

## OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES

### INTERVIEWS – BODY LANGUAGE DO'S AND DON'TS

#### Don't:

- Chew gum. Doing so displays unprofessionalism.
- Rub the back of your head or neck. This shows that you are not interested.
- Play with your ears or nose, as this may indicate discomfort or lying.
- Sit with your arms folded across your chest. You will appear unfriendly and disengaged.
- Cross your legs and idly shake one over the other. It's distracting and indicates discomfort.
- Hold items in your lap. You might begin fiddling with them out of nervousness.
- Lean your body towards the door. You will appear ready to make a mad dash for the door.
- Lean or rest your arms on the interviewer's desk if you are in a personal office. This creates less personal space between you and your interviewer and could make them feel uncomfortable.
- Slouch back in your seat. This will make you appear disinterested, unprepared, and/or unprofessional.
- Stare back blankly. This is a look people naturally adopt when they are trying to distance themselves.
- Hold eye contact for an uncomfortable amount of time.
- Go overboard with gestures, as they might be distracting.

#### Do:

- Sit up straight and lean slightly forward in your chair. In addition to projecting interest and engagement in the interaction, aligning your body's position to that of the interviewer's shows admiration and agreement.
- Show your enthusiasm by keeping an interested expression. Nod and make positive gestures in moderation to avoid looking like a bobble head.
- Establish a comfortable amount of personal space between you and the interviewer. Invading personal space (anything more than 20 inches) could make the interviewer feel uncomfortable and take the focus away from your conversation.
- Limit your application of colognes and perfumes. Invading aromas can arouse allergies. Being the candidate that gave the interviewer a headache isn't going to work in your favor.
- If you have more than one person interviewing you at once, make sure you briefly address each person with your gaze (without looking like a tennis spectator) and return your attention to the person who has asked you a question.
- Interruptions can happen. If they do, refrain from staring at your interviewer(s) while they address their immediate business and motion your willingness to leave if they need privacy.
- Stand up and smile if you are on a phone interview. Standing increases your level of alertness and allows you to become more engaged in the conversation.

After a few well-thought-out questions and answers with your interviewer, it's almost over, but don't lose your cool just yet. Make sure your goodbye handshake is just as confident now as it was going in. Keep that going while you walk through the office building, into the elevator and onto the street. Once safely in your car, a cab or some other measurable, safe distance from the scene of your interview, it's safe to let go. You may have aced it, but the last thing you want is some elaborate end-zone dance routine killing all your hard work at the last moment.