



TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

Many organizations now use telephone interviewing at various points during the hiring process. It is important for you to be prepared for a telephone interview and be able to communicate effectively with the interviewer. Here are some telephone interviewing tips and sample telephone interviewing questions to help you prepare.

TELEPHONE INTERVIEWING TIPS

1. BE PREPARED

- Have a copy of your resume, transcript, and the job description in front of you during the interview
- Keep a log of companies and titles of jobs applied for, which will help you be better prepared if you are called unexpectedly
- Attend phone interview workshops and participate in mock phone interviews offered by your career center
- Practice, practice, practice

2. BE PROFESSIONAL

- Record a professional message for your answering machine or voice mail
- Have a “canned” response ready for a recruiter if you’re caught off guard (exp: “I am on my way out the door to class. I’m very interested in talking to you about this position. Can I arrange a time to call you back this afternoon?” This extra time will allow you to review the job description and other reference materials and prepare some questions for the interviewer
- Turn off music or the TV during the interview
- Do not eat, drink, or chew gum during the interview
- Do not type on your computer during the interview
- Do not put an interviewer on hold to take call waiting

3. BE PERSONABLE

- Be enthusiastic—show interest in the position and the organization
- Ask pertinent questions about the job and company, not just about salary, benefits, and/or hours
- Talk slowly and show self-confidence
- Thank the interviewer for his or her time

SAMPLE TELEPHONE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. FOR AN INITIAL SCREENING

- Tell me about your most recent position.
- Who was your best boss, and why?
- What interests you about working at our company?
- Based on your research, what do you know about our organization?
- You applied for the position and you know what it entails – what are your salary expectations? What is your current salary?
- What is your understanding of the position?
- Why are you looking to leave your employer? Why did you leave your last employer?
- Are you currently authorized to work in the United States?
- What would you consider an acceptable amount of travel?
- In your opinion, what are the top three trends in the field today?
- Based on the description I have provided, what technical/nontechnical qualifications would you bring to this position?
- What questions do you have for me?

2. FOR A BEHAVIORAL SCREENING

- What type of opportunity/position are you looking for? Describe your ideal job.
- What are you looking for in this position?
- What is your ideal work environment?
- How would your current employer/teacher/co-workers describe your work?
- What are your top three priorities or motivators?
- What areas in your career are you interested in further developing?
- Tell me about a time when you had to create something new, or look at something from a different perspective.
- Where do you see yourself next year?
- Can you give an example of a time you worked in a team?
- How do you incorporate diversity into your professional practices?
- Tell me about the toughest customer [internal or external] you had to win over and how you did it.
- Tell me about a situation in which you were the underdog and stuck with it until you succeeded.
- Describe examples of how you acquired experience in X and how you have used this experience on the job.
- Identify two accomplishments that you are most proud of.
- Why should I hire you?
- What else would you like me to know about you?