

The Telephone Interview

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You will encounter the same types of questions as during a traditional interview. However, you may encounter some difficulties during a phone interview that rarely arise when you are meeting in person. For example, you cannot see an interviewer's facial expressions or body language when you're talking on the phone. This means that you are missing key information about how the interviewer is reacting to your answers. This can make it more difficult to get your point across on the phone.

The information below gives you several tips to help you overcome these obstacles and get to the next step, an in-person interview.

Give the Interview Your Full Attention

You must minimize distractions. Don't do anything else while you're conducting a phone interview. Don't drive. Don't read email. Don't text with someone else. Give the interviewer 100% of your attention.

Find a Quiet Place

You need to concentrate. Even at home, background noises can be very distracting for you and the interviewer. Noisy kids, barking dogs or the TV in the next room can disrupt your concentration and leave the interviewer wondering what you're doing. Get far away from any disruptions before starting the call.

Avoid Cell Phones

Cell phones are great when they work. But you never know when you're going to lose the signal. A landline or VOIP phone is a better choice than a cell phone.

Be Prepared

Prepare for your phone interview as if you were meeting face to face. Research the company. Learn as much as you can about the interviewer. Have your notes and resume nearby. Check the internet for recent press releases about the company. If you have examples of your work, make them available for the interviewer to review while you're talking.

Be Professional

Don't eat. Don't smoke. Don't chew gum. Don't speak in slang. Instead, smile; get to the point; be enthusiastic!

You might think this is silly, but consider dressing up for the phone interview. Even if the interviewer can't see you, they can sense who you are by the way you speak and act on the phone. You want to project as professional an image as you can throughout the interview. Dress professionally and act professionally. It makes a difference, even over the phone.

Follow Up

Treat a phone interview exactly as you would a face-to-face interview. Send a thank you letter to review your strengths and how they apply to the job.