RINCOVER

The "real" questions one is evaluated on are: is this person enthusiastic about the job, competent to do the job, eager to learn, able to get along with others, able to work independently, ambitious, with a good track record in previous jobs.

Interviewers are not likely to ask, "Are you enthusiastic" or "Do you get along well with others", but they are going to evaluate the applicant on it. Knowing this, it is wise to bring up experiences that insure a positive answer. "I really enjoyed that job at the GM plant because I was able to help others as well as do my own job."

These statements show enthusiasm for the job as well as other positive characteristics. Such statements should be planned to cover each of the areas (above) that an applicant will be evaluated on.

As well as covering the questions that may not be asked, there are other content related skills that help. First, make positive statements about past experiences — facts about one's previous responsibilities; enjoyment of past jobs, challenges, or supervisory duties; education and training; special skills; indications of reliability and conscientiousness ("I only missed 1 day of work in the last 2 years").

It is also important to ask questions, as it shows that you are interested in the job, and it helps you to find out if the job is appropriate and appealing to you.

These skills do not of course insure you will get any job you want. They do, however, increase the chances of success on virtually any job interview. Moreover, several U.S. studies have shown that such skills can be trained, and most people who receive such training do subsequently get a job.



## I've got a plan for you

I sometimes wonder how close to reality the show *Yes Prime Minister* is in depicting our politicians and civil servants.

Dufferin Aggregates' bid for a temporary asphalt plant in Milton is a case in point. Our mayor says "Let's do business for a change." Well, good for you Mr. Mayor, and while you're at it tell the municipal planners if they don't know how to plan to make it happen then you will make plans to find someone who can.

The technologies and rules of the '90s allow for clean efficient plants while our governments operate as if we are still in the '50s. This job would contribute about \$30,000 to the town coffers and create 35 jobs for the summer.

If it takes six years to change standing policies then how is this town supposed to attract new business?

Now if we had a business development planner, here's the plan I'd submit at no charge.

As a little background, many of our newest subdivisions (10 to 14 years old) had the same lousy contractor pave the driveways. He did such a poor job the Town made him redo all of its portion of the driveways. So many of us had our driveways cut in half, with the Town's part now looking good and the homeowner's a

### VIEW POINT

with PATRICK KELLY



mess. So here's the deal. Let Dufferin put in their asphalt plant with the proviso that asphalt be available to Miltonians at cost plus 10 per cent. Dufferin would write decent specifications for driveways and arrange for contractors to bid on jobs of 50 or more driveways at the best possible price.

Contractors would be required to have at least 25 per cent of their employees be Milton students, no licence fees or taxes would be required from the Town.

Will it work? The job may be too small for Dufferin but if the quarry, the contractors and the students make money — and we get our driveways paved at a reasonable price — where's the loser? All I see are happy people and that's the way it should work.

Now for something that doesn't work. How many jobs have planners or administrators created for the public

The Q-Stop billboard hall wants a liquor licence but the planners say it contravenes existing zoning. Was that one of the Ten Commandments? Were they up there with Moses? The bureaucrats have even eliminated some of the Ten Commandments.

"Honour thy father and mother" — Now if you don't like them you can get student welfare or a divorce.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery" — Well it's okay if you use a condom.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour" — Shelley Martel got off and a good lawyer can do anything.

Do you think Moses and Peter were God's administrators?

The Dunns, owners of the Q-Stop, have worked hard for their business and have been more responsible toward errant kids than many parents. It's the neighbours that matter, not the bylaws. Give them a try for six months and if it doesn't work at least you can say you tried.

The Lord given and the Lord taketh away — not the planning department.

This column has a lot of religious stuff in it. Maybe because it's Christmas. Well they are planning to take Christ out of Christmas. Merry Xmas!

## Special gifts from a pet past remembered

Stepping back through the looking-glass again, we join Tequila, the Pomeranian, on her fiendish quest.

She always seemed to know when the blacksmith was coming. Perhaps her morning romp with Dallas, the resident German Shepherd, had led her down by the barn where the horses were stomping and snorting in frustration at being kept indoors. Who knows?

Whatever her reasoning, she could always sense his arrival hours beforehand. Pressed against the cold window of the farmhouse kitchen, she would watch, tightly-curled tail twitching with anticipation, waiting for the old truck to pull into the yard.

At the first sight of the truck, she would burst into a frenzy of barking so intense, she would knock herself right off the wide window ledge. Squeaking and puffing with annoyance, she'd leap back up, and bark herself off the ledge again.

The family's united cries of "Shut up!" had little or no effect upon her outbursts, and I usually ended up hoisting her under my arm and removing her from the scene. This was cause for extreme indignance, and she would wriggle vigorously with great tenacity in the hope that I would get fed up and set her down.



### PETS AND YOU

with ANNE NORMAN

We could never figure out how she engineered her escape and got down to the barn unnoticed by anyone. Farmhouse doors are always open, it seems, and that little dog was capable of great nimbleness and speed.

While Dallas waited patiently, watching Konrad trim the hooves of the first horse, Tequila would dart, lightning fast, under his hand to grab a slice of hoof before it hit the ground.

Dogs of all shapes and sizes love this rather revolting piece of indigestible protein, and will chew it up (often coughing it up later) with great relish.

Once in possession, the furball from hell would speedily disappear. My mother, sister and I would heave a collective sigh of relief and direct our full attention to the shoeing

process. Ten horses, some of them highly temperamental, had to be cajoled, jollied and wheedled into standing still while Konnie trimmed, burned and nailed shoes to their feet. It was enough to keep us all occupied for a considerable portion of the day, and we didn't need any extra distractions.

On one particular occasion, I didn't get up to my bedroom till quite late in the evening and the furnace was blasting glorious warmth into every room. I smiled happily as I trudged upstairs. Warm and cosy, my room awaited me.

At the doorway, I stopped, nose crinkled. That pungent odour, so wonderful in the barn, had no place indoors; yet, strangely, here it was, emanating strongly from my room.

I stepped closer. Not just from my room — from my bed, to be precise. Investigating further, I discovered the remains of a chewed-up hoof slice at the foot of the bed. The smell, however, seemed to persist after I'd cleaned this up and returned.

Puzzled, I changed and prepared to go to sleep. As I moved my pillow, I discovered the source of the odour. A small, round nugget of dung, commonly called a horse ball, had been lovingly tucked beneath my pillow. Tequila, needless to say, was nowhere in sight.