Phone Interview Tips

Having a phone interview is one way that many companies pre-screen applicants. If a candidate does not sound like a good match for the position on the telephone, they will not call a person in for an onsite interview. Some general suggestions are listed below:

✓ Research employers on the internet and by other means available to you. If someone calls you, you need to be well informed.

✓ Prepare those in your household. No only you, but others will need to use professional telephone skills. Although it is not fair, others may project an unprofessional image that could negatively impact you!

✓ If the phone rings, let everyone in the household know it could be related to your job search. If it is, the room needs to be quiet. Examples: TV turned off, conversations ceased and perhaps very small children taken to another room.

✓ A notepad and 2 pens or pencils need to be kept by the phone at all times to take any messages or notes. Take key information, such as caller’s name, company name, telephone number, and other pertinent details. Read back key information to ensure it is correct. For example, one number transposed in a telephone number gives you a wrong number!

✓ If you answer the phone when a potential employer calls and asks for you, be sure to respond correctly using “This is he,” or “This is she.”

✓ Speak clearly, distinctly, and professionally. Sound upbeat, interested, and sincere. Some suggest you actually smile when you speak. A smile can be “heard” over the phone.

✓ Although not required, in the South words such as “yes ma’am, and no sir” are often viewed very positively by interviewers.

✓ Listen carefully to what the person is saying. Be sure to answer questions as completely and accurately as you can. If you do not know something, write it down. Ask the person what is a good time and method to follow up. Email? Phone call?

✓ Do not interrupt!

✓ Never be rude, sarcastic, use slang, or make unflattering comments about any one or any other employer. That is considered “job suicide.”
- Feel free to ask questions, but please be careful to not ask things you should already know. For example, you will appear unprofessional and lazy if you ask questions about a position when the information is in a job posting that an employer has posted on the EMCC CCN site or the information that is readily available on their website.

- At the end of the conversation, verify key points or details that you are supposed to do and when you are supposed to do them.

- Thank the person for taking time to call you. Let the caller know you are genuinely interested in the position. If you have not been offered an interview time, ask for one.

- If you are not offered one at that time, ask if you need to provide any other information.

- In closing, sound positive, thank the person for calling, make clear you are interested in the position, and say you hope to hear from them soon.