Thank you for listening to this version of Career Cast. Pod casts that come to you from the Sam M. Walton College of Business Career Center. My name is Renee Clay. My podcasting partner is Heather Sprandel. Today we are going to talk to you about 8 factors that can cost you the interview or that perfect job.

The first factor that can cost you an interview or job is unprofessional appearance. Showing up to an interview not dressed for success. There are two types of ways that you can dress for an interview, but you should ask the employer in advance of the interview what the attire is and is expected of you the day of the interview. You can dress in either business casual if the interviewer says it’s okay. Business casual for men includes maybe a button down shirt, with khakis pants and a belt that matches the shoes that you’re wearing. Tennis shoes are not appropriate for business casual. Make sure all clothes are clean, neat and pressed for that day, are subtle in color and match appropriately. That’s business casual for men. Business casual for women includes slacks or knee length, or lower, skirt, as well as a blouse or a sweater and maybe a jacket that matches. Everything should be very clean and neat and pressed. And also, subtle colors as well. No heavy prints. No wording. Think of something that you would be appropriate in wearing to a very conservative meeting. Professional dress for men includes suit and tie, definitely, and polished shoes. For women, suits can include either a skirt that is kneelength or lower, or slacks as well. Traditionally, professional dress for both men and women, the colors are black, navy, dark brown, or grey.

The second factor that can cost you an interview or job is being unprepared for the interview. You need to prepare, plan, and practice prior to the interview. In today's tough job market, you must do everything you can to give yourself an edge, so preparation is the key. Research the company that you will be interviewing with prior to the interview. There’s no reason why you shouldn’t visit their website, read about their news, their mission, their vision, their history. Know about their products that they’re marketing, consumer products. Know who their business clients are and who their customers are. Read about them and understand who you’re interviewing with.

The third factor that can cost you the interview or job: not being able to communicate clearly and effectively. This is important during the interview and on the job. Being nervous can really mess up your communication skills, so being well prepared and practicing what you're going to say are always your best bet.

The fourth factor that can cost you the interview is being too aggressive, arrogant, or acting in a superior way during the interview. No one wants to hire or work with people who think they're better than everyone else. Be careful with your attitude, even if you think you're surrounded by incompetent fools. Being confident is good. Being arrogant is bad.

Fifth: Making excuses for failings. Your instructors never bought "The dog ate my homework!" and your boss isn't going to buy "The finance department gave me the wrong figures!" In the grown-up world, you have to take responsibility for what you are responsible for! You'll never earn respect by blaming others when things go wrong. Take responsibility for your actions and for your work.
Next: Saying unfavorable things about previous employers. Even if you left a job because the boss was an egomaniac who took credit for all of your hard work, verbally abused you in front of others, and poisoned the plant on your desk, don't say anything bad about him/her during an interview. When asked "Why did you leave your last job?" say something like "My manager and I both agreed that my advancement opportunities were limited there and obtaining another position was the best option for me and my career goals." Be mindful of what you say about previous jobs and previous employers in interviews.

Next: Having a poor or limp handshake. Why do people think you'll be a lousy employee if you have a lousy handshake? That's not really logical, is it? You know what? Doesn't matter. It just turns people off and gives them a bad first impression of you. So make your handshake firm and confident, but not bone-crushing. It's not a competition to see who winces first or to who see who ends up in the emergency room.

Lastly: Bad body language. Be mindful during in an interview of your sitting posture. Be mindful of your hands and what you’re doing with them. Most importantly make eye contact with the interviewer or interviewers. It’s very, very important. It shows that you are interested, you’re interested in the interview, you’re interested in the job, you’re interested in what the company has to offer you.

Dr. Phil Gardner, principle investigator and director of the Collegiate Employment Research Institute, does a national survey yearly. According to this year’s survey the national labor market this year is poised to be good to very good according to the ratings provided by the employers who answered his survey: 800 plus companies of various sizes. The interview will be critical to landing that new job. If you don’t want to be unemployed, don't let any of the traits that we just described apply to you!

Tune in for our next pod cast. Thanks for listening to this one. My name is Renee Clay. My pod casting partner is Heather Sprandel. And we’re coming to you from the Sam M. Walton College of Business, at the University of Arkansas, Career Center.