

Telephone Interviewing Tips

Phone interviews are often used to screen candidates in order to narrow the pool of applicants who will be invited for in-person interviews. They are also used to minimize the expenses involved in interviewing out-of-town candidates.

While actively job searching, it's important to be prepared for a phone interview on a moments notice. You never know when a recruiter or a networking contact might call and ask if you have a few minutes to talk. It is important to treat a phone interview with the same importance as a face to face interview. Here are some tips to ease your nerves:

- Keep your résumé in clear view, on the top of your desk, or tape it to the wall near the phone, so it's at your fingertips when you need to answer questions.
- Have a short list of your accomplishments available to review.
- Have a pen and paper handy for note taking.
- Turn off call waiting so your call isn't interrupted.
- Clear the room; evict the kids and the pets. Turn off the stereo and the TV. Close the door.
- Don't smoke, chew gum, eat or drink (however, it is okay to have a glass of water handy).
- Smile. Smiling will project a positive image to the listener and will change the tone of your voice
- Speak slowly and enunciate clearly.
- Don't interrupt the interviewer.
- Take your time. It's perfectly acceptable to take a moment or two to collect your thoughts.
- Keep your answers between 30 seconds and 2 minutes.
- Send the interviewers a thank you note within 48 hours of your interview.
- Ask the employer questions about the company and/ or position. This shows interest.
- Follow with a thank-you note that reiterates your interest in the job.



Questionable Questions

Interviewing is different than it was 10 years ago. It is wise to know the types of questions employers are legally not allowed to ask.

Questions they cannot ask about include: place of birth/ ancestry, race, color, age, religion, disability or sexual preference. It is also not appropriate for them to ask about your marital status or children.

If you are unsure about other questions you may be asked, or are unsure how to answer an illegal question, just ask a Career Services staff member.