NOVEMBER 2017

NEELEY MAKING NEWS

FAST COMPANY

November 8, 2017

These 5 Unconscious Actions Impact First Impressions at Interviews – *by Stephanie Vozza*

You studied the company's history, practiced your answers to the most common interview questions, and have planned the perfect outfit. You're ready to land the job, but a seemingly inconsequential detail could trip you up. It takes a few seconds for an interviewer to form a first impression of you, and something you do or wear could trigger unconscious first impression bias.

Avoid a problem by being aware of the common pitfalls, according to research gathered by EBI, an employment background-check firm. Here are five ways to prepare for your next interview that have nothing to do with what's on your resume.

1. Pay Attention to Pre-Interview Conversation

How's your day going? Did you run into traffic getting here? **Isn't this weather crazy? The questions people ask at the beginning of interviews can lead to unconscious bias, says Brad Harris, assistant professor of management at Neeley School of Business at Texas Christian University.** This brief conversation typically revolves around non-job-related topics and can build rapport, but be careful of this small talk.

In a study published in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Harris and fellow researchers found that what you say during these early moments can and will be used against you.

"Even the smallest pre-interview interaction provides interviewers with meaningful insights into a candidate's job prospects," he says, adding that a misstep can be overcome during the interview. "The effect of first impressions is strongest on the first few formal interview questions, but fades over the course of the interview."

To nail this part of your interview, mirror the person you're talking to, suggests industrial psychologist Jill Strange, vice president of science applications for the software firm Infor. "Adapt their mannerisms or behaviors, such as leaning in, hand gestures, or smiling," she says. "Organizations shouldn't make hiring decisions based on this conversation alone, but mirroring can help put you on the same level."

2. Handshakes Do Matter

A firm handshake while looking the interviewer in the eye, especially for women, leads to a higher likelihood of getting the job,

3. Suits Still Work

With business attire getting more casual, you might be tempted to skip the suit, but research published in the *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management* finds that clothes have a big influence on first impressions.

4. Pay Attention to Your Shoes

If you want a glimpse into someone's personality, look down. People can tell–or assume–a lot about you from the shoes you wear,

5. Wear a Watch

If you're interviewing for a job where being mindful of details is important, consider pulling out that timepiece.

Star-Telegram

November 21, 2017
Fort Worth's GE Locomotive Plant Faces an Uncertain Future – *by Gordon Dickson*

When General Electric announced in 2011 it wanted to build a railroad locomotive plant in far north Fort Worth, government and business leaders rolled out the proverbial red carpet — and a plethora of financial incentives — to lure about 700 jobs to the region.

But last week, all that optimism was tamped down a bit after Boston-based GE's chief executive officer, John Flannery, confirmed rumors that the company would sell or spin off its locomotive division, GE Transportation, as part of a broader plan to rid itself of $20 billion in assets.
The locomotive business includes the relatively new Fort Worth plant that opened in 2013 near Texas Motor Speedway as well as the company's 125-year-old plant in Erie, Pa.

North Texas officials now say they are somewhat concerned the Fort Worth plant could be downsized, or eventually even shut down by whoever its new owner is — although generally, they remain cautiously optimistic that won't happen. Instead, they hope the plant will remain open at roughly its current level.

They say the factory has some of the most modern equipment and efficient manufacturing methods in the world.

Some options for GE include spinning off the Fort Worth plant, known as GE Manufacturing Solutions, into a new company, selling it to one of just a handful of U.S. competitors or perhaps selling it to a foreign manufacturer, observers say.

"I have every hope they will be here for 100 years," said Michael Morris, transportation director for the North Central Texas Council of Governments. His organization, and its subdivision the Regional Transportation Council, agreed in 2012 to contribute about $15 million to GE's construction costs to help build a 3-mile-long test track for locomotives coming off the assembly line.

"That plant is part of a very heavy industry, and it makes locomotives that are low-emission and among the best in the world," Morris said. "It's a very sophisticated facility. They bring in steel plates in one end of the building and they drive a locomotive out the other end."

