



While many employers come to campus for interviews, more and more companies use phone interviews to initially screen candidates. Phone interviews also play a key role in most off-campus job searches. In both instances, your performance during this initial screening will determine whether you move on to an in-person interview at the company's office. The following tips will help you succeed in your phone interviews and, hopefully, ultimately secure your desired internship or full-time position.

1. What to do beforehand

Do your research and preparation: Prepare for the phone interview the same way you would for an in-person interview. DO NOT try to learn on the fly during the interview by researching on your computer.

- **Know the job** – What position are you applying for? What makes you uniquely qualified for this position? How does your skill set align with that which the company is looking for?
- **Know the person you're interviewing with** – You will often be told who you are interviewing with by phone before the interview. Spend a bit of time researching that person on the company website, LinkedIn, and Google to try to get to know them before the interview.
- **Call logistics** – Know who will call whom, the exact time, and how long the call will last. Go to a quiet place where you will not have interruptions.

2. What to do during the interview

What to have in front of you: If you've done your homework before the interview, you shouldn't need too much. Do have the following items in front of you:

- Pen/paper for notes, questions, contact information, etc.
- Your resume and the job posting for reference
- A few (2-3) recent news items that might come up in the interview
- A few (2-3) questions that you might ask at the end of the interview

How to listen and answer effectively:

- Allow the interviewer time to finish his/her question before diving in with an answer.
- Answer completely, but don't ramble; phone interviews don't allow you to have visual cues from the interviewer, so keep your answers concise and on-point.
- Feel free to ask for clarification or a moment to think.
- Make a point to speak loudly, clearly, and slowly with clear enunciation, and get your enthusiasm across. Remember, you don't have facial expressions to demonstrate your excitement!

How to make your questions stand out:

- Use your questions to show genuine interest in the job opportunity, display intellectual curiosity, and let your personality show.
- Do your research, but remember that strong questions have answers that you could get only from your specific interviewer, rather than a website, posting, or other resource.
- Make sure that you seem sincere in your questions and don't sound like you're reading from a list. Consider only outlining or 'bulleting' your questions rather than writing them down word-for-word.

3. Phew, you're done! Now what?

- If not explicitly discussed during the phone interview, feel free to ask for information on timing/actions of next steps in the interview process.
- Send a thank you note to the interviewer(s) promptly, generally within 24 hours.