



# Telephone Interview Tips

Candidates should be just as prepared for their telephone interview as they would for an in-person interview. Employers use telephone interviews to identify the best candidates to move through the hiring process. Following are our favorite phone screen tips.

## Before the Interview

- Clear the room. Evict the kids and the pets, turn off the TV, and close the door. If you do not have a quiet room in your home, you may want to look into renting a space for your interview, such as a reading room at the local library.
- Ensure you are dressed in a way that makes you feel comfortable and confident. Although the interviewer will not see you during your phone interview, some people feel more professional when dressed up as if they were interviewing in person.
- Print a copy of your resume to keep in clear view throughout the interview.
- Keep a pen and paper handy for note-taking.
- Keep a glass of water handy, in case you need to wet your mouth.
- Turn call-waiting off so your call isn't interrupted.
- Unless you're sure your cell phone service is going to be perfect, consider using a landline rather than your cell phone to avoid a dropped call or static on the line. If you must use a cell phone, test your reception in different areas beforehand to determine the best location for your interview.

## During the Interview

- Be sure to smile while you are talking! Smiling will project a positive image to the listener and will change the tone of your voice to sound more upbeat.
- Speak slowly and enunciate clearly. It can be harder to follow what someone is saying on the phone without visual communication cues.
- Don't smoke, chew gum, or eat.
- If you choose to interview in front of your computer in order to reference materials or take notes, be careful about typing while on the phone. The sound of your keyboard can give the interviewer the impression that you aren't fully focused.

- If it is more comfortable for you, try standing or pacing while you talk. The more comfortable you are, the more confident you will sound.
- Answer all questions fully and with great detail, but also as succinctly as possible. Do not talk longer than one minute without pausing. This will give the interviewer a chance to interject if they want to dive deeper on a certain point, or if you've veered off topic.
- Listen more than you speak. Typically, the split should be 60% interviewer / 40% candidate. And never interrupt the interviewer!
- Try not to bridge your thoughts or sentences with "uh" or "um." A pause is a better choice.
- Take your time – it's perfectly acceptable to take a moment or two to collect your thoughts.
- Remember to say "thank you" at the end, and ask about next steps in the process.

## After the Interview

- Take notes about what you were asked and how you answered.
- Follow with a thank you note which reiterates your interest in the job.