



Background Information & Preparation

- Telephone interviews may be used to speed up the selection process and as an initial way to screen applicants.
- Interviewers will sometimes call unannounced. Try to be ready in case this happens to you. If you are given advanced notice, locate a private space with good telephone reception to conduct the call.
- Practice your telephone greeting in advance.
 - Give a pleasant greeting.
 - Thank the interviewer for calling.
 - Ask how the interview will proceed.
- Practice your elevator speech to help you introduce yourself to the caller. A common first interview question is “tell me about yourself.”
- Set up professional voice mail recording in case you miss the call.

Voice Mail and Answering Machine Message

- It is important that your voice mail and email address reflect a professional image.
- If using a landline, let your family, friends, and roommates know you are expecting calls from prospective employers.
- Tell those who answer your phone to use your proper name, not a nickname.
- Do not use inappropriate music for your call waiting.

Telephone Interview Quick Tips

- If the interviewer’s call comes as a surprise, stay calm. Take a moment to remove distractions.
- Write down the person’s name and phone number.
- Answer all questions honestly.
- Act as if you are face-to-face with the interviewer.
- Sit-up straight or stand up, concentrate, take notes, and have a copy of the resume and job description in front of you.
- Lower your voice and speak slowly. Don’t rush.
- Rely on your voice to reflect your personality and skill level.
- When the interview is over, take the initiative to find out the next steps.

Present Yourself Well

The caller may make assumptions about you because of your voice. Present yourself to the best of your ability by following these tips.

- Do not let your answer to any question be “I don’t know” or “maybe.” If you are stumped by a question, politely ask if you could return to that question later in the interview.
- Articulate, pronounce, and enunciate your words correctly.
- Use language that is appropriate for the audience.
- Speak clearly; do not mumble.
- Do not talk with your hand by your mouth.
- Be aware of stereotypes (too high pitched, too breathy, etc.).
- Use proper English; avoid slang.
- Avoid filler words (“um”, “sorta”, “you know”, “like”, etc.).
- Your posture and facial expression can impact the tone of your voice. Consider smiling as you answer questions. It may feel unusual but can help your voice convey enthusiasm.

Practice Makes Perfect: Contact the Business Career Center to schedule a practice interview appointment.