

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 for a telephone interview.

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

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?

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?