For GE, the move is necessary as the company seeks to simplify its operations and become more profitable, an official said.

"The company is in the early stages of this process and exploring a multitude of possibilities that may include, among several options, creative approaches used to transition GE's Consumer Finance business into Synchrony Financial or models like the Baker Hughes and GE Oil & Gas merger," GE Transportation spokesman Tim Bader said in an email.

Incentives

Getting GE to build in North Texas took a cooperative effort among state and local government. In addition to the RTC's $15 million contribution, the Texas governor's office kicked in $4.2 million from the Texas Enterprise Fund, which was created in 2003 to lure jobs to the state.

In Fort Worth, city officials approved an 85 percent abatement of city taxes to the property, which was expected to be worth $5.4 million over 10 years.

A $744,845 grant from the Texas Workforce Commission was awarded to cover training costs for new GE hires, who attended courses at North Central Texas College in Gainesville and the Tarrant County College South Campus in Fort Worth.

Not all of those incentives would have to be honored, if the plant failed to meet certain hiring and construction requirements, or failed to keep the plant operating at certain levels through a minimum number of years, according to terms of the various agreements.

Overall, the cost of building the plant — which was fashioned from an existing speculative property — was about $100 million, not including the test track.

By early 2013 the plant near Texas Motor Speedway was up and running, and within about a year it was cranking out world-class, low-emissions railroad locomotives at a rate of nearly one per day for customers such as Fort Worth-based BNSF Railway and Omaha, Neb.-based Union Pacific Railroad.
The facility housed in two enormous but otherwise nondescript buildings near Texas 114 and Farm Road 156 was heralded as a harbinger of a new wave of manufacturing jobs coming to the region.

Costly move

The fate of the Fort Worth plant depends upon who acquires it, said Morgan Swink, a business professor at Texas Christian University who closely follows supply chain management.

"If another U.S. based manufacturer is the buyer, then they will likely seek synergies and consolidation with their existing operations, which might mean that the GE facility could be moved and/or integrated with the buyer's other operations," he said.

"If the buyer is a non-U.S. manufacturer, they may want the GE plant as a foothold/entry to the U.S. market. Finally, if the buyer is private equity or a holding company that is looking to get into the business, then again I think the GE facility is probably going to stay where it is, at least for a few years

"GE has made big investments in this operation and it will be very costly to move."

The Fort Worth plant employed about 700 people at its peak in 2015-16. Earlier this year about 250 employees were laid off and other employees saw their work week reduced to two hours as GE struggled with reduced orders from the major freight railroads.

In addition to building locomotives in Fort Worth, GE makes mining equipment.

November 2017
A Dallas Executive Tries to Replicate Past Success With CrossFirst Bank - By Jeff Bounds

In February 2016, a mutual friend introduced Dallas executive George Jones to Ron Baldwin, who runs Kansas City-based CrossFirst Bank. In an introductory phone call, "[Baldwin's] second or third sentence was, 'Do you have one more in you?'" says Jones, who retired as CEO of the parent of Texas Capital Bank in December 2013.

Jones recalls it took a moment to realize Baldwin was talking about another stint in banking. "'Yeah. Yeah, I probably do,'" Jones said.

Jones is in his early 70s and financially secure from a decorated banking career. But today he goes on sales and fundraising calls as CrossFirst's vice chairman out of its Dallas operation, which has grown to 30 employees since launching last October.

His CrossFirst exemplifies why successful corporate leaders try replicating previous achievements long after additional riches change little about their lives, experts say.

Jones knows first-hand what it takes to make CrossFirst successful. If he needs inspiration, he can look across Mc-Kinney Avenue to see Texas Capital's headquarters.

Need to build something

Though he's got a hill to climb, Jones' job is arguably easier now than it was at Texas Capital. CrossFirst has more than $2.5 billion in assets and is celebrating its 10th year in business. "We had nothing—no assets, no deposits," Jones says of his Texas Capital days. "Now we have employees, systems, and processes, so I can focus on raising money and landing business."

