



Job Hunting Advice

Mastering Telephone Interviews

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In the era of remote work, telephone interviews are becoming increasingly common. Gone are the days of rushing to an in-person interview; now, you can engage with potential employers from the comfort of your own space. But, beware! Telephone interviews come with their own set of challenges that can turn them into formidable adversaries.

Why a Telephone Interview?

Employers often use telephone interviews to sift through a sea of applicants and identify promising candidates for face-to-face interviews. It's also a cost-effective way for them to evaluate candidates, especially when recruiting on a national or international scale.

The Element of Surprise

Some employers like to keep candidates on their toes by conducting surprise phone interviews. Picture this: your phone rings, and you're suddenly in the hot seat. To help you shine in such moments, we've crafted a Telephone Interview Survival Guide filled with wisdom from our seasoned consultants.

The Survival Guide

1. Do Your Homework:

Research is your best ally. Understand what drew you to the position, and how it aligns with your career goals, and delve into the company's details. Prepare questions you want to ask, as knowledge is the key to confidence.

2. Preparation is Key:

You can never be too prepared. If possible, inquire about the interview structure in advance. This ensures you know what to expect. For additional interview preparation tips, check out our Interview Preparation guide.





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3. Tech Talk:

If you're using a mobile phone, consider using a headset for hands-free note-taking. Unreliable signal? Opt for a landline. And, don't forget to turn off call waiting to avoid any distractions.

4. Practice Makes Perfect:

Whether it's practicing in front of a mirror, recording yourself, or enlisting the help of a friend, rehearse your responses. This will boost your confidence and help you identify and correct any speaking issues.

5. Dress for Success:

Even though you're in your own space, wearing your best attire can put you in the right frame of mind and boost your self-assurance.

6. Find a Quiet Nook:

Distractions can derail your interview. Avoid interruptions from the barista, your daily dose of 'Doctors,' or sudden disconnects while traveling through a tunnel.

7. Smile Before You Dial:

Smiling can help you forget your nerves and exude confidence, even if your interviewer can't see you.

8. Set Up a Workspace:

Sit at a table or desk with your notes, application or CV, interview details, pen, and paper within reach. Keep them neat and organized for easy reference.

9. Master Your Words:

Without body language, your words are your main tool. Use active listening skills, and incorporate phrases like 'right,' 'okay,' and 'mhm.' Speak clearly, slowly, and avoid interrupting the interviewer.

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10. Embrace the Pause:

Don't hesitate to take a moment to think, seek clarification, or ask for time to reflect on a question. This allows you to compose your thoughts and answer effectively.

Following this survival guide will significantly increase your chances of progressing to a second interview. If not, consider reaching out to your interviewer for feedback; even a few small pointers can make a big difference. For sample questions you might encounter during a telephone interview, check out our Competency-Based Interview Questions.

Avoid These Bad Habits

During a telephone interview, steer clear of the following habits:

- Eating your lunch or sipping a beer
- Taking other calls or responding to texts
- Checking and replying to emails
- Slouching on the couch
- Scrolling through Instagram, TikTok or Facebook

By adhering to these guidelines and steering clear of common pitfalls, you'll be well-prepared to ace your next telephone interview. Good luck!