



Telephone Interview Preparation:

Be Ready for the Call Respond to voice mail messages within 24-hours. Keep your resume, notepad and pen near your phone. Find a quiet spot and eliminate any distractions such as the TV, radio, children etc. Prepare a cheat sheet outlining your accomplishments and past experiences. Get comfortable. Sit in your favorite chair. If you prefer to stand, go for it. They'll never know. Keep a glass of drinking water nearby, just in case. If you are completely caught off guard when an unscheduled call comes in, politely ask the employer if you can call back within 10 minutes...and don't keep them waiting! Exude Enthusiasm and Professionalism Make sure you sound excited, try smiling, even though they can't see you, it helps you sound friendlier. Block call-waiting on your phone ahead of time. If that's not possible, ignore it when it beeps. Don't be surprised if you're put on speaker phone and have more than one person asking you questions. Speak succinctly about your background and experiences, keeping responses to one minute or less. Always have a general set of questions prepared to ask the interviewer(s).

A telephone interview will most likely focus on “Soft Skills.” These skills include characteristics and attributes which are best determined in a dialogue and conversation such as:

- **Temperament**
- **Listening Skills**
- **Reasoning**
- **Interest Level**
- **Passion**
- **Energy/Enthusiasm**
- **Ambition/Initiative/Drive**
- **Level of research conducted on the hiring company.**

Never allow yourself to begin a telephone interview while:

- **Driving**
- **Using a cell phone if possible to avoid**
- **In a noisy area**
- **At a location where you can not speak freely and candidly.**

If you must use a cell phone, pull over, shut off the car engine, make sure you have a fully charged battery or adapter, have the strongest possible signal and have at least 30 minutes to devote.

Any of the above can and will jeopardize your telephone interview results. Each week I personally see candidates being “Knocked-out” for reasons such as the above, even though we warn them preemptively.

Things to remember: Have your resume out.

1. Don't read too much into the way an interviewer responds to your answers, some people. Especially HR professionals have great poker faces. Always act as if things are going excellent.
2. Always **project a positive image**. Don't talk negatively about past employers or position responsibilities. You can justify your decision without, bashing, anyone.
3. Smile when responding, even if you have to force yourself or think it's silly, do, it affects the tone and quality of your voice over the phone.

4. Pull out the job description to help to refresh your memory about your past accomplishments before you get asked the questions. You won't have to appear to be digging for answers.
5. The money question: If you get asked about your current compensation, answer honestly and accurately, don't hedge. Make sure to include all the things that make up your compensation; base, bonus, vacation, 401k, stock options. **When they ask what you're looking for in an offer.** Tell them you don't have a hard number in mind but that you certainly would expect to improve on your current compensation and leave it at that. If you lock yourself into a number that is the number they will use for any offer or consideration when weighting candidates.
6. Lastly and this as soon as you hang up the phone please call or email me and give me your feedback THANKS.

I suggest asking these questions to the interviewer:

1. "What do you consider the most important attribute in the person you hire?"
2. "Will it be possible to meet the people I'll be working with?"
3. "Is this position new or is it a replacement?"
4. "When would you like to meet in your office?"

You should also be prepared to answer questions like these:

1. "Which of your last jobs did you enjoy most? Why?"

2. "Which of your last jobs did you enjoy least? Why?"
3. "Why are you considering leaving your present employer?"
4. "What are your career goals?"
5. "What are you looking for if you decide to make a change?"
6. "What are your outside interests?"

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