

Successful Phone Interviewing

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A phone interview gives an interviewer a better idea of who the person behind the [resume](#) is. Todd Bermont of The Careers College gives his top five dos and don'ts below, so you'll shine over the phone and land that face-to-face interview:

Don't "wing" your phone interviews. Do prepare as if they were face-to-face interviews.

Prepare and practice at least three hours for every one-hour phone interview. Research the company, know their mission statement, and create a message about how you can help them succeed. Finally, put together a list of questions you want to ask about the opportunity.

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Don't talk too much. Do ask open-ended questions.

When it comes to job interviewing, we were given two ears and one mouth for a reason. We should be listening twice as much as we are talking. The best interviews are the ones where the interviewer is doing most of the talking. Ask open-ended questions that will help you uncover the interviewer's vision of the ideal candidate, the challenges the company is currently facing, the needs for the position, and the critical factors necessary to succeed on the job. With that information, you can position yourself as the best candidate for the job.

Don't forget to confirm logistics. Do confirm time, time zone, and so on.

In many cases, you'll be interviewing with someone far away. Many a phone interview was missed because the time zone was not confirmed. Are you sure that your 9:30 a.m. interview is at 9:30 a.m. your time? Make sure you confirm not only the time but also the time zone. Secondly, confirm who will initiate the call and what numbers will be used. Get the interviewer's land line and cell phone in case connections are missed.

Don't forget to ask for the order. Do determine your desired outcome and go for it.

Usually, the goal of a phone interview is to earn a face-to-face interview. During your phone interview, show the proper enthusiasm for the job. At the end of the interview, convey your interest and ask for the next step in the hiring process.

Don't set yourself up for failure. Do position yourself for success.

That means, ideally, taking the interview in a secluded and quiet home office. Try to use a land line if at all possible, because cell phone connections can be dropped. Remove any clutter from your home office so you can fully focus on the interview. Dress as if you were in a face-to-face interview. Smile and keep the proper posture. Even try taking the call standing up, as you will sound more authoritative and confident. Over 90 percent of all communication is non-verbal, even over the phone. Interviewers can sense your subconscious energy.

Finally, believe you are the best person for the job. If you don't believe it, nobody else will. Visualize the success. Have fun, be prepared, and expect success, and you'll have winning phone interviews.

(Get more [tips on effective interviewing](#).)

Todd Bermont is the dean of The Careers College and the author of "10 Insider Secrets to a Winning Job Search." Online job-search and career-transition courses taught by Todd Bermont are available at www.TheCareersCollege.com.

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