

CONNIE'S CAREER CORNER

“A phone interview may be your first step to a new job.”

Tip for the day: “Leadership is a choice, not a position.” By: Steven R. Covey

Q: Dear Connie: I have been applying for jobs and several companies have said the first step will be a phone interview. I have not done an interview on the phone. Can you give me some tips?

A: For most companies, a phone interview is the first step. You may do several phone interviews with different groups at a company before you are invited to come in for a face-to-face interview.

The phone interview has become an excellent way for employers to screen out applicants who are not a good match for the position they are trying to fill. This allows them to “meet” the applicant without the time and expense of a face-to-face interview. Here are some tips that can help you use phone interviews to your advantage:

- Have a friend call you and roll-play a mock phone interview to gain confidence in presenting your skills over the phone.
- Make sure that the room you are in is quiet with no pets, children, or TV, music or cell phone interruptions.
- Have a copy of your resume, a pen, and paper for notes by the phone. The interviewer will probably have a copy of your resume, and this will help you focus on the areas the interviewer is asking questions about.
- Dress up before your interview to put yourself in a business frame of mind.
- Try standing as you talk. You will tend to do a better job of projecting your voice and sound more confident.
- Over enunciate your words. If the interviewer can not understand you, he may assume that potential customers will not be able to understand you either.
- Answer the question clearly and then be comfortable with silence. Your interviewer may be writing down your answer. You do not need to keep talking to prevent silence.
- Prepare a short summary of your skills and how you can benefit the company so you can end your conversation on a positive note.
- Have your calendar with you and be prepared to schedule a face-to-face interview if one is requested.

When you have finished your interview, thank your interviewer for his consideration.