

# Phone Interview Tips

## *Internship & Job Search Series*

---

*A growing number of employers are using phone interviews as a part of their recruiting strategy. A successful phone interview is the key to landing a face-to-face interview and ultimately landing a job. Consider the following tips to make a great impression over the phone.*

**Use a land line if possible.** Cell phone signals can be choppy. Take advantage of a land line to minimize the risk of disconnection. You can call the CSC at (414) 288-7423 to see if a land line in our office is available for you to use. If a cell phone is your only option, be sure that your phone is fully charged and that you are in a location with excellent reception.

**Minimize distractions.** Take the call in a place where you will be uninterrupted. Be sure to avoid public places to minimize potential noise. Communicate to your roommates that you will be completing a phone interview in advance so they can make appropriate adjustments to provide you with a quiet space if needed. Alternately, call the CSC at (414) 288-7423 to see if an interview room is available for you to use.

**Consider time.** Prior to the interview find out how long the call is expected to last. Then allocate an additional 30 minutes beyond this time in your schedule just in case the interview goes long. Be prepared to answer the phone 10 minutes ahead of schedule in the event that the interviewer calls early.

**Utilize notes.** Your interviewer can't see you. Jot down notes and print a copy of your resume and the job description. This way you can easily reference any of these items as you speak.

**Answer the phone with your name and a smile.** Providing your name makes it clear that the interviewer is speaking to the correct person. Appropriate greetings include "Hello John Doe speaking" or "Good Afternoon this is John Doe". Smile as you speak to create a pleasant tone of conversation. Taking this approach demonstrates your professionalism and creates an aura of positivity.

**Dress up & sit up.** Even though the potential employer cannot see you, dressing up for the interview can help you to get in the right frame of mind. Such confidence can only improve your performance. Additionally, don't forget to sit up or stand up straight during the interview to help stay alert and professional.

**Be cognizant of pauses.** Because the interviewer cannot see you, he/she cannot take cues from your body language as to whether you have paused momentarily or have completed an answer. Keep this in mind as you speak.

**Get the name and contact info for the interviewer.** This will enable you to promptly follow up with a thank you note. It will also help you identify your interviewer should you have the opportunity to meet him/her at a face-to-face interview.

Most face-to-face interviewing tips apply to phone interviews. Check out the Career Service Center's *Interviewing FAQs* handout for additional interview strategies as well as commonly asked questions.