

Telephone Tips

Your first contact with an employer may be by phone, either you calling to introduce yourself or an employer calling to schedule or conduct an interview. Your ability to communicate on the phone can influence a hiring decision.

- **Call when an employer is more likely to be available to talk.**
- **Call from a quiet area with space for you to write notes.**
- **Prepare for each call. Know something about the company.**
- **Practice aloud before calling.**
- **Use a written outline so you remember all points you want to make. Be careful not to read word-for-word so you sound more “natural.”**
- **Identify yourself and why you are calling.**
- **Ask to talk to a specific person if you know a name, or to the department head, manager, etc.**
- **Get the employer’s attention and make him/her want to listen. “Sell” yourself and ask questions.**
- **Speak with a positive attitude and confidence. Be businesslike, friendly, and polite. Smile when you speak; they will be able to ‘hear’ a smile!**
- **After your presentation, ask to meet for an interview. If the employer agrees, schedule a time. If the employer is not interested, find out how you can make him/her interested.**
- **Thank the employer for his/her time.**
- **Keep a record of the calls you make – to whom, when and results. Follow up as appropriate.**
- **Remember, the more calls you make, the easier it will become.**

Voice Mail – Answering Machine Tips

- **Avoid Generic Messages**—Don’t leave a message such as “Leave a message after the tone.” Personalize the message by including your name so the employer knows they have reached the correct number, such as “You have reached John Doe. Please leave a message. Thanks.”
- **Be Polite, Brief and Clear**—Don’t waste time on such things as telling the caller to leave a message at the beep, or explaining you cannot come to the phone right now. Employers don’t want to listen to lengthy messages.
- **Avoid Annoying Messages**—Avoid the current trend to include a snippet of music from your favorite band. It wastes time and money. Never use profanity. Avoid your children leaving message; we all love our children but employers won’t be able to understand them. Avoid tricky messages such as “Hello, hello,”