



Phone Interviewing Tips

Tip #1: Treat the phone interview as important as or more important than an in-person interview... Why? Because you are not in-person with the interviewer you miss out on subtle social interactions such as a firm handshake, eye contact, and overall body language. Due to the fact you're on the phone means you have to work extra hard to stand out as the interviewer can't 'feel out' the chemistry in-person. Take notes, ask questions, and do research beforehand like any other interview.

Tip #2: Focus... Cut out all distractions from your interview, it's usually best if you can make the call in a quiet place at the comfort of your own home; but be sure that the television is turned off, your children are preoccupied, and the dog is fed. You, as well as the interviewer, need to have full attention on the phone call, and that can't be accomplished with background noise.

Tip #3: Give yourself time... Many phone interviewees may try and fit their interview during their lunch break or in between classes. Make sure you have enough time to continue the conversation without cutting the interview short for your next commitment.

Tip #4: Have a computer handy... Having access to the web can be a huge advantage to your interview. The interviewer can't see that you have a tab with the company's website and a search engine for questions. Just be sure that the interviewer can't hear your keyboard. Invest in a quiet keyboard if possible.

Tip #5: Print out your resumé... Having a hard copy of your resumé can help tremendously. Sometimes you may forget certain points or the interviewer may ask a question about your resumé they saw when you first applied. Above all else, you can use your resumé to take notes in the margins.

Tip #6: Be ready... Make sure you're ready to answer the phone call five minutes before scheduled. Hiring agents sometimes call early as a tactic of testing candidates.

Tip #7: Do your homework... Prior to your interview, research the company online, talk to any contacts you have that might work there, and get a feel for the company's culture by identifying its key focuses/priorities. Thoroughly review the job description of the position for which you are applying and come prepared with questions, as well as highlight why you would be the best fit.

Tip #8: Smile... The interviewer can't see you, which makes it harder to project enthusiasm. Fortunately, if you smile it is proven to help convey happiness, enthusiasm, and excitement even over the phone.

Tip #9: Give clear, concise answers... Since the employer can't see you face to face, you must be even sharper and concise with your answers. If you need a minute to gather or collect your answer, share that with your interviewer so there isn't undefined quiet time.

Tip #10: Be honest... Just because you aren't meeting in person doesn't mean you should over-exaggerate yourself and your capabilities. Hiring managers sniff out candidates that seem too good to be true. Be honest about your capabilities. Not only does it convey trustworthiness, but also it helps the interviewer select their best candidates. The last thing you want as a new employee is to step into a role that is above your capabilities, because you fudged some details. Do yourself a favor, your future self will thank you for getting rid of overwhelming stress.

Tip #11: Avoid talking about money... If an interviewer decides to ask you about your desired salary don't answer with phrases like: "I currently make X, but I want to make Y," "I'm negotiable," or "I'd rather discuss in person" These phrases tend to make interviewer move on. Answer instead with something like: "I need a better understanding of the total compensation package before I can state my desired salary."

Tip #12: Follow up... Be sure to ask the interviewer for a timeline as to when a decision would be made, as well as their preferred way for you to follow up. Be sure to follow any guidelines the employer establishes.

Tip #13 Next steps... Be ready to be flexible to possible next steps or subsequent face to face interviews. Have your calendar readily available to schedule a next interview, if given the opportunity.

Tip #14: Say thank you ASAP... You didn't have an interview at the office so there's no commute home. Send the interviewer a thank you email as soon as possible before the interviewer stops thinking about you. You want to create a good impression, don't wait to do so.

Bonus Tip: If you have a personal website direct the interviewer to take a look at the end of the interview. A good time to mention a personal branding website is when an interviewer asks something like: “Is there anything else you have questions about or would like to let me know?” This is the perfect time to pounce on your opportunity. Direct them to your website. It gives them an engaging experience and shows your initiative, creativity, intelligence, and forward thinking. You’ll really set yourself a mile above the other candidates.