



JOB AND CAREER ADVICE

TELEPHONE INTERVIEWING TIPS

Often times the first step in an interview process involves the telephone. Additionally, companies elect to conduct video interviews before they'll agree to meet in person.

Are you as prepared as possible? In this week's blog I'll share some tips for putting your best foot forward.

Let's begin with telephone interviews. Companies conduct them because they're less time consuming and are cost effective. Generally speaking, a company might phone screen twice as many candidates as they'd eventually look to bring in for a face to face conversation.

The biggest drawback of phone interviews is, well, that you aren't face to face. Regular readers of my writings know studies have shown interpersonal communication to be broken down into three main categories. And by far, the greatest is body language (55%). The other two are tone of voice (38%) and your actual words (7%).

Since they can't see you (body language) it's critical you pay special attention to your tone of voice and your wording.

Be sure to slow down your speech rate. It'll help you sound more professional and, frankly, will help the interviewer actually understand the words you're using. Use a land line if one's available

to you. Their connection is more reliable and the sound quality tends to be much better.

Dress up, stand up, and speak up! Dressing up for an interview can subconsciously make you sound more professional. Standing up helps you sound more alive, more enthusiastic. Think about the difference between slouching in a chair or couch versus standing and speaking with someone. Be aware of your voice inflection. Avoid sounding monotone while being careful not to sound too sing-songey. Also, find a quiet area for the interview. No one wants to hear kids, adults or a television in the background.

Perhaps the only advantage of the telephone interview is their inability to see your surroundings. Print off website information about their company. You can have as many notes in front of you as you wish. Script out some good questions to ask. And while I wouldn't script out my answers to their questions, I do think you could jot down some key points so you won't lose your train of thought. Think of it as an open book test.

Let's switch to a video interview for a moment. Try to do a "test run" with a friend so you'll feel more comfortable with the whole process. Since the interviewer can see you you'll want to dress appropriately and make sure whatever's behind you isn't cluttered or inappropriate.

Look into your camera and don't focus on your computer screen. Think of the camera as your interviewer's eyes. You'll want to maintain a fair amount of eye contact, just as you would in a face to face encounter.

Whether your interview is on the phone or via video, your goal is to generate a face to face meeting. Make sure you maintain your enthusiasm and end the interview by clearly stating your interest level and learning the next step in their interview process. Good luck!

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