

# TELEPHONE & SKYPE INTERVIEWS

## WHY A TELEPHONE OR SKYPE INTERVIEW?

Employers often request a telephone or SKYPE interview to narrow down their list of candidates. It is often more efficient for both the employer and candidate to have a phone or SKYPE interview as the initial screening interview. For candidates who live farther away, it is also more practical. Prepare for the phone or SKYPE interview as seriously as an in-person interview, it is just as important. Your end goal with a telephone or SKYPE interview is to secure an in-person interview.

## WHAT ARE THEY LOOKING FOR?

Employers are looking to see that you are articulate, present your accomplishments professionally, and to get a sense of how well your personality would fit in with their organization. For SKYPE interviews, they can also see how tech-savvy you are depending on how well you utilize the software. 42% of companies used video interviews to recruit in 2011 - are you ready?

## PHONE INTERVIEW TIPS:

- **Unscheduled phone interview:** If a employer calls you out of the blue, feel free to have them leave a message and call them back as soon as possible when you are in a quiet place where you can focus. Feel free to schedule for a date in the near future at a time & place where you can concentrate.
- **Time Zone:** Ensure that if speaking with someone in a different time zone in the US or internationally, make sure you have confirmed the appropriate time.

### Before the Interview:

- **Preparation:** Research the employer and the job description (have this in front of you)
- Think about what you can do for the employer, and be able to answer questions such as:
  - Why are you interested in our organization? What can you contribute?
  - Why do you want this job/internship?
  - What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
  - What are your career goals?
  - Prepare 1 or 2 questions to ask your interviewer
- **Rehearse** your answers in advance, do a practice interview.
- **Length of answers:** Be mindful not to go on and on in your answers...
- **Technology:** Choose a quiet space with a landline phone (lessens the chance of a dropped call). If using a cell phone, make sure it is fully charged.

- **Take Notes:** Have pen & paper in front of you to take notes, and a copy of the resume and cover letter that you used to apply for the position.
- **Eliminate Distractions:** Make sure pets and family members are not a distraction if calling from home.
- **Dress Professionally** (even though they cannot see you in case of phone - often helps you to get into the zone of a professional interview)
- **Time:** Leave plenty of time before and after the interview

#### **During the Interview:**

- **Answer the call with: This is “(your name)” speaking**
- **Stand up:** Helps to project your voice and ideas.
- **Remember to ask for their contact information**

**After the Interview: Send a Thank You Note and Follow Up Appropriately**

### **SKYPE INTERVIEW TIPS:**

#### **Before the Interview:**

- **Make sure your Skype username and account picture are professional (a variation of your first and last name)**
- **Technology:** We recommend an Ethernet (wired connection) access versus wireless as it is more reliable.
- **Sound Clarity:** Consider investing in a USB-Connected Headset for best sound quality and to reduce feedback from computer speakers. Practice speaking over SKYPE.
- **Put Yourself in the Best Light:** Test out the webcam in advance to ensure a clear image of your face, try to have light in front of you to avoid a shadow.
- **Do a Trial Run:**
  - Practice looking directly into the webcam to make strong eye contact - NOT at screen
  - Ask someone you trust to do a practice interview with you over Skype
- **Dress Professionally:** The interviewer will be able to see your top half - dress as you would for an in-person interview to show that you are taking this as seriously as an in-person interview.

#### **During the Interview:**

- **Start the SKYPE Conversation:** Introduce yourself and thank them for taking the time to interview you.
- **Posture:** Sit up Straight, and Lean in slightly to show your interest.
- **Smile and Speak Clearly:** It can be more difficult to be heard clearly over SKYPE so speak clearly and enunciate as you answer questions.

**After the Interview: Send a Thank You Note and Follow Up Appropriately**

*\*Also see the Center for Career & Professional Development’s Interviewing, Thank You Notes, and Professionalism in Online Communications Tipsheets*