



Tips for Telephone Interviewing

- **First, prepare yourself.** Tape yourself in a mock interview with a friend on the phone and listen closely for "ums," "uhs," and other annoying dead air fillers. You don't need them; a pause in the conversation is perfectly acceptable, as long as it doesn't stretch out to a couple of minutes. Here, you'll also be able to identify and correct other foibles interrupting the other person, a nervous laugh, sounding too clipped or angry. Practice as much as you can. Close your eyes they're on the phone.
- **Create a peaceful area in which to conduct the interview.** Do not conduct a telephone interview on a cell phone. Turn off the television or radio, and eliminate all other distractions. Make sure you have both your current resume and other critical papers right at your fingertips for quick and easy reference. If you get a little panicky, it's perfectly okay to put the interviewer on hold to take a deep breath or change location. Just don't leave the person hanging for more than 10 seconds.
- **Develop a signature statement.** This is your career proclamation, a one- or two-sentence summary of who you are, why you are interested, and what you bring to the position.
- **Allow the interviewer to guide the conversation, but be mindful of your own contributions.** Avoid one-or two-word answers, use specific examples from your experience to substantiate a point and have some questions of your own for the interviewer that demonstrate your knowledge of the institution.
- **Remember the nonverbal cues you're sending.** It may help to dress up for your phone interview. Your voice will reflect the fact that you're psychologically prepped for the interview. Try also to match your rate of speech to the interviewer's.
- **Put a mirror in front of you.** Here's where you can cheat a bit to give yourself a psychological advantage. If you see in the mirror that you're gesticulating frantically or frowning, you'll know instantly you have to calm yourself down, or paste on a smile and it will be audible in your voice.