GENERAL TIPS FOR PHONE INTERVIEWS*

- Have your resume in front of you, as well as the job description along with any research notes/questions you have prepared. Have pen and paper on hand to take notes.

- Use a LAN line if possible for better reception, and try to ensure you will not be interrupted during the call.

- Remember, on phone interviews, the interviewer can not see your expressions (hand or facial). Be sure to show energy over the phone - use your voice to show emphasis on points, and be sure to speak loudly enough for the person to hear you.

- Sometimes an interviewer will be on a speaker phone, which can be distracting. Try to work with it assuming you can hear the person well. If not, you might kindly mention that your phone connection is not receiving her/him well. In most cases, the person will take you off of the speaker phone. In some cases where you have more than one person on the interview team, you must adapt. Either way, always accommodate the interviewer.

- Whether it is one interviewer or more than one, if you have not been given names before hand, write down each name (and title if given) as they are introducing themselves. Try to take notes of who is asking the questions – this will help you frame a thank you letter later as you can refer back to the conversation. This is a great way to continue to build rapport.

- As with all interviews….
  
  o Have success stories ready to go - use the "PAR" approach: describe the problem (or challenge), the action you took, and then the result. This will help give context to the interviewer. Make sure to share what your role was, as well as when you had to work with others to achieve results. Showing how you have successfully worked with others can reveal your ability to be resourceful, work across teams, and influence people when you might not have authority. In addition, if you are a manager, it will show your ability to lead and motivate teams.

  o Think about what the interviewer will want to know about you – use the position description as your guide, as well as your research. If you are a career changer, be sure to focus on your transferable skills, rather than on what you don’t have. Translate the qualifications section of the description into questions. For example: If the position requires strong analytical skills, a question to be prepared for might be “Can you tell me about the kinds of work you’ve done that required analytical skills?” Practice your answers – out loud – before the call. Also, use the responsibilities of the job, and frame those into questions.

  o Have at least 3 good questions prepared for the interviewer. These could be asked by you during the conversation so the interview will feel more like a “dialogue.” The goal is to build rapport with the interviewer, so asking them questions is engaging them to participate equally in the interview. Show your personality and interests. Even in the case of a “dialogue,” many interviewers will still ask at the end if you have any questions. Try to have at least one question saved for the end, as well as take this time as an opportunity to reiterate your interest.
In many cases, a phone interview can be used to “screen” you. Sometimes this is a person who wants to see if you are a candidate who should be invited for an in-person interview. They are assessing your skill set, as well as how you will fit culturally. Be prepared for questions like:

- What is your ideal opportunity? Note: this can be from an organization, boss, and position standpoint.
- Why are you interested in this position? What do you know about us?
- Why are you looking to leave your current organization (if applies to you)?
- What are your salary requirements? Note: for tips on how to talk about salary expectations, see below.
- What is your availability to begin a position?
- Are you eligible to work in the United States (for international students)?

Don't forget at the end of the call to reiterate your interest in the position, and ask what next steps might be in the process. Lastly, ask for contact information so you may send them a thank you letter.

**SALARY NEGOTIATION APPROACHES**

*Adapted from a presentation given by Ginny Rehberg’s (The Career Doctor)*

The biggest negotiating ‘mistake’ is to talk about salary too early in the interview process. If you do, it’s easy to get screened out. You might mention a number that is too high or too low. By going first, you lose your negotiating leverage. Delay the discussion as long as you can.

**FIVE WAYS TO AVOID DISCUSSING SALARY WITHOUT ANNOYING THE INTERVIEWER**

**DELAY THE CONVERSATION**
Politely postpone the discussion

“I’d like to know a bit more about the position, and I’m sure you’d like to know more about me, before we discuss the compensation package.”

**THE REVERSE**
Get them to tell you the salary.

“I don’t have a particular number in my mind yet; I’m sure you must have a salary range in mind. What would that range be?”

**THE MARKET**
If the new job pays a lot more than your present job.

“I’ve done some research, and it seems that the market for these positions is in the range of $100,000 to $150,000. I’m comfortable in that range.”

**THE POSITIONS**
If you are interviewing and have other potential offers.

“Positions I’ve been looking at are in the range of $100,000 to $150,000.”

**THE PACKAGE**
If they INSIST on knowing what you make presently.

“My total compensation package, including variable comp was in the range of $100,000 to $150,000.” (The range you mention would include variable compensation such as bonuses, commissions, etc.)

*Always speak in terms of ranges, and make those ranges as broad as possible.*