As a founding executive at Texas Capital, Jones helped raise money for a predecessor institution, then ran banking operations during its first 10 years. Jones took the helm of the mothership in spring 2008, when Joseph "Jody" Grant retired as CEO of the publicly traded company. The underlying bank's assets grew from about $4.65 billion in mid-'08 to $11.7 billion when Jones retired in late 2013.

A non-compete solicitation agreement with Texas Capital limited Jones' business ventures two years into his retirement. "I didn't have the passion I was looking for," he says. "In the business I knew, building something from scratch was exciting."

Of the three motivations many psychologists believe combine in various forms to drive human behavior, the desire for achievement is the most common impetus for leaders' actions, according to Dianna McFarland, associate professor of professional practice at Texas Christian University. She notes power and working in groups also drive leaders.

But what separates the motivations of successful leaders from those of everybody else? Aside from ambition, another common factor is a desire for "lifelong learning," according to Harvard researcher John Kotter. "The world of new ideas, technologies, or applications is fun for them," McFarland says. "New challenges could be key motivators to continue pushing boundaries in a field or even for moving to an adjacent field."

'Know thyself'

Though successful leaders have varying styles, they possess traits like intelligence, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and a willingness to learn from experience, says Cooper of UNT. They respect their followers, provide clear structures for subordinates to do their jobs, and help bring positive change by communicating their ideals and encouraging innovation in their organizations and beyond, she adds.

In relationship-oriented fields like banking, successful leaders may also need "emotional intelligence," according to Mary Uhl-Bien, BNSF railway endowed professor of leadership at TCU's Neeley School of Business. Emotional intelligence is the ability to manage emotions in both oneself and others, according to Psychology Today. Emotionally intelligent leaders can build strong relationships by adapting their style to the situation, especially when interpersonal issues are at hand, Uhl-Bien says.

"But as the saying goes, even a stopped clock is right twice a day," adds David Mack, associate dean of the college of business at the University of Texas at Arlington. "The wrong person with the right idea can be successful once or twice."

In reading a biography of the late Houston businessman Howard Hughes, Mack learned that while Hughes made a lot of money, "he also lost millions through bad decisions, ego-driven miscalculations, procrastination, or just poor judgment." Both Mack and Uhl-Bien say what separates people who succeed multiple times may partly be understanding their own strengths and weaknesses. "Leadership is situational," Uhl-Bien says. Leaders "may benefit from understanding situations that 'fit' them and avoiding those that don't."

CNBC

November 14, 2017

TCU Professor: General Electric became 'clunky' under former CEO Jeff Immelt

Management Professor Mary Uhl-Bien was called upon by "Squawk Box" to grade the performance of General Electric CEO John Flannery as the company attempts a massive turnaround plan.

"Squawk Box," CNBC's signature morning program, called on Mary Uhl-Bien, the BNSF Endowed Professor of Leadership at the TCU Neeley School of Business, for insights into the changing of the guard at GE.

"We have to think about what Flannery has inherited. GE lost a third of the value since Immelt took over. They were not on top of the change. This is an organization that got very clunky. Flannery comes from health care. He understands the complexity of health care. He saw the potential. I'm pretty optimistic about where he's going to go with it," Uhl-Bien told anchors Joe Kernen, Becky Quick and Andrew Ross Sorkin.

Uhl-Bien said conglomerates face tough times in today's environment, with high levels of change and unpredictability.

"The argument is that a portfolio will take care or risk, but in this case I think it's actually making it worse," she said. "Flannery understands complexity. He knows they need to get more focused and identify complimentary areas rather than thinking of this as just a portfolio."

Although she predicted that things will get worse before they get better, Uhl-Bien said she is optimistic about Flannery's direction.

"From a leadership perspective, you never waste a good crisis," she said. "Investors are going to be unhappy for a little while. He's got to get the cash flow under control. But if he uses this and really drives the culture change he's talking about, focuses on strategy, gets the idea of digital and really works to expand that strategy, I'm going to go out on a limb here and be bullish on Flannery."

KRLD NewsRadio 1080

November 14, 2017

TCU Accounting Professor Stephen Lusch talks about the tax plan with Mitch Carr