



## PREPARING FOR A SUCCESSFUL PHONE INTERVIEW

Phone interviews are a common first step in the hiring process and are typically done as a way to screen from a group of qualified candidates. In some cases, phone interviews can result in a hiring decision, but this approach is more commonly used to select a handful of individuals for in-person meetings. There are two types of phone interviews, unscheduled & scheduled:

**Unscheduled phone interviews:** This is when you're called and asked a few questions about your resume or application. The caller might not say this is an interview, but if they're asking questions which impact your chances of getting a job, it's an interview. You should be ready for this type of interview anytime you're applying for positions. Typical questions might be to talk more about specific items on your resume, why you want this position, what you know about the organization, or to just tell them more about you. Stay calm when answering. If they ask "is this a good time to talk", it's alright to tell them you're in the middle of an important task or driving, but look forward to speaking with them and will call back in a few minutes. Use this time to collect your thoughts, get a copy of your resume, and move to a quiet environment.

**Scheduled phone interviews:** You know when this call is coming and should prepare just like you would for an in-person interview. The only difference is that you can have notes available for expected questions, if needed. Everything else should be the same in your presentation, meaning that you should dress the part, sit-up straight, smile, and demonstrate how you can add value to their organization.

Other items to consider for a phone interview include:



**Prepare the environment:** Remove distractions, use a traditional land line (if possible) to prevent a dropped call, have some water and your notes ready.

**Start and End on a positive note:** You should start the interview by thanking them and end by showing interest and asking about next steps in the process.

**Be ready to discuss your resume:** Have a copy in front of you, but don't just repeat the same words on the resume. Provide examples that show your value.

**Check your energy level, tone, and delivery speed:** Successful communication is a combination of verbal and nonverbal elements. During a phone interview, they can't see you which makes the way you deliver the message much more important. Have a good energy level but don't allow this to result in an awkward tone of voice or rapid-fire talking.

**Remain professional:** Don't assume the environment is less formal and let your guard down.

**Ask good questions:** Just like an in-person interview, you need to have good questions ready to ask them.

**Send an immediate thank you email:** You won't get a chance to shake hands as you walk out the door, so make sure to send everyone on the call a short email.