

Telephone interview tips

Be on your very best behaviour

A phone interview is the very best way to check on a candidate's telephone manner, especially where telephone manner and customer contact are key parts of the role. Sometimes, role play can be used to assess a candidate's strengths and weaknesses.

Dress Smart

Psychologically, your dress has an impact on the way you carry yourself and behave. If you are wearing a shirt, trousers and suit, you will carry yourself in a more positive way than if you are slouched in jeans and a t-shirt. This will come through in your voice.

Shut out noise

Make sure your surroundings are quiet and that you won't be disturbed. Shut the door, turn off the radio, and any phones you are not using.

Have pen and paper to hand

Make notes of what is covered - you may be asked the same questions if invited to a second interview.

Know your CV

Plan what might be asked in the interview beforehand, e.g. personal details, education, career history, experience. The interviewer will be aiming to match candidates against the job description and person specification so re-read thoroughly.

Answer with confidence

Just the way you answer the phone has an impact on the person calling. Talk distinctly and clearly. If you're not confident in your speaking voice, you cannot compensate for it in other ways on a telephone interview.

Make a connection

Try to establish something in common. Ask about the caller's experience with the company or mention something you have read about the company.

Let silence be golden

Watch out for awkward silences, umms and errs, and unintentional interruptions - by either the candidate or interviewer. If you need a minute to compose your thoughts, don't be afraid to ask for a little time before answering.

Stand Up

If you stand up rather than sit down, your voice will naturally sound more convincing and clear and many people feel more confident standing rather than sitting down – sounds crazy, but it's true.

Mobile Reception

If you are having your interview on a mobile phone, make sure that the battery is fully charged and that you get an excellent reception where you are going to be taking the call. Also make sure there is no background noise and you will not be disturbed.

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Smile

Even though no-one can see you, smiling will help you to relax, feel and sound positive.

A two-way process

You should be given the opportunity to ask questions - make sure you have some in mind.

End on a positive note

Thank the caller for their time and express interest in the opportunity. Don't be afraid to ask what the next stage is and always call your consultant straight after the interview to tell them how it went while it is still fresh in your mind.

Remember, these points alone won't get you the job.... 'you' will get you the job by knowing your CV, skills and experience and answering questions as best you can. If you follow these tips too, they could just give you that extra 10% and make the difference.

Good Luck!!