

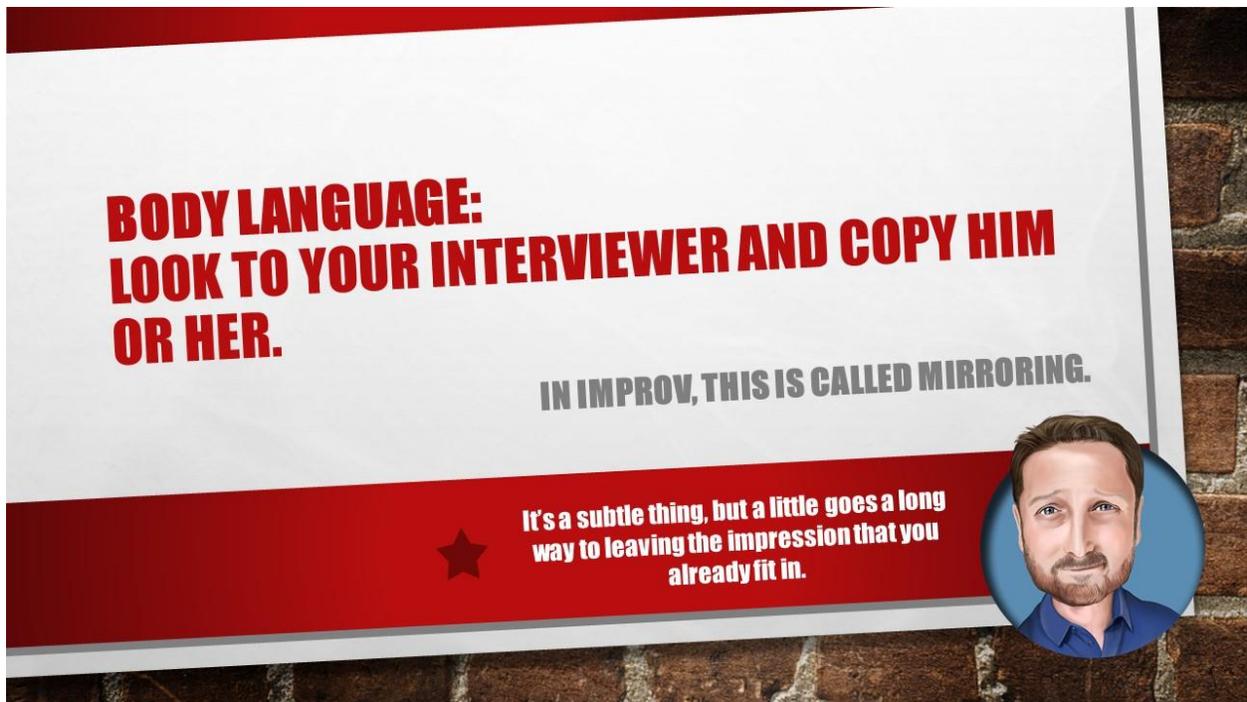


Whether you're going for a clap or a callback, an ovation or an offer, a laugh or a job, these tips will help you tap your full potential. And hey, you might just be better at improv than you think.

You're prepped and ready to totally nail this job interview. You've rehearsed your elevator pitch. You've committed the entire job description to memory as well as the companies background. Heck, you even drove a practice route to the interview location to make sure you knew exactly where to park. You never know what is on the other side of that door and you need to look at this as an adventure, not a test!

The first impression is a lasting impression, and it starts with nonverbal communication. So, how do you find the right middle ground between appearing confident and appearing cocky?

Notes:



Mirroring body language and energy:

Mirroring puts your interviewer at ease and makes her feel like she's connecting with you more. It's simple psychology. We're wired to trust people who behave like us.

Notice the position of your interviewer's body and the pacing of her speech. Is she reclining, sitting up straight, or leaning in? Is he bantering or choosing his words carefully? Does she speak particularly fast or slow?

Let your interviewer's behavior rub off on you. It's a subtle thing, but a little goes a long way to leaving the impression that you already fit in.

Homework:

Coffee shops are also prime for this exercise. Find someone you can mirror their body language and figure out what emotion they are conveying.

By practicing this exercise, you learn to pay more attention to this type of nonverbal communication, which often takes place outside of our awareness.

Notes: _____



Say "Yes, and..."

One of the founding rules of improv is the "Yes, and..." technique. The basic idea is that improvisers should agree to the world of the scene and build onto it.

Example:

Actor A: What a beautiful night I can see all the stars.

Actor B: Yes, and I they really do look shorter in person, I cant believe we are at the Oscars.

"Yes, and..." in an interview reminds a job candidate to go further with their responses. With 'yes' you are supporting the idea that you are an experienced candidate, it's with the 'and' where you get to expand upon your skills.

So, let's say an interviewer asks you if you're comfortable using a CMS. You might reply:

Yes, I'm very comfortable using Drupal and WordPress, and I lead a session at my previous job training staff on best practices in tagging and optimizing content for SEO in content management systems.

HAVING A MANTRA GIVES YOU AN ANCHOR.

WHEN YOU HAVE A STATEMENT THAT IS HOW YOU WANT TO BE REMEMBERED, AND THE IMPRESSION YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE... MAKE IT YOUR MANTRA AND YOU WILL FLAVOR THE CONVERSATION WITH THAT STATEMENT.

★ Think of this Mantra as your Brand!



Improvisors use to create engaging characters is to enter a scene with a mantra. Anything from “I love you,” to “Am I the only sane one here?” to “That’s fascinating!”

This gives you an “anchor”—a starting point for deciding what to say next. Instead of trying to make stuff up out of the blue, you can focus on doing the obvious thing that someone with that saying would do.

For an interview, it helps first to decide what kind of person you want to be, and then use that to create it. Perhaps it’s “I love solving problems with data,” or “Things should look beautiful.” Just make sure it’s something you *really* believe in!

From there, answering questions is much easier—instead of pulling things out of thin air, you’re doing the obvious thing that flows from your mantra.

Now you have an anchor. In the heat of the moment, if the interviewer asks you a question you weren’t expecting, you can always come back to these few words and start your answer there. It will prime your conversation and your confidence.

ASK YOURSELF, "IF THAT, THEN WHAT?"

ACCORDING TO A FORBES SURVEY, ALTHOUGH WE GET 85% OF OUR KNOWLEDGE FROM LISTENING WE ONLY COMPREHEND 25 PERCENT OF WHAT WE HEAR AND ONLY 2% OF PROFESSIONALS HAVE ANY FORMAL TRAINING ON HOW TO LISTEN.



Don't think about your reply think about what they are really saying.



Speaking of mantras, one of the main things improvisers say over and over in their heads is, "If that, then what?" This helps with building off the previous line to create a detailed and interesting world.

Here's an example: One player starts a scene by saying, "I heard the food here is excellent." The other player asks himself, "If that, then what?" If there's buzz about the food being excellent, maybe the restaurant is so hip that George Clooney is at the table next to them.

How does this apply to interviews? It's a recipe for asking excellent questions!

This is for the part where your interviewer tells you about her role, how she does things, how the company works and then lets you ask questions. As you listen to your interviewer, ask yourself, "If that, then what?" By just saying this to yourself, you'll find it easier to ask specific questions that make your interviewer feel like you get it.

For example, suppose your interviewer says, "We never deliver a product unless the whole team is 100% happy with it."

