

## How do you want to be remembered?

How your interviewers perceive you in the job interview and how they remember you depends on your communication. And the order in which you offer information is crucial.

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A common question at the beginning of the interview is something like this: «Please introduce yourself. » The aim of this question is to get a brief overview of the applicant's professional career to date. Ideally, the question is answered when a golden thread in the career becomes visible that leads directly to the new job in question.

A few years ago, I asked exactly this question during a job interview training to a Head of Communications of a well-known industrial company. She led a team of 20 specialists for internal and external communication.

### Inner images matter

She framed her answer chronologically by recounting her professional career from the past to the present. Her first sentence was: «When I started at the company twenty years ago as assistant to the CEO... ». Even today, years later, I have the image in my mind that I created back then: A young assistant with a pad and pencil sitting opposite the CEO and taking notes. Throughout the rest of the conversation, I fought this image internally and kept telling myself, «She's responsible for all communications and manages 20 employees. »

Inner images are like first impressions: You almost can't get rid of them. Information at the beginning of a description sticks most strongly. In addition, they set a reference point to which the interpretation of subsequent information is aligned. Therefore, be sure to tell the story in reverse chronological order. In that example, it looked like this: «I work for the company XYZ as Head of Communications and manage 20 employees in internal and external communications.... »

### Put a punch line at the end

I had a similar experience recently with a sales director of a large industrial company with a remarkable career. He managed a demanding division with many employees. He had started as a car mechanic. With great professional commitment, combined with ongoing further training, he developed rapidly. You can guess what kind of image comes to my mind when I think of him: a jacked-up sports car, in front of it my customer in an oil-smeared blue overall. We then changed the self-presentation and he recounted his career in reverse chronological order in the next job interview. His interview partners had to laugh heartily when he concluded the description of his impressive career with the surprising sentence: «And I started as a car mechanic. »

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