

## **Making Scents of the Job Hunt**

Looking for a job? You're not the only one. In a sea of faces in the tempestuous economy, skilled, talented workers are struggling to keep their heads above the wake. They cling to the sinking ships of their careers and hope for the best, but praying the seas will calm before you drown won't always work. The key to finding a job is making yourself stand out in the marketplace.

But how? You've polished your résumé, pressed your interview clothes, perfected your handshake and read every article you can find about landing your dream job. You've gone as far as to buy a red shirt to help assert your confidence and power. Yet, there is one important sense that most interview tips fail to mention—smell.

Of course, you don't show up to an interview smelling of B.O. or something equally offensive, and you may have even splashed on your favorite cologne. But did you really consider your scent before stepping into the office?

While a spritz of perfume may seem like a great idea before a big date, reconsider before a big interview. Polls indicate that as much as a third of individuals note that they dislike or are bothered by fragrances, and some studies from the American Lung Association show that over 70% of asthma attacks are caused by perfumes. Additionally, many people are not just bothered by these aromas, but actually have allergic reactions to them. So your eau de toilette, may be flushing your chances of being hired right down the ole toilet.

Rarely, though, is it the scent causing the offense. Rather it's chemicals and other compounds floating around in your atomizer. As a result, it may be better to choose a natural or botanical water-based perfume when making a great first impression is absolutely imperative. Though natural perfumes don't completely eliminate the risk of adverse reactions, they do reduce the likelihood.

Unfortunately finding your perfect natural perfume isn't as easy as going to the department store. A quick search online produces many natural perfumes options that use water, oil or grain alcohol base rather than a chemical fixative and are scented with natural botanical essences and essential oils. But if you're going to that much trouble, shouldn't the scent be perfect? It's not enough to avoid repelling future employers; you want to really draw them in. To do that, you need to pay careful attention to every note you put on your skin.

So how do you paint the picture of a self-assured, talented and alert worker using only your scent? It's as easy as making your own blend. Like all good perfumes, an essential oil mixture should contain at least one top, one middle and one base note, though some essential oils function as more than one note.

Now to decide which oils to use.

Going on an interview can make anyone sweat, but choosing the right oil can not only calm your nerves, but can also put others—like your interviewer—at ease. Some popular calming essential oils include lavender (top), basil (top), frankincense (base), sandalwood (base), clary sage (middle), juniper berry (middle), myrrh (base), patchouli (base), tangerine (top), ylang ylang (middle) and vetivert (base). Chamomile (middle) is also known for its calming properties, though some people with ragweed allergies are bothered by it, so use with caution.

Exuding confidence at an interview is also of the utmost importance. So you might want to try a confidence-promoting essential oil blend that uses bay laurel (top), bergamot (top), jasmine (middle), grapefruit (top), orange (top) or rosemary (middle).

If you're suffering from a bit of job-hunt burnout, you might want to tickle your olfactory nerves with a stimulating scent. Try adding a little peppermint (top), spearmint (top), ginger (base), tea tree (middle), black pepper (middle), lime (top) or rosemary (middle) oil to your blend.

Though these are by no means all of the oils that can be useful in creating the right mental environment, they do create a good starting place. To get a preview of how oils will smell together, simply remove the caps, hold all of the oil bottles about an inch below your nose, and inhale. After mixing and mellowing, the scent won't be quite the same, but this is an easy way to get an idea if you like the combination.

After you've picked your notes, place a couple drops of each oil in a clean, dark colored bottle and seal it up. After a few hours, remove the lid and take a whiff. Then recap and wait about 36-48 hours; your scent should be pretty true to smell by then. Add a drop or two more of your oils, as needed to achieve an aroma that puts you in the right mindset for your next interview.

If the thought of choosing oil blends frays your nerves more than an impromptu interview, no fear. Here are a couple pre-tested blends that will help you stay cool under pressure.

**Blend One:**

4 drops lavender

3 drops spearmint

2 drops vetivert

**Blend Two:**

3 drops grapefruit

2 drops ginger

1 drop black pepper

Note: As essential oils can be irritating to bare skin, make sure to add two drops of water, grain alcohol or vegetable glycerin for every drop of essential oil in your blend. Then simply recap, shake and apply to your pulse points before your next interview or big meeting!