

Acing the Phone Interview

Your First Chance to Make a Great Impression!

You may feel a bit uneasy thinking about interviewing over the phone, but this initial screening interview can actually be an easy way to break the ice with a potential employer while helping you confirm you are truly interested in continuing with the interview process.

6 Key Actions to Ensure a Successful Phone Interview

PREPARE IN ADVANCE

Phone interviews are often done to narrow the pool of candidates. Be sure you research the company and familiarize yourself with the position requirements. Typical questions might include:

- WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT OUR COMPANY?
- TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF.
- WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO THIS POSITION?
- WHAT ARE YOUR PROFESSIONAL STRENGTHS?

A phone interview should be scheduled like any other interview. If you get caught off guard by an employer calling you unexpectedly, it is appropriate to request that you schedule the interview for a day and time that is convenient for both of you.

CELL PHONE VS LAND LINE? When giving out your preferred phone number to employers, be aware that using a cell phone may not always put you in the best environment to take a call. Connectivity issues can also create stress when in the middle of a phone interview or other important conversation with an employer. Be sure your voice mail message sounds professional for any number you give out.

MAKE SURE YOU HAVE WHAT YOU NEED

- YOUR RESUME
- INFORMATION ON THE COMPANY
- A GLASS OF WATER
- A LIST OF QUESTIONS TO ASK
- SOMETHING TO TAKE NOTES WITH
- NOTES ON ANSWERS YOU PLAN TO GIVE

BE AWARE OF YOUR PRESENTATION STYLE

The challenge with phone interviews is the lack of social cues you would receive face to face. Pay attention to those things you have control over to make your best impression.

- POSITIVE VOICE TONE
- GOOD LISTENING SKILLS
- HIGH ENERGY
- SMILE WHILE YOU SPEAK
- CONTROLLED BREATHING
- SPEAKING SLOWLY AND PROFESSIONALLY

If you feel nervous about an upcoming phone interview, ask a friend to help you practice over the phone.

REMEMBER INTERVIEWING IS A TWO WAY STREET

Don't forget the purpose of interviewing is to decide if you and an employer are a good fit. Be sure to ask questions and assess whether you want to continue with the process based on the interviewer's answers. The Amica Career Center's Interviewing Handout has a list of questions to ask an interviewer.

ASK ABOUT THE PROCESS GOING FORWARD

Make sure you know the process going forward from a phone interview and always send a thank you email or note.

SEND A THANK YOU

Be sure to send a thank you reiterating your interest in the position. An email thank you is appropriate.