



Are You Ready To Be Interviewed By Phone?

All too often, job seekers aren't prepared to conduct a full-blown job interview by telephone. Yet employers increasingly are relying on telephone interviews to screen applicants more thoroughly to determine if there's a fit before flying them out. This way, employers save time and expensive travel and lodging costs.

1. Always be prepared for a full-blown interview, not just a quick screening. Have copies of your resume and cover letter stored somewhere near your phone to use as a guide.
2. Be ready to answer why, when and how regarding your educational background and work experience. Telephone interviewers favor these types of questions because they help screen applicants faster. Typical queries include: When did you encounter the greatest challenge of your career to date?
3. Take charge of the phone interview after the first five minutes or so, but not before. Telephone interviewers usually are practiced at taking control and need to impose their agenda right away. At this point, they're bent on doing more talking than listening, so listen carefully before you speak.
4. Be ready to give a 60-second commercial to interviewers that outlines the highlights of your background, skills and knowledge. This description should qualify you and justify your reason for wanting to work for the company.

Tough Questions

If you aren't accustomed to being interviewed by phone, some questions may seem particularly difficult to answer. Here are suggested ways of handling those common queries: "Describe what you do." This typical telephone interview question is usually asked early on and resembles the "Tell-me-about-yourself" query in face-to-face meetings. When answering, give a concise, one-minute, fact-filled account of your most current achievements. Be sure to come out of the starting gate running hard with a confident, clear description of your strongest skills and achievements.

- Ex: "I'm quite surprised to hear you say that. Let me recap the match points between my background and the job as you've described it. If you need additional information or more supportive evidence, please jump in and ask." This response leaves the door open for the interviewer to cover more basics and fill in the cracks, which could change the picture in your favor.

If your image is better projected in person, press for a personal interview.