



## Tips for Phone Mock Interviews

### What are phone interviews and phone screenings?

- Some employers use phone calls to pre-screen candidates before offering in-person interviews.
- Some employers conduct interviews by telephone — they usually tell you this and formally schedule the telephone interview in advance, but some may informally do this without warning.
- A phone interview can be a screening step before an in-person interview. Keep in mind that different employers have different methods of screening candidates, so you should be prepared for all possibilities.

### Before you give your phone number to any employer

- When you give your phone number, you expect to be called.
- The moment you in any way make your phone number available to an employer -- whether on your resume, an e-mail, an online application, etc. — you should be prepared for the possibility of receiving a call from an employer.
- Don't be surprised. Do be prepared because you may be evaluated on your telephone conduct.

### Phone Etiquette

In the event that your voice mail is reached, be sure it is appropriate, simple and with your name clearly stated so the employer knows she or he is reaching the intended person, and may be more likely to leave a message.

#### **Deciding to answer your phone.**

If you are not in a situation appropriate to receive a call from an employer (noisy location, or quiet location in which you should not be speaking on the phone), let the incoming call go to your voice mail. Return the call promptly in an appropriate location.

#### **Answering and inconvenient timing:**

If you do answer your phone, and the employer has reached you at a time when you can't speak with him/her, it's perfectly appropriate to politely explain this and offer to call back at a time convenient to the employer. For example, "I am so sorry that I'm not able to talk with you now. Is there a time I can call you back at your earliest convenience?"

#### **For scheduled-in-advance phone interviews:**

In some cases, the employer will contact you (by phone, e-mail, etc.) to set a specific time to conduct a phone interview. When you agree to that scheduling, you are committing to a business appointment and you should be fully prepared.



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### Before the phone interview

- Prepare for a phone interview just as you would for a regular interview.
- Compile a list of your strengths and weaknesses, as well as a list of answers to typical phone interview questions. Plan for a conversation about your background and skills.
- Keep your resume in clear view, on the top of your desk, or tape it to the wall near the phone so it's at your fingertips.
- Have a short list of your accomplishments available.
- Have multiple pens (just in case one decides to stop working!) and paper handy for note taking.
- Clear the room of people and any distractions. Place a note on the door indicating "Interview in progress, please do not disturb," to eliminate the risk of someone walking in on you.
- Unless you're sure your cell phone service is going to be perfect, consider using a land line rather than your cell phone to avoid a dropped call or static.
- Practice interviewing with a CREW Counselor before your scheduled appointment.

### During the phone interview

- Silence all text, email, and social media alerts to avoid disrupting the interview.
- During the phone interview, do not chew gum or eat.
- If needed, keep a glass of water handy to drink in between questions.
- Smile. Smiling will project a positive image to the listener and will change the tone of your voice.
- Speak slowly and enunciate clearly.
- Use the person's title (Mr. or Ms. and their last name.) Only use a first name if they ask you to.
- Don't interrupt the interviewer.
- Take your time – it's perfectly acceptable to take a moment or two to collect your thoughts.
- Do not talk too much. Keep your answers short during a phone interview.
- Remember your goal is to essentially gain a face-to-face interview.
- Have at least three questions prepared to ask the interviewer.
- Be sure to thank the interviewer for their time.
- Take notes about what you were asked and how you answered.

### After the interview

- Follow up with a thank you email to the interviewer(s) that reiterates your interest in the job.