**5. TELEPHONE INTERVIEW CONVERSATION**

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| **KEY TO ACHIEVING SUCCESS IN TELEPHONIC INTERVIEWS By** |
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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | ***GAURAV KUMAR*** *Sr. Lecturer* *Department of Computer Applications* *Chitkara Institute of Engineering and Technology, Rajpura, Punjab* *E-mail: kumargaurav.in@gmail.com* | ***ANU SUNEJA*** *Lecturer* *Department of Computer Applications* *Maharshi Markandeshwar University, Mullana, Haryana* *E-mail: suneja.anu@gmail.com* |   With the revolution of communication technology and mobile equipment, many activities are executed from remote location. Now is the time when we monitor and control various business activities and professional tasks by holding a mobile handset only.  This era of information and communication technology has also influenced the current job market which includes sending interview call letters by SMS, schedule a telephonic interview and even intimation of final result on a ten digit mobile number. Now the Human Resource (H.R.) Department of many organizations is shortlisting and calling the candidates by telephonic conversations. The time is left far behind when there was long wait for the interview call letter to be delivered by the postman. Now, almost every organization believes in the screening the candidates by telephonic interviews rather than sending sealed envelopes with postage stamps. There are many reasons due to which telephonic interviews are planned.  Telephonic interviews are scheduled to determine whether the candidate is competent to face the personal interview or not. Basically, a telephonic interview is the first contact, the candidate establish with the company. Such interviews are often used for shortlisting the candidates in order to narrow the crowd of applicants who will be invited for face-to-face interviews. Moreover, telephonic interviews minimize the expenses involved in interviewing distant candidates. In many cases, candidates belong to remote area and cost of traveling and accommodation is to be reduced by conducting a telephonic interview to save too much time, money and cost. Obviously, in telephonic interviews, no time is spent in railway stations, bus stands, airports or on the highway. Also there is no expenditure on flights, hotels and meals. Candidate can appear in the telephonic interviews while sitting at their home or any other place of convenience.  As you are also searching for the jobs enthusiastically, so be prepared to attend a phone call which may be your initial step to move inside your new office. So, the candidate should always be prepared for a telephonic interview. Therefore, it is suggested not to switch-off the mobile phone because the first call of interviewer can arrive at any time or any occasions. Many candidates underestimate the importance of a telephone interview and talk in casual way. This is the biggest mistake because that is the first impression and interviewer may not call the candidate again. Some candidates believe that a telephone interview is just a formality and consider it a ceremony before a face-to-face meeting. But it is not true. So, candidates are advised to behave in a gentle and sincere manner while receiving the call.  **CHALLENGES IN TELEPHONIC INTERVIEWS**  However there are many advantages of telephonic interviews but there are some complexities and challenges associated with it.   * The candidate can't see the interviewer face-to-face, and therefore their body language can’t be analysed. Here, the concept of seeing into their eyes and gesticulation is nowhere. In telephonic interviews, candidates cannot show the confidence in terms of greeting smile and sitting style. * Every person is not gifted with the attractive Anchor-Like Voice. Sometimes, the candidate is very good in personality and knowledge, but voice is not very impressive. Moreover, pronunciation and dialect of every person is different depending upon the region which is one of the obstacles in effective communication. In this case, telephonic interviews are not successful.   **TIPS TO SUCCEED IN THE TELEPHONIC INTERVIEWS**  Here are some tips which should be followed in the telephonic interviews so that the candidates can be called for the personal face-to-face interview or getting appointment letter in hands. Just as you would prepare yourself for the face-to-face/personal interview, devote some time for planning and preparing for such interviews.  **DO NOT SWITCH-OFF YOUR PHONE** The candidates should keep their mobile phone always ON because the phone call can ring anytime. The battery of mobile phone should be fully charged. In case of meeting or other official appointments, the phone may be placed in vibration or silent mode rather than switched-off. It leaves very bad impression on employer if the phone of candidate is in switched-off mode or giving message that the number is out of service due to low balance.  **ATTEND CALL AT QUIET ROOM** Select a quiet, private room with a cell phone in good working condition. Make sure that you do not receive other phone calls if you know the time of telephonic interview.  **KEEP IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS READY** Keep yourself free at least at the time of interview and make sure that that there is no background noises to disturb and hinder the interview process.  You should be having the copy of your Resume (Professional Profile/CV) that was sent to the company. It will give you the information which information you have sent to the company. You should have a Pen and Paper to note the points. The candidate should keep a calculator and a calendar ready so that any schedule can be fixed or to perform some calculations.  **AVOID RESCHEDULING OF THE INTERVIEW** If you want to change the interview time due to busy schedule, don’t reschedule the interview again and again. It will give bad impression of non-seriousness to the interviewers. Try to reschedule the interview only once if unavoidable. You should not reschedule the interview because of not being prepared. Try to have all the certificates and testimonials with you so that you are ready to give any information on demand.  **RESPOND WITHIN SECONDS RATHER THAN MINUTES** In telephonic interview, the candidate should respond to questions within 1 minute. In case you are thinking for the answers, the first response should be delivered within 10 seconds otherwise simply say sorry. Candidates should avoid lengthy responses because the interviewer expects short answers on phone rather than long stories.  **AVOID ANSWERS IN “YES, NO, YA” LIKE WORDS** The candidate should avoid answers in “Yes”, “No” or “Ya” words. The response delivered by the candidate should be well explained so that it is understood by the interviewer. The candidate should keep the voice clear, conversant and non confusing.  **JUSTIFY YOURSELF** The candidate should be well prepared to justify his/her performance in last few years. It will leave a very good impression on the employer regarding your current status and performance evaluation. Moreover, there is an impression of being confident to the interviewer. The candidate should be able to describe the goals and objectives of professional life. Here, the interviewee should not give more attention of salary and promotion.  **STAY ALONE DURING THE INTERVIEW** Sometimes, the candidates take help of friends during the interview. It is not advisable. You should be alone while appearing for a telephonic interview rather than friends or kids around you. The candidate should thank the interviewer for spending the valuable time and considering you at least for the telephonic interview. The candidates are not advised to smoke, chew gum, eat or drink anything when the interview is going on. It gives the caller a feeling that you are trying to steal some time before answering.  **DELIVER HONEST AND TRUE INFORMATION** One of the important points the candidate should remember is not to give any manipulated or false information while answering the Tell Me about Yourself Interview question. Now days, the organizations are taking help of detective agencies to keep track of candidates’ personal and professional background. Such checks have become very important and strict today. The employer may dismiss the person even after years of working, on the basis of some false information provided during the initial phase of interview.  **COMMONLY ASKED TELEPHONIC INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTED ANSWERS**  There is a series of common questions which are asked during a telephonic interview. These questions are generally asked in almost every interview. Following are the questions and suggested answers -  1. **WHY DID YOU LEAVE THE PREVIOUS JOB ?** This is one of the tough interview questions in which the candidate should answer in calm and honest way. While answering such question, the candidate should not blame their internal politics in ex colleagues or ex boss. It creates very negative idea about your professional approach. In this case, the candidate can give reasons including career growth, scope to explore the skills and learning environment. The candidates should avoid giving reason that the new organization was giving more salary. In such answer, the employer relates the loyalty of candidate with the salary and monetary benefits.  2. **WHAT IS YOUR POSITION IN CURRENT ORGANIZATION ?** Here, the candidate should not boast of his/her position and power in the organization. The candidate is expected to just give a general idea about work profile and experience in the organization.  **3. WHEN YOU WILL BE ABLE TO JOIN THE ORGANIZATION ?** Answer of this question should be ready with the candidate once he/she applies for the job. The candidate is advised to have an idea of joining the new organization keeping in view the schedule and appointments. If the candidate fumble or gets confused to answer this question, the employer may think that the candidate is not sure whether to change the current job or not. So be clear about your decision. There is no need to give exact date and time, but the candidate should be able to give the basic idea of month of joining.  **ANSWER TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION “TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF”**  **This is the first and very basic question which is asked everywhere the candidate joins or going to join. Actually, there are many flavours to answers this question, but it requires some basic components to be told to the interviewer.**  **BRIEF SUMMARY OF PERSONAL PROFILE -**It includes the name of candidate and the place where he/she belongs to. The profession of parents and family members can also be narrated by the candidate. In telephonic interviews, the candidate should avoid telling the hobbies like fishing, making friends etc.  **PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS -** The candidate is required to tell about educational qualifications along with the division and distinctions achieved. However, the marks in each degree, certificate course is not mandatory to tell. In case, the marks or grade is asked, the candidate should have a copy of all the documents to avoid any mismatch in future.  **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND COMPANY PROFILE –**Here, the candidate should describe the professional experience with the name of organization worked with. There is no need to tell the exact salary until it is asked. The nature of job and company profile can be told to enable the employer know the current organization, where working.  **WEAKNESSES AND STRENGTHS –**This is another very common question which is asked in almost every interview. Therefore, it is advised to prepare the answer of this question very carefully. Many candidates tell their strength as weakness to attract the interviewer but the employer is not fool. Be honest while answering this question. The candidate may discuss one or two weaknesses like getting nervous in some situations, lacking in some skills, emotional, sensitive etc. Avoid telling weaknesses like short-tempered, sleeping, laziness and related terms. Moreover, the candidate should not boast on strengths. Strengths should be told in the honest and calm manner so that it marks a positive impact on professional capabilities. The candidate can point out the strengths like   * Positive Attitude with Hard Work * Punctual and Determined * Self-Confidence * Ability to face the failures and recover with confidence * Learn from Mistakes * Quick Learner * Full commitment to work * Highly Energetic * Willing to learn New Things * Good Interpersonal Skills * Well Organizer and Manager * Good Helping Hand * Team Player * Communication Skills * Problem-Solving Ability |