



# PHONE INTERVIEW TIPS

## Why do employers use phone interviews?

Phone interviews are cost effective and take less time than a live interview. In addition, they provide convenience to the interviewee. Some employers use phone interviews in the screening process before bringing the “finalist candidates” on-site. Unscheduled phone interviews let the prospective employer know how well the candidate can think on their feet. Phone interviews are used to confirm resume information, ask basic questions, and inquire about reasons for leaving the previous employer. Overall, the employer is trying to gauge whether you, the position, and the organization are a good fit.

### Before the Interview:

- Confirm all details (date, time, and who you will be talking to). Be sure you know whether the interviewer is calling your or if you need to make the call.
- Keep a log of everywhere you apply to so that you can aptly answer if you are called unexpectedly.
- Practice going through a phone interview.
- Record a professional message for your answering machine or voice mail.
- Dress the part for the interview. Experts say if you’re dressed in a professional manner, you’ll speak the same way.
- Use a landline when possible. You don’t want to have to worry about a dropped call.
- Choose a quiet, comfortable, and private space for the interview. Be sure to communicate with others that you wish to not be disturbed. Turn off all distractions before beginning the interview.
  - If you need to reserve a quiet space on campus, plan ahead and check availability at the Center for Career and Professional Development, the Academic Success Center, or the library.
- Have all your tools organized in front of you:
  - Resume, transcript, and position description
  - A “cheat sheet” with a brief list of your qualifications, strengths, and skills relevant to the job you’re interviewing for
  - Pen and paper to jot the interviewer(s) name(s) down immediately and to take notes
  - Company research (with relevant information highlighted)
  - Questions to ask about the company and position
  - A loosely written outline of points to make or items to cover as you talk about the position
  - A glass of water

## During the Interview:

- Use the interviewer's formal title during the conversation (Mr. or Ms. and their last name). Only use a first name if they ask you to.
- If you are able, stand up to talk. Your position affects the quality of your voice. If you are sitting down or relaxing, you don't project the same readiness and intensity as when you stand up.
- Speak slowly and enunciate clearly.
- Be enthusiastic by showing interest in the position and organization.
- Take notes (important dates, times, duties, trainings, etc.).
- Talk only when necessary. Since you lack the visual cues of body language to assess whether you've said enough, mark the end of your response with a question such as, "Would you like more details of my experience as an intern with XYZ Company?"
- Listen to the interviewer and don't interrupt. If you have something you want to say, jot it down and mention it when it's your turn to talk.
- Ask pertinent and targeted questions about the job and company. Show them you've researched the company and you want to know more.
- Keep your answers focused on experiences from your internship, class work, professional association, or other degree-related experiences. Do not use personal or friend/family-related examples or those from religious organizations.
- If you need a few seconds to gather your thoughts, don't worry, but don't leave too much dead air. If you need the interviewer to repeat the question, just ask.
- Let the interviewer end the interview. Make sure to ask what the next step in the process will be. Also ask for the interviewer's email address. Then you should thank them for their time and reiterate your interest in the position. It is important to show your appreciation regardless of how the interview was conducted.
- Do not:
  - Ask the interviewer if he/she can call you back later
  - Ramble on so the interviewer can't interject or ask more questions
  - Put an interviewer on hold to take a call waiting
  - Eat, drink, or chew gum
  - Type on your computer

## After the Interview:

- Within 48 hours after the interview, send out an email thanking the interviewer for their time.
- Unless otherwise specified, connect with the interviewer after approximately two weeks to check on the status of the job selection process.



# COMPETENCIES & INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Example behavioral interview questions to practicing using the STAR method

	Competency	Definition	Examples of Behavioral Interview Questions
<b>Engagement</b>	<b>Communication</b>	Engaging in dialogue that leads to productive outcomes and points of connection by effectively articulating one's self to individuals within and outside of one's industry or area of expertise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you did not communicate well. How did you correct the situation?</li> <li>___ - Describe a time when you effectively communicated something difficult to a supervisor.</li> <li>___ - Describe the most effective written document, report, or presentation you completed. What made it effective and why are you particularly proud of it?</li> <li>___ - Describe a situation when you were able to guide your interactions with a person or group by effectively "reading" the situation.</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you had to "sell" an idea to your peers or co-workers. How did you do it, and did they "buy" it?</li> <li>___ - Describe a time when you kept other individuals informed about projects or things that impacted their job or role.</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you communicated technical or field-related information to individuals outside of your area of expertise.</li> <li>___ - Describe a time when you disagreed with your supervisor.</li> </ul>
	<b>Collaboration</b>	Developing authentic and mutually beneficial relationships by valuing everyone and taking responsibility for one's role within a team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when building a successful relationship was difficult. What strategies did you employ and what was the result?</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you demonstrated valuing someone who had a different opinion than you.</li> <li>___ - Give an example of how you built and maintained a professional relationship.</li> <li>___ - Describe how you have contributed to your organization's, department's, or employer's goals.</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you worked on a team. What was your role and how did you ensure you met your commitments to the team?</li> <li>___ - Describe a time when you took personal accountability for a conflict and initiated contact with the individual(s) involved to explain your actions.</li> </ul>
	<b>Leadership</b>	Being able to recognize, respect, develop, and capitalize on the unique strengths of individuals from all backgrounds and being an active member in a group that achieves a shared vision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ - Describe a time when you helped a group capitalize on everyone's strengths.</li> <li>___ - Give a specific example of how you helped create an environment where differences are valued, encouraged, and supported.</li> <li>___ - Describe when you initiated a connection with someone from another culture.</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you delegated work to others. How did you decide what to delegate to different individuals?</li> <li>___ - Tell me about the most successful group or team experience. What made it successful, and how have you worked to replicate that experience?</li> <li>___ - Describe a time when you built or helped build motivation or enthusiasm around a goal.</li> <li>___ - Give an example of a time when the result of listening to a team member resulted in solving a problem or achieving a goal.</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you worked with a group on establishing a plan to reach a goal.</li> </ul>

