

Recruiters may wish to schedule a telephone interview instead of meeting face to face. This method is useful for screening candidates when traveling to an interview site is impractical. Although telephone interviews can seem especially difficult since eye contact is impossible, remember that with a little preparation, you will be on your way to interview success.

Preparation:

- Place your résumé in full view and easily accessible for the interview. It will be a reminder to help you answer questions.
- Keep all employer research materials within easy reach.
- Have a notepad and pen handy to take notes.
- Place a “Do Not Disturb” sign on your door and turn off the stereo, TV, and any other potential sound distraction.
- Alert others that an interviewer will be calling; ask that they allow you to answer the phone.
- Have a glass of water handy.
- Take care of any personal hygiene needs like going to the bathroom prior to the scheduled telephone call.
- Turn off call waiting, if you can. If this is impossible, do not take any other calls while you are interviewing.
- Make certain that the speaker phone is not activated. You do not want to run the risk of the interviewer hearing an echo or not clearly understanding you.
- Prepare yourself for potential questions, as well as those you would like to ask the interviewer.

During the Interview:

- Listen carefully. Do not do anything else while the interviewer is on the phone. The interviewer will notice if you are distracted.
- Speak clearly and smile. It is important for the interviewer to hear enthusiasm in your voice.
- Be honest in your answers even though you are not able to speak face to face.
- Practice giving a brief overview of your work history and be prepared to describe everything included in your résumé.
- Take notes on what the interviewer says and the questions asked. You will be able to refer to them later in the interview.
- If you are to call the interviewer, always be courteous to the support staff. How you interact with them will have an impact on the impression you leave.
- Always refer to the interviewer as Mr., Mrs., or Ms. unless otherwise directed.
- Beware of giving “yes” or “no” answers, which do not provide significant information about your abilities.
- Close the interview positively and with confidence: “It sounds like an interesting opportunity, Ms. Smith, and a position where I could make a definite contribution. I’ll be anxious to hear if it will be possible to meet you personally and continue our discussion.”

Follow-Up:

- Write a thank-you letter aligning your skills with the position for which you interviewed.