

# 22 Tips For Telephone Interviews

By James North

## 22 Tips For Telephone Interviews

James North  
contact@InterviewSell.com

InterviewSell <http://www.InterviewSell.com>

Here we look at telephone interviews. This is an extract from INTERVIEWING FOR JOB OFFERS.

Telephone interviews are a convenient means to screen candidates. They are meant to be a relatively quick and easy way to narrow down the pool of applicants, before compiling a short list for on premise interviews.

The "Most Desired Response" or "MDR" of a telephone interviews is securing a face-to-face interview. It is that simple. Notice, that the MDR of a telephone interviews is slightly different from that of a face-to-face interview. The telephone interview is designed to lead to a face-to-face interview, whereas a face-to-face interview's MDR is often a job offer.

Here is how to prepare for a telephone interviews. Although, it is customary for interviewers to give you advance notice of a telephone interviews, some will not. They will just ring up and go for it. Once you start sending out applications, be prepared for telephone interviews. That call can come at 8am Monday morning, 7pm Friday evening or 9pm Sunday night.

Practice your voice projection. Speak aloud to practice. Ask someone else to listen to you or even record and play yourself back. It's amazing how different you sound. You will notice the bad habits...the "errrrrs" and "ummmmmms."

Obviously, telephone practice as well as general interview and question practice are essential. Further, you should be able to demonstrate a good knowledge regarding the job, company, its' products and services and even its' competitors...that means undertaking research.

Try to anticipate the questions you'll be asked that demonstrate you can do the job. Then, prepare accordingly. Technical questioning on the telephone is common - as a means to screen candidates. The questions may not in great depth, but should be known by a good candidate.

During the interview, the interviewer has only ears with which to judge you, and that is something you must exploit.

## 22 Telephone Interview Tips

1. Have your research and company notes to hand. You should also have a copy of the resume that you sent to that company. Remember, the most effective resume are those that are especially tailored.

2. Take a "surprise" call in your stride. If you are looking for work then no telephone interviews should really be a "surprise."
3. Be calm and collected. Remember to slow your breathing...at least try by counting to 5 with each inhale and exhale.
4. Smile - it really makes a difference in your voice so much so that the person on the other end can tell when you are smiling.
5. Sound positive, friendly, and collected.
6. If you need time say..."Thank you for calling. Would you wait just a moment while I close the door?" Rest the phone as you pull out your resume and company information.
7. Be professional, as if it was a face-to-face interview. Don't be over-familiar with the interviewer. It does happen!
8. You should always refer to the interviewer by his or her surname until invited to do otherwise.
9. Listen carefully to the interviewer. Listening and communication skills are essential.
10. Answer politely and keep to the point...telephone interviews are seldom more than 15 minutes.
11. Have some questions prepared - for example, "What exactly will be the three major responsibilities in this job?" No trapdoor questions!
12. Be factual in your answers.
13. Speak directly into the telephone. Keep the mouthpiece about one inch from your mouth.
14. Do not smoke or eat while on the phone.
15. Shut out all background noise, such as pets, children playing and the television.
16. Take notes. They will be invaluable to you in preparing for the face-to-face meeting. No need to record the conversation...that is a bit over the top!
17. Prompt the interviewer to invite you to interview by saying, "I am immediately available for interview if you would like to arrange one now."
18. If you are invited to an interview take a note of the details and read them back to confirm date, place, time etc.
19. Ask if there is anything you should bring to the interview and ask the format of the interview or process...length and how many interviews are normally undertaken. This information will be excellent when it comes to preparing.
20. Taking care to ascertain the correct spelling and pronunciation of the interviewer's name shows your concern for the small but important things in life--it will be noticed.
21. If you require more details like a Job Description or Person Specification ask for one.

22. Thank the interviewer for her time and that you hope to hear soon. No harm in saying that you are very keen for a face-to-face interview. One school of thought asserts that you should ask three times for an interview; subtly of course.

"I am immediately available for interview."

"I really would like an opportunity to meet you and look around the company."

"I will be in the area on Monday and it is no problem to pop in."

It is difficult to evaluate an opportunity properly over the telephone. Even if the job doesn't sound right, go to the interview. At the very minimum it will give you practice.

Moreover, once you attend a face-to-face interview the job may look that bit more attractive as you gather more facts. You might even discover a more suitable opening elsewhere within the company; it does happen.

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"If you really want something in life, you have to work for it. Now quiet! They're about to announce the lottery numbers." - Homer J. Simpson

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