

## TELEPHONE INTERVIEW

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- A lot of the advice for a telephone interview would be the same as for a normal interview. We have a lot of resources on our website that would be useful for you see:
  - Preparing for interviews-self assessment and research.
  - Particularly – download the “[interview Help sheet](#)” under “Resources” on the right hand side of the page.
- Then specifically for telephone interviews, please see below:
  - 2 useful websites on telephone interviews and how to prepare can be found at:
    - <https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/interview-types/273645-how-to-handle-a-telephone-interview>
    - <http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/ivphone.htm>

### Telephone Interviews

#### Be Prepared to Interview

Prepare for a phone interview just as you would for a regular interview.

- Before the call, confirm all the details, including the date, time, and who you will be talking to. Be sure you know whether the interviewer is calling you or if you need to make the call.
- If something goes wrong and you miss the call, or the recruiter doesn't call on time, don't panic. You should be able to get the call back on track or reschedule if need be by contacting the recruiter.
- Check your voicemail message – is it something you would be happy for a potential employer to hear? If not, re-do it.
- Turn call-waiting off so your call isn't interrupted.
- Clear the room - evict the kids and the pets. Remove all distractions, turn off the stereo and the TV. Close the door.
- SMILE – smiling whilst on the phone has been proven to improve tone and the way you come across on a call.
- Consider sitting at a desk, it may help you feel more professional than sitting on your bed.
- Keep your CV in clear view, on the top of your desk, or tape it to the wall near the phone, so it's at your fingertips when you need to answer questions.
- Have a short list of your accomplishments available to review.
- Create a checklist. Review the job posting and make a list of how your qualifications match the hiring criteria.
- Have a pen and paper handy for note taking.
- Listen carefully to the questions and allow the interviewer to finish each question before starting to answer. Don't worry if you need a few seconds to think of a response, but don't leave too much dead air. If you need the interviewer to repeat the question, ask

## Practice Interviewing

Talking on the phone isn't as easy as it seems. Practice, practice, practice! Have a friend or family member conduct a mock interview so you can see how you sound over the phone.

### During the Phone Interview

Don't smoke, chew gum, eat, or drink.

Do keep a glass of water handy, in case you need to wet your mouth.

Smile. Smiling will project a positive image to the listener and will change the tone of your voice.

Speak slowly and enunciate clearly.

Use the person's title (Mr. or Ms. and their last name.) Only use a first name if they ask you to.

Don't interrupt the interviewer.

Take your time - it's perfectly acceptable to take a moment or two to collect your thoughts.

### After the Interview:

Take notes about what you were asked and how you answered.

Remember to say thank you.

While you're job searching, it's important to be prepared for a phone interview on a moment's notice. Many companies start the [interview process](#) with a phone call to discuss the job opportunity with a prospective employee, determine if the candidate is a good fit, and to gauge his or her interest in the position.

In many cases, your [interview will be scheduled in advance](#) by email or phone. In others, you may receive a surprise phone call asking if you're available to chat about a job.

You never know when a recruiter or a networking contact might call and ask if you have a few minutes to talk, so always answer the phone professionally, especially if the number is unfamiliar. You should also make sure that your outgoing voicemail message is professional.

## Why Companies Use Phone Interviews

Why do companies use phone interviews? Employers use telephone interviews as a way of identifying and recruiting candidates for employment. Phone interviews are often used to screen candidates to narrow the pool of applicants who will be invited [for in-person interviews](#).

They are also used as a way to minimize the expenses involved in interviewing out-of-town candidates. For remote positions, a phone interview may be the only option.

### How to Ace a Phone Interview

Before you get on the telephone to interview for a job, review these phone interview tips and techniques so you can ace the interview and make it to the next round.

Prepare for a phone interview just as you would for a regular in-person interview. Compile a list of your [strengths](#) and [weaknesses](#), as well as a list of answers to typical [phone interview questions](#). In addition, have a [list of questions](#) ready to ask the interviewer.

If you have advance notice of the interview, make sure to review the job description and do a bit of [research on the company](#).

Take the time to [match your qualifications to the job description](#) so that you can speak to why you're a strong candidate for the position. Review your resume, as well. Know the [dates when you held each of your previous jobs](#), and what your responsibilities were.

You should feel comfortable and ready to discuss your background and skills confidently during a phone conversation. Have a copy of your resume nearby, so that you can refer to it during the interview. Also, have a copy of the job posting and a copy of your cover letter if you sent one.

