

Kismet Search: Tips for a Phone Interview

Understanding the interview process is one of the most important things a successful candidate can do.

- It's important that you drive a successful outcome from the interview, moving the process forward to the next step, and ultimately to an offer. Companies often don't prepare for the conversation, so your preparation can be most helpful and impressive.
- Frequently, a telephone interview is the first contact between you and the hiring official. The goal of the phone interview is for you to create growing mutual interest, moving the interview to the next step - a face-to-face interview.

Preparing for the phone interview: Successful preparation starts when you accept the phone interview appointment. Understand what the company is seeking and know what areas to review before the conversation. Careful preparation will greatly increase your odds of moving the interview process to the next step. The fact is...there are no perfect candidates. You are always welcome to review any questions or points with your recruiter at Kismet Search before the telephone interview as well.

- **Research the company**, management profiles, and its product via their website and other search engines (Google, LinkedIn, etc.)
- **Review the job description** so you can discuss both the positives and negatives about your qualifications, so you won't be surprised.
- **Review your resume** and make sure that you can discuss the content easily.
- Prepare 10 questions to ask the interviewer on a "cheat-sheet".
(The most common feedback from hiring officials after a phone interview has to do with the questions asked by the candidate. If the questions are well thought out and articulate, if they are open ended questions that allow the hiring official to talk about the company, or their vision for the department, etc., the interviewer will generally come away with a positive impression.)
- **Prepare 5 things that you want to communicate** that would show why you are qualified for the position. Tie those 5 things to the job requirements as much as possible.
(Often companies focus only on your current position, whereas you may have relevant experience from a prior job, which gets missed.)

During the Interview

- Listen fully to the question and then answer when appropriate.
- Do not interrupt...wait a beat before answering or asking a question.
- If you are unclear about what the person is asking you, clarify before answering.
- Have your resume in front of you so you can easily access it.
- Don't chew gum, smoke a cigarette, or curse.
- Most of all, have your questions ready, close your door, and get a drink of water. Go somewhere that people or noise will not interrupt you. *If you are not in a place where you can talk freely, we suggest you set another time to talk.*
- We highly recommend against using a cell phone for the phone interview. This can be a tough one, but a landline always sounds better. There is nothing worse than losing the call or having your cell phone cut in and out during a first conversation.
- If you MUST use your cell phone for the phone interview, we suggest that you treat it like a landline.
- Do not drive your car...or walk around...or talk from the line in a crowded Starbucks, etc. Eliminate any potential distractions. TV, radios, screaming kids, barking dogs in the background...all can change the experience for the person on the other end of the line, usually not in a positive way.
- Take notes during the phone interview. Use these notes later as a reminder for the Thank You letter or e-mail or to prepare for the face-to-face interview.

After the phone interview: Review the conversation with your Kismet Search recruiter immediately afterwards to go over your notes. Let him/her know if you're interested in moving forward and what it'll take for this to happen. If you're not interested, let him/her know why so we can refine your career interests. We often recommend that you write a thank you email to demonstrate your interest and reasons for that interest.

GOOD LUCK!