

How To Handle a Phone Interview

Phone interviews are a common technique used to determine which candidates will move forward in the interview process. They can also replace an actual in-person interview and so they are critical in determining whether or not you will be hired. Here are some important tips for phone interviews.

Be Available:

Be there when you say you will be. Recruiters and employers are often very busy calling other candidates and you don't want to give them the impression that you don't value their time. If you make an appointment to receive their call, be prepared to give them your full attention.

Have a quiet space where you won't be interrupted by kids, pets, or household chores your spouse or housemates might be doing, like running the dishwasher or vacuuming. Also ensure that there isn't any loud music or other distractions. Let others know that you are setting this time aside for an interview so that they won't be barging in.

Be Prepared:

Re-read your resume and know all your skills and strengths, just as you would for a regular interview. Just because you can have all your information in front of you and the interviewer can't see you looking at your resume, you still need to be prepared so that you'll sound polished and confident.

Be Professional:

Just as you would a regular interview, ensure you appear professional. Practice talking on the phone with a friend, simulating a phone interview. Keep an eye on your speech patterns and don't talk excessively or mumble. Be attentive to the interviewer. Because the interviewer can't see you, they can't see your body language or how you act when you respond to questions. All your feedback is coming to them through the phone, so it's critical that your phone skills be excellent.

Also, ensure that you aren't chewing gum, that you sit straight, you smile, and that you dress the part. No one will see how you are dressed but it will change your attitude. By thinking and acting like this is an interview (and it is!), you will come across as more confident and prepared.

Follow-up:

Just as you would a traditional interview, follow-up with the interviewer to let them know that you appreciate the time they took in interviewing you. Let them know again of your interest in the job and that you look forward to hearing from them regarding the position.

Remember, a phone interview is just like a regular interview. It can determine whether you get hired on the spot or get selected for a future interview. It's important to treat it just like any other interview you would participate in, so ensure that you are prepared, confident, and attentive to the interviewer.