## Practice Interviewing

Talking on the phone isn't as easy as it seems. As with an in-person interview, practice can be helpful. Not only will this help you rehearse answers to common phone interview questions, but it will also help you realize if you have a lot of verbal ticks, fail to enunciate, or speak too fast or too slow.

For practice, have a friend or family member conduct a [mock interview](#) and record it so you can see how you sound over the phone. Once you have a recording, you'll be able to hear your "ums" and "uhs" and "okays" so you can practice reducing them from your conversational speech. Listening to the recording will also help you pinpoint answers that you can improve.

If you don't have someone who can help, practice answering your own questions. You don't need to memorize answers, but having a sense of what you're going to say will help reduce your nerves and make your responses sound more natural.

## Get Ready for the Call

Before the call, [confirm all the details](#), including the date, time, and who you will be talking to. Be sure you know whether the interviewer is calling you or if you need to make the call.

If something goes wrong and you miss the call, or the recruiter doesn't call on time, don't panic. You should be able to [get the call back on track or reschedule if need be](#).

Use a quiet, comfortable, and private space with no distractions so you can focus on the interview.

Proper Phone Interview Etiquette

Review these guidelines for appropriate phone interview etiquette, so you make the best impression on your interviewer.

**Answer the phone yourself.** First, be sure to let family members and/or roommates know you are expecting a call. When you answer the phone, respond with your name, i.e. "Jane Doe" (in a perky tone of voice), so the interviewer knows they have reached the right person.

**Listen carefully to the interviewer** and don't start speaking until the interviewer finishes the question. If you have something you want to say, jot it down on your notepad and mention it when it's your turn to talk.

**Don't worry if you need a few seconds to think of a response**, but don't leave too much dead air. If you need the interviewer to repeat the question, ask.

## Phone Interview Tips

Follow these tips for a successful phone interview:

**Create a checklist.** Review the job posting and make a list of how your qualifications match the hiring criteria. Have the list available so you can glance at it during the interview.

**Have your resume handy.** Keep your [resume](#) in clear view (either on the top of your desk, or tape it to the wall) so it's at your fingertips when you need to answer questions.

**Be prepared to take notes.** Have a pen and paper handy for note-taking.

**Don't get interrupted.** Turn off call-waiting so your call isn't interrupted.

**Reschedule if you have to.** If the time isn't convenient, ask if you could talk at another time and suggest some alternatives.

**Clear the room.** Evict the kids and the pets. Turn off the stereo and the TV. Close the door.

**Use a landline.** If you have a landline, use that instead of your cell phone. That way, you'll eliminate the possibility of poor reception or dropped calls.

### **Do's and Don'ts during the Phone Interview;**

**Do** use the person's title (Mr. or Ms. and their last name.) Only use their first name if they ask you to.

**Don't** smoke, chew gum, eat, or drink.

**Do** keep a glass of water handy, though. There's nothing worse than having a tickle in your throat or a cough starting when you need to talk on the phone. Have a glass of water ready so you can take a quick sip if your mouth gets dry.

**Do** smile. Smiling will project a positive image to the listener and will change the tone of your voice. It can also be helpful to stand during the interview, since this typically gives your voice more energy and enthusiasm.

**Do** focus, listen, and enunciate. It's important to focus on the interview and that can be harder on the phone than in-person. Be sure to listen to the question, ask for clarification if you're not sure what the interviewer is asking, and speak slowly, carefully, and clearly when you respond. It's fine to take a few seconds to compose your thoughts before you answer.

**Don't** interrupt the interviewer.

**Do** take your time. It's perfectly acceptable to take a moment or two to collect your thoughts.

**Do** take notes. It's hard to remember what you discussed after the fact, so take brief notes during the interview.

**Do** give short answers. It's important to stay focused on the questions and your responses.

**Do** have questions to ask the interviewer ready. Be prepared to respond when the interviewer asks whether you have any questions for him or her. Review these [questions to ask the interviewer](#) and have a few ready in advance.

**Do** remember that your goal is to set up a face-to-face interview. At the end of your conversation, after you thank the interviewer, ask if it would be possible to meet in person.

### **Follow-Up after the Interview**

As the interview winds down, make sure to say thank you to the interviewer. Ask for the interviewer's email address, if you don't already have it. Send out an [email thank-you note](#) immediately, thanking the interviewer and reiterating your interest in the job. You can also use your [thank-you note](#) as a way to provide information on anything regarding your qualifications you didn't get a chance to mention during the phone interview.

When the interview is over, carefully review any notes you were able to take during the conversation. Jot down what types of questions you were asked, how you responded, and any follow-up questions you may have if you have an opportunity for an [in-person interview](#) or a second-round phone interview.