



Phone Interview Tips

Create a checklist. Review the job posting and make a list of how your qualifications match the hiring criteria. Have the list available so you can glance at it during the interview.

Have your resume handy. Keep your resume in clear view (either on the top of your desk, or tape it to the wall) so it is at your fingertips when you need to answer questions.

Have the job description handy. Keep it near you for reference and ask any clarification questions you may have.

Be prepared to take notes. Have a pen and paper handy for note taking.

Don't get interrupted. Turn off call-waiting so your call is not interrupted.

Clear the room. No kids or pets. Turn off the stereo and the TV. Close the door. **ELIMINATE ALL NOISE AND DISTRACTIONS.**

Use a landline (ancient, but they do still exist). If you have a landline, use that instead of your cell phone. That way, you will eliminate the possibility of poor reception or dropped calls.

Using a Cell Phone. If you are using a cell phone, lay it down flat on a stable surface and ASK: "Can you hear me clearly," at the beginning of the call.

Do's and Don'ts During the Phone Interview

- **Do** use the interviewer's name.
- **Do not** smoke, chew gum, eat, or drink.
- **Do** keep a glass of water handy, though. There is nothing worse than having a tickle in your throat or a cough starting when you are in the middle of an interview.
- **Do** smile. Smiling will project a positive image to the listener and will change the tone of your voice. It can also be helpful to stand during the interview since this typically gives your voice more energy and enthusiasm.
- **Do** focus, listen, and enunciate. It is important to focus on the interview and that can sometimes be more difficult on the phone than in-person. Be sure to listen to the question, ask for clarification if you are not sure what the interviewer is asking, and speak slowly, carefully, and clearly when you respond. It is fine to take a few seconds to compose your thoughts before you answer.
- **Don't** interrupt the interviewer. Try to maintain a 50/50 balance of listening and talking.
- **Do** take your time. It is perfectly acceptable to take a moment or two to collect your thoughts.
- **Do** take notes. It is hard to remember what you discussed after the fact, so take brief notes during the interview.
- **Do** give short answers. It is important to stay focused on the questions and your responses.
- **Do** have questions to ask the interviewer ready. Be prepared to respond when the interviewer asks whether you have any questions for him or her.

- **Don't** discuss salary during the phone interview if possible. If asked a question about compensation, a best response is: "Considering my experience and qualifications, I'm sure what you're offering will be competitive and fair."
- **Do remember that your goal is to set up a face-to-face interview. At the end of your conversation, if you are at all interested in the position, CLOSE FOR NEXT STEPS. Ask if an in-person interview will be extended. Explain why you are the best person for the job. Thank the interviewer(s) and ask when you should expect to hear from him/her again.**