

# Tackling Phone Interviews

**W**hile face-to-face interviews are still the norm, your first step in the door to many companies may be over the telephone.

Phone interviews are becoming more common as companies recruit from geographically diverse areas, often wanting to pre-screen candidates over the phone before paying for travel or taking up a hiring manager's time.

If you find yourself needing to conduct a phone interview, here are a few tips.

## USE A WIRED PHONE

Even the best cell phones can drop calls at inopportune times, and few calls are more important than over-the-phone job interviews.

If you don't have a wired phone line at your home, see if you can borrow one from a friend or neighbor. Traditional telephones are more reliable and usually have a better sound quality than their wireless counterparts, so don't leave anything to chance.

## HAVE CONFIDENCE

For most jobs, the worst thing you can do on a phone interview is to sound timid, quiet or shy.

The hiring manager will be judging you based entirely on your voice and how you answer questions verbally, so practice beforehand so you can give bold, confident answers over the phone. You should do your best to come



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across as an intelligent, articulate person.

## DON'T BE COCKY

At the same time, overconfidence can become a problem.

If you sound like a know-it-all, people won't want to work with you — and chances are the boss won't want to hire you, either. You want to sound smart and capable, but not to the point that you look like a jerk.

It can be a tough balancing act for some people, depending on their personality. You want to be bold and clear about your accomplishments, but you don't want to brag about yourself to the point of being rude. The lack of

real, face-to-face communication can make your job even tougher because you can't see how the interviewer is responding to your answers.

## A PROFESSIONAL IMAGE

Remember not to chew gum, drink, eat or smoke during the phone interview. Even though you may have nervous habits, you need to project your very best image on the phone.

You'll also want to speak clearly and give short answers because no one likes to hear someone ramble endlessly about themselves. Practice speaking in sentences that are short and to-the-point, and make sure you leave time for the interviewer to talk and ask questions thoroughly. You shouldn't talk over them.

## JOB TIPS

### Get info before an interview

Before you go into a job interview, it's important that you find some information about the company you might be working for. You want to understand the basics of what the company does and how your job would fit into that mission.