

Telephone – Interview Tips

Be prepared when conducting a Telephone Interview.

1. It's best to Use a land line. You don't want to risk having problems with cell phone service. It is irritating for employers to conduct interviews if the call breaks up frequently or is dropped completely. If you don't have a land line at home, just make sure you are in an area with as much cell phone service as possible. Do what you can so the process runs as smooth as possible.
2. Do your research about the company, look at their website, press releases, new articles etc.
3. Keep your materials handy. This includes your resume, notes about your career objective (even if it isn't included in your original cover letter it's a good idea to have this out depending on the questions you will be will asked), a pen and pad of paper for note-taking and anything else you think may be helpful during your interview.
4. Steer clear of distractions. Find a quiet place to interview and stay there! There shouldn't be any noise in the background to distract you or your potential employer.
5. Speak slowly and clearly. When you speak to people face-to-face, you are able to understand what they are saying more clearly because you can see their mouth move. Neither you nor your potential employer will be able to do this over the phone of course, so speak clearly and a little bit more slowly than you would if you were talking to this person in person.
6. Don't take too long or talk too much to answer each direct questions. The impression: This candidate just can't get to the point. Understand the job you're interviewing for and apply your experience & skills. Answer each question individually.
7. Nervous talkers. The impression: This candidate is covering up something or is outright lying.
8. Do not bad mouth previous work relationships or people, this talk can bite you in a surprising way. Only speak about your work responsibilities, experience and skills in a positive manner.
9. Remember – you can't be seen. That means that anything you say cannot be interpreted by your body language. Beware of jokes or sarcastic remarks that would have been harmless had he seen your facial expression. Maintain your professionalism; stay on target with the interview topics and focus on the key information about you that will get you hired.
10. Absolutely - No eating, drinking or chewing gum during the interview! This is self-explanatory.
11. Prepare your questions ahead of time. Prepare a few questions to ask your potential employer at the end of your phone interview. Do not end your call without having a question.

Some examples are:

“What does a typical day look like for an employee with this job?”

“What are some skills I would need to develop in order to excel in the position I’m applying for?”

“What software/equipment would I be using?”

“What is the next step regarding the final decision of the position”?

Remember – do not ask about salary or benefits until the employer has brought it up.

12. Don't forget to close.

Your goal for a phone interview is to get an in-person interview. Find out what the next steps are; (face to face interview, decision timeline). Finally, thank them for their time and follow-up with a thank you email or note ASAP or by the next day with bullets identifying how your background is parallel to the job.