

Phone and Video Interview Tips

PHONE INTERVIEWS

Phone interviews are commonly used as a screening round for employers so they can determine which candidates they would like to invite for in-person interviews. Phone interviews require just as much prep time regular interviews, so keep these tips in mind as you plan ahead:

Be Prepared!

- Review your resume, experience, and skills in relation to the job description
- Know what you have to offer
- Anticipate possible interview questions and brainstorm answers
- Review the company website and job description
- Have a paper and pen handy to write down notes during the interview

DON'T:

- Read word-for-word off prepared answers
- Leave preparation to the last minute

Have your information in front of you:

Unlike during an in-person interview, it's perfectly acceptable to have information available to you while on the phone with a potential employer. Things you may want to have out:

- Resume, list of accomplishments/strengths
- Job description
- Company website
- Questions to ask the employer at the end of the interview
- Write down the name of person(s) you are interviewing with

Minimize distractions:

- Plan ahead you so can make sure you will be in a quiet room where you know you will not be interrupted.
- Make sure you turn off music, TV, etc.
- No eating, drinking, or gum chewing
- If possible use a landline, if not, make sure you have good cell phone service and enough battery power

Dress the part:

While some people prefer to be comfortable while on a phone interview, it may be a good idea to think about dressing-up. You may find that "dressing the part" gives you the feeling of being a professional.

During the interview:

- Make sure you can hear everyone on the other line...if you cannot, let the interviewer(s) know or politely ask them to speak up
- It's okay to ask for a question to be repeated
- Speak clearly, concisely, and loudly enough so they can hear you
- Also, if you need a second to think about your answer...ask for it! It's better to ask for time, compose yourself, and then answer the question than to start rambling
- Introduce your answer in parts. This will help keep your answer on track and let the interviewer know when you are done: -"First....Second....and Lastly...."
For example: "There are many reasons why I am interested in your company. Here are three...
First... X...
Second... Y...
and finally... Z..."

Remember...

- Phone interviews are tricky because you cannot gauge the interviewers non-verbal communication (are they smiling, nodding, looking bored, etc.). This makes it all the more important to have well-thought out and concise answers. Phone interviews are not the time to ramble or lose focus on the question.
- Smiling counts! Even though interviewers cannot see you, smiling over the phone is still important and can be sensed by the interviewer.

VIDEO INTERVIEWS

In addition to phone and in-person interviews, it is becoming more common for companies to conduct interviews using programs such as Skype. Doing a video interview takes just as much time and effort as a traditional interview so make sure you:

- Prepare, prepare, prepare. Research the company, know your strengths and skills, and read the general Interviewing Guide on our website. Also, make an appointment for a mock interview with Career Services.
- Understand how to use the video program and do multiple trial runs with family or friends first.
- Dress professionally, just like you would for an in-person interview.
- Conduct the interview in a clean, clutter-free space with proper lighting.
- Clear the area of any potential distractions (cell phone, roommates, pets, etc.).
- Look at the camera during the interview, not the computer screen. Set the camera up so the employer sees some of the background behind you, not just your face.
- Speak clearly and at a pace that is a little slower than normal. Avoid fillers (like, umm, ahh, uhh).
- Smile! Bring energy and enthusiasm to the interview to show employers your interest in working for them.

After any type of interview, send thank-you notes

- Take this as another opportunity to express interest in the position and let the employer know your qualifications. Make it personalized – mention an interesting point from the interview.
- Email or regular mail is fine.
- Send it out within 24 hours of the interview.
- Make sure you proof-read for grammar and spelling errors.