

Also tell me what I already know!

Do you also assume that the recruiters in the job interview have studied and understood your application documents? Then you are in good company; most applicants expect this. Nonetheless, I strongly advise against this assumption!

Peter Näf

It took me years to recognise the following communication trap: I was working with a client in out-placement. We did a personal and professional assessment, prepared his application documents, practised storytelling and finally simulated a job interview. In the course of this interview, he told me about a certain professional experience. Suddenly, I was missing a piece of information that I knew I had because he had told me about it before.

Don't lose your conversation partners!

Since my client knew this too, he simply omitted the information. So, what happened with me? I searched my memory for the missing link in the chain in order to mentally complete his description. During this period, I was absent from the conversation - my conversation partner had lost me.

The same thing happens when applicants in a job interview assume that the recruiters have studied and internalised their application documents. If they then communicate incompletely, the interviewers switch back and forth between the interview and their own memories from studying the application documents in order to supplement what the other person has said. This is tedious - if they make the effort at all. Valuable

information is lost in the interview due to the mental absence of the interviewer.

Good communication is always prepared

An analogy: How does a good film work? If you understand it without thinking about it, then the director has done her homework. Good storytelling in film and interpersonal communication picks up the addressees and guides them into my world without them noticing. In doing so, it always provides exactly the information that is needed for a current understanding. A little reminder here, a repetition there, a short explanation in between - and your conversation partners listen to you as relaxed as if they were sitting in a cinema seat.

I work with communication specialists from time to time. I am always impressed that they leave nothing to coincidence when it comes to communication and stick to the principle: good communication is prepared communication! When we communicate in writing, we do it automatically. When we proofread, we notice the small communicative gaps. We realise when a reference is not correct or it is unclear who is being spoken about and we correct accordingly. We also have to do this extra work in oral communication when something important is at stake.

Or to paraphrase a statement about written communication by Wolf Schneider (book: *Deutsch für Kenner*): Someone always has to struggle, either the speaker or the listener. As an applicant, I advise you to take on the plague!

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