



**PGA**  
Employment Services™

**CAREER NOTES**  
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With the fast pace of life today, along with the time and expense of conducting on-site job interviews, employers in almost every industry have turned to using the telephone interview as part of their hiring process. The golf industry is no different, as telephone interviews have become a common practice and a convenient screening device for out-of-town candidates. While much has been written about face-to-face interviews, little attention has been paid to successfully meeting the unique challenges of a telephone interview.

A UCLA study showed that when we communicate face-to-face, messages are conveyed in a variety of ways and not just with the use of words. The results were as follows:

- 55% - body language
- 38% - tone of voice
- 7% - what we actually say

These startling results clearly portray the challenges we face when we participate in a telephone interview. The interviewer can't see your body language, posture, dress, facial expressions, and eye contact that comprise 55% of your communication abilities. That leaves you with only 45% of your communication skills to try to nail the interview.

On a positive note, you can view this challenge as a terrific opportunity. The majority of the candidates who submitted resumes have already been eliminated from consideration. The prospective employer is already sufficiently intrigued by your cover letter, resume, and credentials and wants to get to know you better. And you have the advantage of being able to prepare information for the telephone interview and refer to it during the call.

Here are some tips to help you put your best foot forward in a telephone interview:

#### **Do's**

- In advance, try to find out how many will be on the call, and get names and titles if possible.
- Research the facility and the job – operational information, history, issues, job priorities, etc.
- Have pertinent documents handy – your cover letter and resume, copy of the job listing, facility research notes, etc.
- Anticipate what questions may be asked and have important points and key thoughts written out (but don't write out entire paragraphs and read them verbatim – it will show).
- Make a list of your goals, strengths, and key accomplishments; your weaknesses and what you are doing to overcome them; and why you are interested in the job and facility.
- Have pens and paper available for notes, and write down names of interviewers if possible.
- Take the call in a quiet room, close doors and windows, and eliminate any distractions.
- Use a land telephone line, and disable call waiting if possible.
- Turn off the television, radio, etc.
- Have a glass of water handy, tissues, etc.
- Sit up erect at a desk or table, or stand up and face an empty chair – it can provide effective imagery and helps your voice project.
- Smile while you are talking – it can show in your voice.
- Sound positive, friendly, and enthusiastic about the opportunity.
- Speak in a clear, well modulated voice – practice in advance if possible.
- Enunciate your words, use correct grammar, and speak in complete sentences.
- Address the interviewer by name. If more than one person is interviewing and you know who asked the question, address your answer to that person and their interests, if possible.
- Ask for a question to be clarified if you aren't sure what they are asking.
- Stop when you are done with an answer – let them pick up the conversation.
- Have a list of prepared questions to ask them.

### **Don'ts**

- Don't accept a surprise telephone interview call on the spot – politely ask if you can call back in ten minutes or reschedule the call.
- Don't take the call on a cell phone.
- Don't use a speaker phone.
- Don't eat, smoke, chew gum, etc.
- Don't overuse filler words like “umm” and “uhh” – this habit is especially noticeable on the phone.
- Don't speak in monotone – show energy and enthusiasm.
- Don't ramble – answer the question completely but get to the point.
- Don't give simple “yes” or “no” answers – back up your answers with specific examples.
- Don't have anyone in the room with you.
- Don't try to fill the silence with idle chatter.
- Don't interrupt the line of conversation.
- Don't bring up compensation – this typically comes later in the interviewing process

### **Before You Hang Up**

- Ask for contact information for any follow up, and get correct name spellings if you don't have them.
- Reiterate how you fit their needs and can make a strong contribution to their success.
- If you like the position and things sound good to you – let them know!
- Ask what the next step will be, time line, if you can provide additional information, etc.
- Have your calendar handy in case they ask to schedule another interview.
- End the call on a positive note, reaffirming your interest in the job and desire to move to the next step.
- Thank them for the opportunity.

### **After You Hang Up**

- Make notes about what you were asked, how you answered, what could be useful in an in-person interview, etc.
- Send personalized thank you note(s) and any requested information immediately.
- Replay the interview in your mind. What went well? What could have gone better? What would you do differently?

### **Important Reminder – 2010 PGA Compensation Survey**

Make sure that you and all members of your professional staff complete the 2010 PGA Compensation Survey on PGALinks. Your participation will help provide you and your fellow PGA Professionals with accurate compensation information when you need it for negotiations, job searches, budgeting, and hiring. It will also assist those of us who work with employers on your behalf in our efforts to upgrade compensation for all PGA positions.

All individual responses are completely confidential, so please take a few minutes to complete the survey and help make the Carolinas PGA a leader in section participation. PGA members who complete the survey by March 15 will receive 2 MSR credits (maximum 5 survey credits per MSR cycle year).

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