



Prepare For a Phone Interview

Successful Phone Interview - TIPS

Companies frequently use phone interviews early in their interviewing process as an economical and timely method of screening candidates for a job opening. These phone conversations are, in most cases, your first contact with a company. Do not underestimate their importance – doing so may jeopardize your chances of taking the next step in the process. Treat a phone interview as you would an in-person interview.

Here are a few useful hints to help you through the process:

- ⇒ **If you have given your home line as your point of contact, be sure to inform others in your home that potential employers will be calling.** Ask them to answer the phone in a professional manner and to pass along important messages. Reinforce how important their cooperation is to your search success.
- ⇒ **Make sure your voice mail message is courteous, professional, and includes your name.**
- ⇒ **Work with your recruiter to set up a specific time for the call.** This will allow you to be fully prepared and to avoid situations where you are unable to conduct an effective interview.
- ⇒ **Use a land line instead of a cell phone.** Test your phone to ensure it is in good working order.
- ⇒ **If you have the “call-waiting” feature on your phone, DO NOT interrupt your conversation to answer a call.** Should a call come through and there is a distinctive break in the conversation, either ignore it or make light of the situation. **Conduct the interview in a separate room in order to avoid any potential distractions,** i.e.: radio, television, background conversations, etc.
- ⇒ **Talk directly into the mouthpiece.** If you have a bad connection and/or have difficulty hearing the other party, either have the person call you back, adjust the phone, or ask them to speak louder.
- ⇒ **Be fully prepared with notes** in regards to: 1) the company, 2) the position, and 3) yourself (resume). This will help ensure that you are organized and articulate during the interview.
- ⇒ **Prepare (but don't memorize) responses to 5-10 common interview questions.** For sample questions, consult our 'Typical Interview Questions' resource document.

Remember, this is a great opportunity to sell yourself and to find out more about the position. The phone interview is also the opportune time to set up your face-to-face meeting - do not be afraid to ask for the appointment. Have your calendar on hand so you may suggest dates that would be convenient for the interview. Best of luck!