

Police Oral Board - How To Win Over Board Members In The First 5 Minutes

Your success or failure in the police oral board interview depends on your ability to favorably impress the interviewers in the first 5 minutes of the interview. This initial contact is the most important part of the interview.

The impression you make in this brief time can determine whether you will get the job. Interviewers have a limited amount of time to assess each candidate. Their assessment begins the moment you walk into the room and greet them. Decisions are already being made about you as a person and potential employee in these first few seconds of the interview. Likes and dislikes have already begun to form about you before you even sit down.

How you handle these few valuable minutes is the most important effort you will make in your entire interview. All the years of energy and preparation devoted to fulfilling your career dreams can come down to these 5 fleeting minutes.

There are effective techniques and strategies you can learn to master that ensure you will make a positive impression in those vital first 5 minutes.

1. First impressions are difficult to reverse -- the reason first impressions are so important is that they can be very difficult to reverse.
2. One WRONG move and you are in trouble -- any deviation from the expected norm of proper behavior -- not looking someone in the eyes, a nervous tic, or an inappropriate comment can leave a negative impression with the interviewer that will be tough to overcome.

If an interviewer likes you, you will be given the benefit of the doubt -- a second chance.

If an interviewer likes you, they will relax. If you like an interviewer, you will relax. By building rapport and gaining a feeling of mutual trust, you will come out a winner in any interview. You will gain the benefit of the doubt on tough questions and your attributes will be more easily accepted, often without question.

It's not what you say, but how you say it.

Human nature gives everyone the tendency to judge people, with considerable certainty, during the first few moments of communication. A striking example of this is how a person's tone of voice can affect your perception of them.

For Example:

A person who speaks too softly is judged as shy and unsure of himself or herself.

A person who speaks loudly is judged as aggressive and over bearing.

A person who speaks in a moderate tone of voice is judged as moderate and in control.

Unless proven otherwise, the initial impression made by someone's tone of voice can mark that person's personality in the mind of the interviewer.

The person who speaks too loudly or too softly may come across as being too aggressive or being unsure of themselves and will lose points on their interview score. They are perceived as being less socially adept than a person who speaks moderately.

Remember: the person who speaks too loudly or softly may in fact not be bold or shy, but that impression is given.

Does this mean that to make a good first impression you should alter your persona to fit a socially expected image? For success at an oral interview and to get the job of your dreams the answer is: YES.

If you feel there are elements of your persona that could be perceived as socially unacceptable for the purpose of succeeding in your career goals -- work on it! Make yourself socially acceptable.

Individualism and idealism are highly thought of qualities. HOWEVER, let's be realistic. If you walk into the interview room with your hair a little too long and unshaven, because you want to be yourself and be accepted for your work related skills and qualities only, you will be disappointed.

If you want to win, you must play the game.

To get the job, you must present the image the employer wants to see.

In reality, the most qualified person does not always get the job. The person who plays the game, and plays it well, will get the job. Employers, especially law enforcement employers, want to hire people that are willing to conform to the type of employee they need, not a non-conformist. The person who is willing to change, to adapt, will win the job.

If the interviewer sees a candidate that is a little off center, they perceive him or her as being unwilling or unable to conform to accepted social behavior, and not adaptable enough to be part of their organization.

Be honest but don't confess your deep dark secrets.

Does playing the game mean you have to be dishonest during the interview process? NO! It means you have to be smart and careful. You don't have to give up your individualism or be dishonest.

In the interview setting you should honestly portray your BEST self.

Never lie. Avoid the negative and present the positive. It is important to be honest and accurate, but there is an appropriate level of self-disclosure in an interview setting. Temper honesty with common sense and if asked about your shortcomings, use common sense and don't reveal your deepest darkest secrets.

What is your greatest weakness?

This is one of the most frequently asked oral board questions, and one of the most difficult to answer. Don't try to disguise a strength as a weakness, which some publications on the subject of interviewing suggest. If you answer with, 'I'm a perfectionist' or 'I'm too patient', the interviewers will see right through it. They will think either you're not being truthful or you're full of yourself.

When asked this difficult question, it is best to choose a genuine weakness, which will not automatically disqualify you.

Don't choose trivial weaknesses such as; I snore, or I crack my knuckles and don't reveal deep dark secrets. Find a weakness that shows you are ordinary, that your weakness doesn't seriously affect your behavior or decision-making capabilities.

Examples of weakness interviewers will forgive are: impatience with other people who are not doing their job, fear of public speaking, or poor handwriting, etc. You would indicate that you are aware of your weakness and have taken specific actions to improve your strength in this area.

Be prepared to discuss personal and technical weaknesses. A personal weakness might be a tendency to be late for appointments. A technical weakness might be a lack of computer knowledge or skills.

You have 5 minutes to showcase your attributes, character, social skills, and self-confidence to strangers who represent the doorway to your dream career as a police officer. If you approach this moment in your life with disciplined judgment, cop common sense, and a police officer mindset, you will have a successful interview.

About the Author

Discover the three reasons why 70% of all police applicants fail their exam...and get your free no obligation report: "How To Pass The Police Polygraph." Yours free for visiting [Police Exam Strategies](#).

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