

MAKING AN IMPRESSION WITH THE PHONE INTERVIEW



Organizations are increasingly using telephone interviews to test applicants. The telephone interview presents the job seeker with the ability to leave a strong and positive first impression on the potential employers. When planning for a phone interview, remember a few things:

- Interview time
- Climate/surrounding
- Understanding your strengths and weaknesses
- How to project your thoughts and your passion
- Researching the interviewer and finding questions to ask (advance preparation)
- Practicing answering the various types of questions you can be asked during a telephone interview.

A telephone interview is the first step towards securing a personal interview. Do not take this interview lightly and prepare well before time.

WHEN SHOULD A PHONE INTERVIEW OCCUR?

If all goes well, you will have the opportunity to communicate with a company and set up a time to perform a telephone interview at your convenience. They might call you randomly, based on a CV you sent out months ago. The call could start with, "I just had a few questions about your CV" and stretch into an hour. Remember, you have the option to say, "It's not a good time, but can I call you back in an hour?" So you can prepare yourself to give your best answers. You must give the interview on a moment's notice. If you are applying for jobs, you should be prepared to get an interview call at any time. You never know when a recruiter will contact you.

HOW WILL A PHONE INTERVIEW BE EVALUATED?

How you will be judged in a telephone interview varies from how you could be evaluated during a personal interview. Your first appearance matters a lot in any conversation; you have to present yourself professionally and avoid any kind of nervousness. Your first impression on the phone will be your greetings and your style of talking, accent, and behavior. After the interview, the interviewer may ask him or herself the following questions:

- Did the candidate have an enthusiastic voice?
- Did the candidate answer questions accurately or vaguely?
- Did the candidate investigate the company?
- Did the candidate express an interest in another interview?
- Did the candidate go ahead with a letter of thanks?
- Did the candidate send helping material (CV, portfolio, etc.)?

WHERE SHOULD A PHONE INTERVIEW TAKE PLACE?

Safe from interferences and disruptions set yourself in a private location. Place your phone where you can easily communicate with your interviewer and make sure that the area you are using doesn't have any telephones, radio, TV channels, friends and family, pets, or anything else that might make a noise or take your mind off the job. Choose a comfortable place with an ideal view to help you concentrate.

PREPARING FOR THE PHONE INTERVIEW

Just like you prepare for an in-person interview, plan for the phone interview. Dress up formally so you'll be in a professional and positive mindset.

Research the Organization and the Position

It is necessary to know about the company and the role that you are applying to before you start the interview. Visit the website of the company, read the job description, and try to match your profile to what the company is seeking.

Behavioral Answers

Behavioral questions are the most common type of questions asked. These questions are intended to determine how you would react in a particular situation. Another approach is to use the STAR model (**S**ituation, **T**ask, **A**ction, **R**esponse) to address behavior-based questions. The formula makes sure you provide a full and concise answer.

Traditional Questions

Conventional questions include questions that explain points on your curriculum vitae, assess your accomplishments and objectives, and determine your expectations from the organization.

Make a List of Questions to Ask

- What are the qualities of your organization's good employees?
- What is the typical career path for this position?
- Can you tell me how this company has helped to develop your career in the right direction?
- Have you any unanswered questions about my qualifications or my experience?

Utilize Your Resources

Before you start an interview, make sure you have the following documents within your reach

- CV and cover letter for the position
- Pen and paper to take notes during the interview
- Job description and role

DURING THE PHONE INTERVIEW

- Have an enthusiastic and poised voice.
- Smile as much as you can; this will generate enthusiasm in your voice.
- Talk softly, so you don't sound too harsh or loud.
- Maintain the dialog with questions prepared in advance.
- Don't eat, drink, or chew gum during the phone conversation; this might produce disturbance.
- Speak directly so that you are understood clearly.
- Concentrate fully and avoid taking other phone calls.
- Sit upright or stand while you speak on the phone. Your voice sounds a little better.
- Avoid noise-causing anxious behaviors.

- Be patient, let the interviewer complete the question before you answer or ask anything in return. Do not interrupt the interviewer.
- Listen to what's being said and ask for clarification if necessary.

ENDING THE CONVERSATION

- Let the employer end the conversation.
- Thank the employer for his time and reiterate your interest in the position.
- Find the next steps to be followed up appropriately.
- Show your willingness and state that you want to meet personally.

FOLLOW UP WITH THE INTERVIEWER

Send a letter of thanks to the interviewer to show your gratitude and excitement for the role. Make sure the hiring process timeline and potential steps are addressed so that you are aware of where you are in the interview process.

PREPARE FOR A FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW

A telephone interview may be all it takes to convince the interviewer that you are the right person for the job. However, many organizations, before making any decisions, prefer to meet job seekers personally. For assistance, consult with Career Services for face-to-face interviews. There are a lot of resources that can work with you during a taped practice interview to evaluate your strengths and weaknesses.

Hints to Help You Transition to the in-Person Interview:

- Reflect on what you can contribute to the organization
- Offer new information, if necessary
- Include new examples of what you've achieved
- Ask more specific questions
- Let your research show



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