



# Telephone Interview Tips

blueskies

You should never under estimate the importance of a telephone interview; it is the first real step to differentiating yourself from the competition. An interview is still an interview, even if you don't have to go into their offices. You still need to be as prepared and well presented as you would be for a face-to-face interview.

Telephone interviewers may just be looking for a confident manner and intelligent responses to some set questions. However, you may find you are on the phone for an hour and a half and are expected to answer detailed questions about previous roles and achievements.

We have put together our top tips for making sure your telephone interview goes as smoothly as possible.

1

### Give Yourself Time

Organise a time when you have at least 30 minutes free, when you will not be disturbed. The longer the call, the better you are doing, so you don't want to be in a position where you have to cut it short. Having to rush and being aware of the time will only increase stress.

2

### No Interruptions

Make sure you don't have any, whether it is a family member or notifications from your mobile phone. The smallest interruption can distract you from your answer you are giving and may give the impression the interviewer hasn't got your full attention.

3

### Relevant Information

Make sure you have your CV and any relevant information in front of you, job spec etc. Make a list of bullet points of anything you want to cover off. Be sure to sound prepared and composed, if you sound confused and disorganised you might not get a second chance.

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### Be Prepared

You should have some information from the prospective employer about the role and company. Think about answers you might give to their questions, particularly for competency based questions. Do your research and prepare some questions to ask them exactly as you would for a regular interview.

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### Answer the Phone With Your Name

To avoid an awkward start to the call, take charge by answering the phone by stating your name. This lets the person on the other line know exactly who you are and saves them the trouble of asking for you. Know exactly how you will greet the caller and start the conversation.

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### Smile

Smiling when you speak brings energy and excitement to your voice. When speaking on the phone, your voice actually loses about half of its energy during transmission. Make sure your enthusiasm gets across by overcompensating.

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### Body Language

This is the tricky thing about the telephone interview – you can't judge reactions in the same way as when you are face to face with an interviewer. It's a little harder to engage the interviewer in a two-way conversation if they have a schedule of questions and a row of tick boxes. As you don't get the feedback or body language information that help in the face to face situation, it might be useful to ask questions such as "is that what you needed to know?" or "do you want me to go into more detail?"

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### During the Interview

Make sure you sound enthusiastic, the sort of person they want on the team. Pace yourself, a good interviewer knows you may need a little time to compose a good response, so do take time to think about answers. Be aware that they may be pushing you to answer as part of their interview technique. Listen carefully and if you don't fully understand the question, ask for clarification. Don't allow yourself to become flustered, especially if some of the questions seem either irrelevant or overly-specific. And remember the interviewer may need some time to make notes between questions so don't worry unduly about short silences, be patient.

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### Follow Up

Make sure you have the interviewer's email details so that after the interview ends you can write them a thank you note, so as to reiterate your interest in the role and outline key points discussed and what you think you bring to the table.

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