



## **DON'T EAT SPAGHETTI ON YOUR FIRST DATE!**

An interview is a lot like a first date. This is a somewhat funny, somewhat serious comparison between dating and interviewing. Now this is not to say that you should interview your date. You may not get too far with that approach. But, let's think of the interview a little like how you should handle yourself just as you would for your date. We have a short flyer that we often send to our candidates that are about to interview called First Impressions Count. You can ask about it if you are about to interview and we haven't yet sent one yet. The title tends to say it all. First Impressions are what count. Let's examine some of the key areas.

Dress for Success – These days, the attire could be about anything from casual to a business suit. The important thing is to know where you are going and what the expected attire is before you get there. Going to take your date to dinner? Well then, call ahead and see what the attire is expected to be.

How about your personal appearance? Now I'm not saying that you need to spend a bunch of time doing your hair fancy, particularly for you ladies, but how about making sure you have a recent trim or haircut? I can imagine all kinds of things that might just make the interviewer, or your date cringe. How about the guy with a "uni-brow", partially shaven, or nose hairs! Okay, sorry for that image. If you are really trying to impress your date, you'll likely get cleaned up and look quite presentable. So, why not for the interview? Just be careful not to go overboard on the cologne or perfume (his/hers).

If you eat before the interview, how about taking a quick look in the mirror? It's a bit embarrassing to have sesame seeds, a broccoli floret, or something green in your teeth. And, what about that spaghetti? How many times have you eaten spaghetti and not gotten a sauce splatter on your shirt or blouse (his/hers). A breath mint would be good, in both cases. Avoid the garlic and you won't have to use more than one. Avoid the carbonation. You don't want to have the urge to belch in the middle of the date/interview.

Sell yourself but don't dominate the conversation. This can go for both the interview and the date. Listen in intently. Nothing spoils the atmosphere more than a disengaged attention. Listen actively. Be ready to exchange answers to lots of questions. Being prepared can really help. These days, it's not that hard to do a little research on your date/interviewer. Ask around a little bit. What are they like? What do they like? What don't they like? What do they like to do in their spare time? Ask good questions on

your own. See the comparisons? Another comparison, an attorney in a trial generally will never ask a question that they don't already know the answer to.

Discussing compensation is a serious "no-no" on the first date. There's no way to win this one. You'll either come across as greedy, or someone without a lot of value. Stay away from it.

Don't forget to close. Do you want another date? Ask now vs. later. You don't have to be specific about time and place yet. It's just a case of measuring the response.

Always follow up. If you had just gone on a great date, wouldn't you send something expressing what you feel? You bet you would. Why? You really want to get the message across of what you thought and what you want the next steps to be. Now you may not send a thank you to your date, but you sure should after your interview. There's nothing like something from you personally to express thanks for their time and attention to what you are really after, that great job. Now you may not be committing for richer or poorer, but you do want to express commitment that you can really deliver on the objectives of the job. Do you want it? Then go get it.