<b>Innovation</b>	<b>Adaptability</b>	Taking the initiative to further enhance one's skill set and being creative with ways of thinking or approaches that allow for action, reflection, failure, and resilience in an ever-changing world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ - What things have you done to become better qualified for your career?</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you needed to learn a new skill. How did you go about developing this skill?</li> <li>___ - Describe a major change that occurred in a role you held. How did you adapt to this change?</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a situation in which you had to adjust to changes over which you had no control. How did you handle it, and in looking back, would you do anything differently?</li> <li>___ - What do you do when priorities change quickly? Give an example of when this happened.</li> <li>___ - Describe a time when you failed and had to demonstrate resilience.</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you adjusted your style or approach when it was not meeting the objectives.</li> <li>___ - Give an example when you took initiative or went above and beyond. What was the outcome?</li> </ul>
	<b>Analytical Skills</b>	Seizing the opportunity for organizational improvement that prompts critical thinking and problem solving by obtaining, processing, and synthesizing information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ - Describe a time when you made a suggestion to improve the work in an organization/company/etc...</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you were particularly effective at prioritizing tasks and completing a project on schedule.</li> <li>___ - Describe a time when you had to analyze information and make a recommendation. What kind of thought process did you go through and what was your reasoning behind your recommendation?</li> <li>___ - Describe a situation where you had a number of alternatives to consider. How did you go about choosing one?</li> <li>___ - Describe a time when you came up with a creative or innovative solution/idea/project/report to a problem.</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you or a team you were on was caught off guard by an unforeseen problem or obstacle.</li> </ul>
	<b>Technology</b>	Employing current and emerging software and tools to solve general and industry-specific challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ - Describe a challenge you had in solving a technical problem. How did you solve it, and how did you know what software or tools you needed?</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you sought out the opportunity to learn a new piece of software or tool. How did you become proficient using it?</li> <li>___ - Give an example of a time where you introduced someone else to a new technological approach to solving a problem.</li> <li>___ - Tell me about how technology played a role in a previous experience. How did you feel about using the technology? What other technologies would have been helpful?</li> <li>___ - Provide an example of when you had to change how you approached your work to adapt to using new technology. What were the challenges and opportunities the new technology brought to your work?</li> <li>___ - Describe a situation where you had to troubleshoot a technology problem.</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you approached your supervisor to recommend implementing new software or tools. What did you see as the pro's and con's?</li> </ul>

<b>Professionalism</b>	<b>Self-Awareness</b>	<p>Understanding one's strengths, limitations, emotions, and biases in a variety of situations and articulating how one's interests, skills, and values align with educational and professional goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ - What challenges did you face in a previous job or leadership role and how did you handle them?</li> <li>___ - What was the most competitive work situation you have experienced? How did you handle it? What was the result?</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you disagreed with a manager or boss. How did you handle the situation, and in looking back, would you do anything differently?</li> <li>___ - What kinds of decisions are the most difficult for you? Describe one.</li> <li>___ - What is something you have done in the past to contribute towards a positive work environment and how did you know it would be considered as positive?</li> <li>___ - Describe a time when you recognized and overcame your biases.</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you were under extreme pressure. How did you handle the situation?</li> <li>___ - Recall a time when you were less than pleased with your performance.</li> <li>___ - Tell me about the most useful criticism you ever received.</li> <li>___ - Do you prefer to work with the "big picture" or the "details" in a situation and why? Give an example of an experience that illustrates your preference.</li> </ul>
	<b>Integrity &amp; Ethics</b>	<p>Making choices and consistently acting in a manner that displays integrity (following internal principles, morals, and values) and ethics (following external laws, rules, and norms) in personal and professional settings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ - Give a specific example of a time when there was no rule or precedent to help you attack a problem.</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you worked in a situation where the rules and guidelines were not explicit. How did you accomplish the task and what things did you take into consideration that helped guide your decision making process?</li> <li>___ - Describe a situation when you were in a moral or ethical dilemma.</li> <li>___ - Give an example of how you have acted with integrity in a work environment.</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you had to handle a tough problem which challenged fairness or ethical issues.</li> <li>___ - On occasion we are confronted with peers being dishonest. Tell about such an occurrence and how you handled it.</li> </ul>
	<b>Brand</b>	<p>Demonstrating the continual development of a positive impression or image in every facet of life while seeking feedback from others to ensure congruence between one's intended and perceived reputation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you sought out feedback from others. What did you learn about yourself?</li> <li>___ - Describe a situation where you worked with the same group of people for an extended period of time. How would they describe your strengths and areas for improvement?</li> <li>___ - Give an example where you adjusted your approach to working with a team after receiving feedback from a peer or co-worker.</li> <li>___ - Tell me about how you decided who to ask to serve as your references for this position.</li> <li>___ - Describe what has impressed you about a previous supervisor or colleague and how you have tried to emulate that quality in your work.</li> <li>___ - Tell me about a time when you put specific things in place to ensure your words met your actions.</li> </ul>

Competency & Definition		Brainstorm Additional Interview Questions
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<b>Innovation</b>	<b>Adaptability</b>	Taking the initiative to further enhance one's skill set and being creative with ways of thinking or approaches that allow for action, reflection, failure, and resilience in an ever-changing world.
	<b>Analytical Skills</b>	Seizing the opportunity for organizational improvement that prompts critical thinking and problem solving by obtaining, processing, and synthesizing information.
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