‘Chemistry’ is what gets the job

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—Barbara Provus
principal, executive search firm

"That all-important chemistry," is the way this critical factor is described in NetWords, the quarterly publication of Exec-U-Net, a national career management networking organization based in Norwalk, Conn.

The newsletter asked Barbara Provus, principal at Shepherd, Bueschel & Provus Inc., executive search firm, what makes — or doesn't make — the right chemistry.

"I look for candidates who have a twinkle in their eye, who can laugh at themselves, appear relaxed and unthreatened, and who are not afraid to disclose the odd personal detail about their lives or to admit to failing occasionally on the path to maturity," Provus said.

But she's "always turned off by a weak handshake and by people who do not make eye contact, allow their eyes to wander or who look at their watches."

Provus also notes that much of the chemistry is created in the first five minutes — so start mixing your "chemical" brew the moment you enter the interview room.