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Top 7 Tips to Ace a Phone Screening Interview

WELLESLEY, Ma; ARLINGTON, Va; HARTFORD, Ct; STAMFORD, Ct.

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The phone screening interview can make or break your next opportunity. Will you move on to an in-person interview or get struck from the list?

The most effective way to ace the initial phone screening interview? “Be prepared,” notes Tom McNeil, President of executive resource company MDL Partners (www.mdlpartners.com). “Have an index card by the phone and keep important points handy so you’re ready when they call.”

The phone screening interview can range from a 5 minute conversation to half an hour and will most likely be with someone in human resources whose role it is to decide which candidates to bring in for a more serious discussion. This person will probably be trying to get general information about multiple candidates and make initial judgments about their personality, temperament, communications style, salary expectations and more. The idea is for the phone interviewer to confirm that you are who you claim to be on your resume, to gauge your immediate response to an open-ended type of examination, and to make sure there are not any red flags.

Here are MDL Partners’ top 7 tips to ace a phone screening interview:

1. Remember that when you get that call after applying for a job, the promptness of your answer is usually as important as its substance.
2. Be prepared to explain every job transition.
3. Be prepared to explain everything on your résumé; you never know which bullet point on your résumé might have piqued the curiosity of the interviewer.
4. Project self-confidence and communicate effectively. Don’t rush, keep an even tone, be as articulate as possible and show your personality.
5. Understand your red flags and prepare to lower them. It might be an employment gap or frequent job-hopping, or simple age, but you should understand that you can do a great deal to mitigate these issues when you address them head on and non-defensively.
6. Practice answering common questions. Tell me a little bit about yourself. What is your biggest strength/weakness? What are your salary expectations? Where do you expect to be in five years? Have answers prepared for these and practice, practice, practice.
7. Control your environment. Make sure you are in a quiet room and stay distraction-free.

“These tips will serve you well when you move onto the in-person interview as well,” adds McNeil. “Your preparation will help you stand out from the crowd.”

MDL Partners works with clients to not only stand out from the crowd, but to achieve their career goals and to broaden and deepen their network. There are plenty of times in your career that you will use MDL Partner’s services – and once you are a client, you are a client throughout your entire career. MDL Partners works with clients on their immediate needs today, with an eye towards the future.

About MDL Partners:

In the career consulting industry MDL Partners is unique because we utilize our extensive network of over 5,000 clients as a primary resource. At MDL Partners we work with mid and senior level executives, entrepreneurs and professionals who are looking for a better environment, a new job, a career change or career advancement. When you become a client of MDL Partners you immediately gain access to a worldwide network of senior level executives and professionals. This extensive network is a true differentiator between MDL Partners and other career services options. And our career services are yours to use in the future as your needs and the market change. MDL Partners has offices in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Virginia.

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