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### How hormones can help you land a job

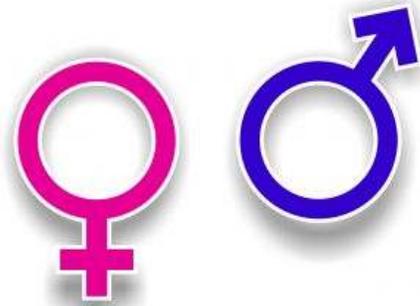


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Everyone knows that what you say can be the difference between getting a job and getting shown the door. And nonverbal communication can also play a huge role in whether or not you are viewed by potential employers as a good candidate for a job. But did you know that even your hormones can help you with your job search?

According to health journalist Gabrielle Lichterman, author of *28 Days: What Your Cycle Reveals about Your Love Life, Moods and Potential*, although you don't actually have control over your hormones and how they may influence your moods, being cognizant of their effects can reduce the chance of making a misstep during a job interview.

"The great thing is, once you know how your hormones and other brain chemicals affect you, you don't have to be a slave to them," says Lichterman, who founded Hormonology, a horoscope based on hormone cycles. "You can be aware of how they affect you and then play up the strengths and compensate for the weaknesses."

In order to compensate for the weaknesses that may be caused by hormones, Lichterman suggests the following tips for women going on job interviews during different points in their menstrual cycle.

**Days 1 through 3.** Lichterman says that these are not the best days to have a job interview because estrogen and testosterone levels are low. As a result, your energy is low during this time and you're not as mentally sharp as you would be during other times of the month.

"Go in knowing that you have to pump up your energy and think a little bit more before you speak," says Lichterman. "You should probably give yourself a little bit more rehearsal time and go over your facts and figures before you leave the house."

**Days 4 through 14.** Lichterman says that this is the best time to schedule a job interview because on these days, estrogen and testosterone levels make you more eloquent, and increase your memory and ability to think on your feet. Also, during this time, you will smile more and have more confidence.

Additionally, on these days you are radiating pheromones—scentless chemicals that we transmit through sweat—which, Lichterman notes, can be helpful if the interviewer is male.

"If you have a male interviewer, these pheromones will actually make him more interested in what you have to say," she says.

**Days 15 to 28.** In the last half of your cycle, your estrogen is declining as your progesterone is rising—which Lichterman says can have a negative effect on your ability to concentrate and express yourself verbally. During these days, she suggests that you spend time really preparing for your job interview and mapping out exactly what you want to say.

#### **Men's hormones and job hunting**

When we talk about hormones, we are usually talking about how they affect women. But male hormones can also influence things like mood and energy levels, so a man should also pay attention to them during his job search. Lichterman suggests that men keep the following in mind during their 24-hour hormone cycle.

**Early morning.** If you have a job interview first thing in the morning, remember that your testosterone level is

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at its peak. During the morning hours, Lichterman suggests that you turn it down a notch.

"Testosterone is highest in the morning and that makes you super energetic, combative, and aggressive," she says. "So you want to rein all that great testosterone energy in just a little bit because you don't want to scare the interviewer or accidentally come off as too aggressive."

**11 a.m. through 2 p.m.** This is the best time to have a job interview because your testosterone—which steadily decreases throughout the day—is at a level where you are more agreeable. Also, your brain is at its sharpest point in the day.

**After 2 p.m.** This is not a great window of the day to have a job interview because your testosterone level is lagging and you will feel fatigued. If you have an afternoon interview, be sure to take a walk or drink some coffee to pump up your energy a bit.

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### How to use your job interviewer's hormones to your advantage

Just as the knowledge of how hormones affect you can give you a leg up on your competition for a job, you can also use your interviewer's hormones to your advantage. Lichterman says that being cognizant of an interviewer's hormone levels can help you better connect with her or him.

If your interviewer is a woman who has not been through menopause, Lichterman suggests the following:

- Determine if she is in the first or last half of her cycle. One clue to figuring this out is how much she is smiling.  
"If she smiles a lot and shows a lot of teeth, chances are it's the first half of her cycle," Lichterman says. "If she's sedate, quiet, and doesn't show any teeth when she smiles or rarely smiles, she's most likely in the second half of her cycle."
- If your job interviewer is in the first half of her cycle, you should raise your energy levels to match hers.  
"If she's in the first half of her cycle and you can tell that, pump up your energy just a notch," Lichterman notes. "She wants to be engaged and she's easily excited by new ideas and fresh viewpoints. She wants to be swept away in something new and exciting, and something that's really going to rev her engines."
- On the other hand, if your interviewer is in the second half of her cycle, you will need to turn down the volume because this is a time when she will not be interested in taking as many risks as she would be earlier in her cycle. If you have ideas that you want to share with her, do it in a way that appears more safe.

If you interview for a job with a man, Lichterman suggests the following:

- First thing in the morning, when a man has his highest level of testosterone in the day, you will want to be energetic in order to match his mood.  
"If you're meeting with a male interviewer in the morning, he's going to be more energetic, aggressive, and combative. Men are more likely to say no in the morning than they are in the afternoon," says Lichterman. "In terms of ideas, you want to come across as solid—someone he can't say no to and someone he can't look for a reason to say no to."
- If you have a midday interview with a man, keep in mind that this is the best time of day to introduce new ideas to him because he will be much more agreeable.
- After 2 p.m., a male interviewer is feeling the effects of his declining testosterone, so keep in mind that he is not as sharp as he was earlier in the day.  
"The most important thing in the afternoon interviews with men is to make it simple," says Lichterman. "Don't give him any complex ideas and certainly do not go on and on with one idea—don't talk in circles, keep it simple."

*This article originally appeared on my [Workplace Communication Examiner](#) page on August 18, 2009.*

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