

THE 'MUCH-FEARED' TELEPHONE INTERVIEW: How You Can Be Successful With These Proven But Simple Strategies

The face-to-face interview, traditionally used by employers in choosing the best candidate for a position, is now frequently reserved only for those who have made that first cut. Alternative formats, such as telephone or video teleconference interviews, are being used much more frequently by companies in their efforts to both save time and reduce travel costs. This trend started in the early 2000s but has increased dramatically since then.

Why Do Employers Use Alternative Formats?

A telephone interview is frequently more convenient, cost-effective, and time-saving for a recruiter or hiring manager than a face-to-face meeting. Frequently a candidate can be fit in first thing in the morning, before lunch or whenever they have a small block of time. A phone call is much less burdensome and time consuming than meeting a candidate face-to-face. The same can be said of the video teleconferencing format to some degree. This may be a little less convenient but still a huge expense avoidance rather than having the candidate flown in.

Preparing For The Interview

Don't be caught off guard when asked to participate in a telephone or video interview. ***Make sure to use these interviews to your own maximum advantage by preparing in advance.*** The successful candidate will put as much effort in to preparing for a telephone or video teleconference interview as a for a face-to-face interview. Unfortunately, sometimes candidates will tend to take these interviews less seriously. This is a mistake. If you're really interested in the position, this interview is the first hurdle you have to pass to make the grade and be seriously considered.

You should review your résumé thoroughly and compare it to the job posting / want ad or job description, if one is available. Develop a 'T-Account'. Strategize a list of bullet points demonstrating how your experience and achievements align with the requirements of the position being discussed. Absolutely research the company just as you would for an in-person interview. ***According to a USA Today survey of executives, 44% said that the most common mistake candidates make during job interviews is to have little or no knowledge of the company.*** Don't be afraid to ask questions, just as you would face-to-face. Your thoughtful questions will go a long way towards demonstrating your critical thinking skills. One suggestion is to prepare a written outline or 'T-chart' of all of the topics you'd want to emphasize. Psych yourself up, just as if you were in front of the interviewer.

Make Sure That You're 'Equipped' For The Interview

For telephone interviews, you should have the following in front of you: small standing mirror, two-minute introduction (*aka* elevator pitch), résumé, cover letter, outline of key selling points for this particular job, and questions about the company and the position. The two-minute introduction can be used when confronted with the often-used ice-breaker, "Tell me about yourself." This introduction should be a condensed summary of what you've accomplished, your education and what you're pursuing at this point in your career. Conclude your pitch stating that the comprehensive match-up of your skills and experience to the company's requirements is why this meeting is taking place. Practice your 'intro' so you are not simply reading it. Practice it over and over. Make it sound natural! Record yourself to improve your presentation! Get comfortable with the words, and the flow should be easy and well-paced. Ask friends or family to listen and give you a critique. This introduction can also be used in face-to-face interviews and is extremely effective for networking meetings.

Definitely dress just as if this was an in-person interview. You'll truly project a more professional image this way. While it

might seem more convenient to just be comfortable in your jeans or pjs and slippers; you will actually lose a bit of your edge. The mirror helps make sure you are smiling - at least once in a while. Nothing is deadlier than a bland telephone call! Smiling comes right through over the telephone; it changes your projection and actually increases the energy.

For on-line video interviews, have your two-minute introduction, résumé, cover letter, outline of key selling points for this particular job, and questions about the company and the position. Of course; to ensure a professional first impression, you'll be wearing your interview / business suit, since the interviewer(s) will get to see you. If you've never used video-conferencing technology before, you should really familiarize yourself with the equipment and its operation before the day of the interview. One characteristic of some video teleconference systems is that there might be a slight time lag from the time you speak to when the interviewer hears you. If you've been following current news events on television, you'll see this frequently with reporters being interviewed *on-location*. Once you allow for the time for the delay - both ways - you'll adjust. Don't be thrown off by this lag time. Again, make sure you remember to smile appropriately from time to time!

