



## Job Interviews on the Telephone – TOP TIPS!

### 1. Do your research.

*If the interview is scheduled in advance, know as much as you can about the employer and the opportunity before the interview, just as you would for an in-person interview:*

- Re-read the job posting, and make notes of where you meet or exceed the requirements (and where you don't).
- Review the organisation's website to see what they do, where they are, and the latest news they may have posted.
- Look for a LinkedIn "Company Profile" to see what information they post, as well as other job openings they might have.
- Google the company and the product/service names.
- Based on your research, **have questions to ask** if the opportunity arises or you risk looking uninterested *and unprepared* (not good!).

This research will help you to succeed in the face-to-face interview later, hopefully. It should also help you to determine if you really want to work for this employer.

### 2. Be ready for the call when it comes

Hopefully, you'll be able to schedule the call for a time when you can focus completely. Be in a quiet place where you are comfortable and unlikely to be interrupted (or overheard, if you are not at home).

**If you currently have a job, do NOT take this call in your workplace!** Your boss or a co-worker may interrupt and may also discover your job search. NOT GOOD! Go outside, assuming it's relatively quiet, or find someplace private and a good environment for a phone call.

### **3. Have the documentation you need at your fingertips.**

Having easy access to the company and job information will allow you to confidently respond to questions without fumbling regarding which job you are talking about. So have a copy of *both* the job description and a copy of the resume or application you submitted in front of you *before* the interview starts.

### **4. Take notes.**

If possible, take notes during and *immediately* after the call. Focus on giving good answers rather than writing copious notes, and you can write most of the notes after the call.

- *During the call*, write down any commitments you make for after the call, like sending a sample of your work or following up with the answer to a question that you couldn't answer during the call.
- *At the end of the call*, be sure make note of the answers to the questions in #11 below.
- Note anything about you that seemed particularly important to them, indicated by the interviewer asking you several follow-on questions about that topic.
- Note anything about you that seemed to disappoint them.

These notes will help you to prepare for the in-person interview if you are successful in the phone interview.

### **5. Know your answers to the common questions.**

Brief "yes" and "no" responses will not move a telephone interview forward, but *will* end it quickly. So, start by practicing your [answers to the common interview questions](#) now so that you are ready when the unplanned telephone interview occurs.

Paint visual pictures with your words by telling stories that demonstrate results you achieved or contributed to. Answers that express the who, what, when, where, how, and why. Those answers will make you stand out.

The more you prepare now, the less you will ramble and leave out when the interview arrives.

### **6. Smile while on the phone!**

You will find that you sound more upbeat and engaged when you do this. Your smiles will be "heard" by the interviewer making for a positive impression.

### **7. Focus on your language and voice.**

You have only the power of your voice in a telephone call. Speak clearly, stay upbeat, and use positive language. Smiling (#6, above) will help.

*Don't trash anyone, not even the former boss who was such a jerk!*

Try to take cues from the interviewer (does he or she speak slowly and softly or fast and loud?), and **modulate your own tone** to make a positive impression.

Remember that the words you choose (your language) and the motivation you put forward (tone, modulation, enthusiasm) will help determine your outcome.

### **9. Avoid selfish questions during the interview.**

Now is *not* the time to ask about benefits or salary. Initial interviews, until you have an offer, are about convincing the employer that you are an applicant they must consider hiring. You do not have any power until that time, and asking these questions will just show that your emphasis is not on being a good fit but just on the benefit to you.

### **10. Express your interest in the opportunity and the employer.**

As the call is ending, thank them for the opportunity to speak with them about the job, and express your interest in having an in-person job interview by saying something like this:

"I've enjoyed speaking with you today, and I would be very happy to discuss more about this opportunity in person.

### **11. Don't hang up without asking for the next step**

The interviewer is bringing the call to an end but there has been no talk of a next step. Speak up! Express your enthusiasm for moving forward and ask about the next step.

## **Good Luck!**