

Tips for Successful Phone Interviewing

In many cases, your first meeting with a potential employer will take place over the phone. The following tips are designed to help you make the most of your phone interview.

1. Always make sure that you are in a quiet place without distractions – one where you can speak freely. If the interviewer calls at a bad time, it's better to reschedule for five or 10 minutes later (when you can find a place to talk) than trying to get through it. If you are on your cell phone make sure you have located a spot to talk where you get a clear and strong signal.
2. Always have a copy of your resume in front of you. Many times the interviewer will ask you questions in reference to work history or projects detailed on your resume. In addition, it will be helpful to have a copy of the job description in front of you.
3. Take 10 to 15 minutes to focus on the upcoming conversation before the interviewer calls. I will supply you with information to review regarding the opportunity you will be discussing. Take a few minutes to review those notes and, if possible, the Web site of the company you are interviewing with.
4. Always know with whom you will be speaking, as well as that person's title and functional responsibility. I am responsible for letting you know exactly who will be calling.
5. There are times when I may not know exactly who will be calling. This happens more in larger companies when one member of a larger team is assigned to call you to assess your technical skills. Get the interviewer's name and title and ask how he or she fits into the organization.
6. Use Power Phone Skills! Speak slowly and clearly and always think about your answers before responding. If sitting, sit upright, just as you would in an actual interview. Many people think that if you stand while talking on the phone you are more alert and are better able to project your enthusiasm for the position. Be careful not to go monotone – keep your voice lively. Make sure to smile while speaking.
7. Make sure your answers are clear and concise. Get to the point; don't ramble. If you don't know the answer to a question, don't fake it – just say so.
8. Have questions prepared. Ask the interviewer if you may ask a couple of questions. Additionally, always express interest in the position. At the conclusion of the interview, ask the interviewer what the next step will be.
9. Upon completion of the phone screening, call me. Moving quickly in our industry is imperative, and I am very interested in your feedback.
10. Use Action words! So much of interpersonal communication is through body language, but obviously the interviewer can't see you. You still need to convey that same enthusiasm through your voice and words. For instance, use phrases like " I am excited about this opportunity because..."