The all-Important Follow Up

Once you've gotten through the telephone or video interview, what's next? You should certainly follow up as you would with a face-to-face or in-person interview. You should immediately send a short letter to the recruiter/manager, thanking him/her or them for their time and position yourself as the candidate for the position. Many candidates neglect this critical step. It's invaluable in positioning yourself professionally, setting you apart from 'the rest of the herd' and strengthens the likelihood of making the "short" list. Additionally, if you got that sinking feeling that you gave a bad answer to the interviewer, you now have an opportunity to do some strategic 'damage control'.

How We Prepare For The Future

The job market is continually changing just as rapidly as technology moves forward, and the candidate who positions him/herself as flexible and ready to meet new challenges has a real advantage over those who don't. If you are not comfortable using the tips provided here, you can get in touch with us to remedy the situation. These new skills will serve you well in current and future job searches. Current data (historically proven) shows that the average American will change jobs / careers five to fifteen times within their working lifetime. At Career Development Resources we make use of video recorded 'mock' interviews to make candidates aware of their body language and oral presentation; helping to ensure a top-notch 'performance' for the 'real thing'. We also make sure that clients are well-versed in using Zoom, Teams, and other teleconferencing software and equipment.

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Mark Berkowitz is the owner and President of Career Development Resources, LLC. Changing lives and revolutionizing careers since 1985, Mark provides one-on-one career consulting services, résumé building assistance and guidance to help each client achieve not only job advancement, but lasting and meaningful success in their career path as well. A distinguished figure in his field, Berkowitz is one of the top career builders in the country and has been quoted in nearly two dozen books and publications on the topic of career advancement.

Passionate about empowering others to realize their dreams, Mark served as an executive board member of the Professional Assn. of Résumé Writers and Career Coaches. He has been helping clients successfully advance in and/or change their careers for over 36 years. With a Master's Degree in Career Development and four specialized certifications (National Certified Career Counselor, Certified Professional Résumé Writer, Int'l Certified Job & Career Transition Coach, and Certified Employment Interview Professional), he is uniquely qualified to help you improve your career situation. A recognized expert in the field, he had not only taught in Graduate Schools and led workshops and seminars, but also trained other counselors. Mark served as chairman of the Certification Board for the Professional Assn. of Résumé Writers and Career Coaches and was a founding member of the Career Management Alliance (fkn Career Masters Institute). Additionally, he has shared his expertise in effectively utilizing career assessment tools with graduate counseling students from nearby Fordham University, helping to prepare them for their future counseling careers.

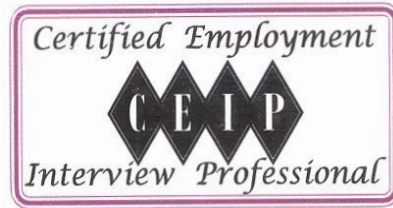
Mark connects with clients locally as well as international clients via the internet. He also provides outreach to high school and college students, presenting career planning and job search strategy workshops.

- Highly regarded with résumés, cover letters, and interview strategies showcased in nearly two dozen books.
- Enjoys an INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION as a "Résumé Guru" by members of the Professional Assn. of Résumé Writers and Career Coaches.

His work appears in nearly two dozen books on résumé /cover letter writing and winning interview strategies. He has been spotlighted on WCBS television in “*Acing The Interview*” and has been named as the “*Professional of the Year 2024*” by the **PODCAST BUSINESS NEWS NETWORK**.



Berkowitz has been recognized as “... *one of the leading résumé writers in the U.S. today*” in Professional Résumés for Executives, Managers, and Other Administrators. Wendy Enelow, President of the Career Masters Institute has acknowledged Mark as “... *one of the most talented career counselors I have ever met.*”



You can contact him at 1+ (910) 833-5013 or cardevres1@gmail.com to find out how he can assist you in launching your career into a higher orbit.

*See how you can benefit from professional expertise
instead of **suffering from your career mistakes.***

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