



Burtch Works' Tips for Phone Interviews

Whether you're a recent grad or still have a few months left, it's never too early to start preparing for interviews. The process typically begins with a phone interview that will cover your background, the company and the position for which you're applying. Be prepared to answer behavioral questions as well as technical questions, as many employers are interested in whether or not you'll be a good "cultural fit" for their organization. Technical questions will measure your skill set and experience (such as internships and academic projects), and are obviously very important. Behavioral questions will demonstrate how you approach problems, how you handle stress, or even what your interests are outside of school.

Make sure to do your homework and research the company (review our whitepaper on researching companies for more tips): visit their website and their LinkedIn page, and learn as much as you can about the specific position you are applying for. The more you know about the company, the better you will be able to show that you want to join *their* company and *their* team, not just *any* company.

As this may be your first phone interview (and even if it isn't) here are some tips that we've found helpful when working with job candidates:

DO

- Practice with a friend beforehand.
- Have at least three specific, job or company related questions ready to ask.
- Speak clearly, loudly, and slowly.
- Do your homework on the company; visit their website and find out about their services and products.
- Send a **personalized** thank you note to anyone you speak to.
- If working with a recruiter, follow up for feedback and next steps.
- Allow your personality to come through; cultural fits are important in a decision.

DON'T

- Use a cell phone unless it's fully charged and you're in an area with good service.
- Talk in a noisy or crowded area; find a quiet, private spot where you won't be disturbed.
- Answer questions with a simple 'yes' or 'no'; give specific examples.
- Ask about salary or benefits.
- Start a phone interview unless it's been scheduled beforehand; if you are contacted directly by a company, schedule for a later time so you have ample time to prepare.
- Speak negatively about previous employers, or if you must, make sure to follow a negative statement with a positive one, for example: "I didn't enjoy the job but I learned a lot about my strengths and preferences, as well as gained valuable workplace experience."



Phone interviews can be extensive, as companies will want to cover a lot of ground before deciding to schedule your on-site interview (which is covered in another whitepaper). If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact us.