

10 Ways To Overcome Job Search Phone Phobia

1. Write A Script

Develop a script for your call and rehearse it periodically and out loud. Make sure you keep it brief remembering the goal is an appointment or another call. If too much is exchanged during that call, there will be no reason for another.

2. Stand Up

Always stand when making a call. This will help you sound better and project confidence. Did you ever see a Choir sit when they sing?

3. Learn To Talk With A Smile

People hear your smile; and since they can't see you, don't have to worry about looking silly if you've not done it before.

Hint: Hang a small mirror opposite you at the height you are standing. I dare anyone to stare at themselves in a mirror during a phone call and not crack a smile.

4. Make A List Of Your Most Feared Questions

Script your answers and rehearse them out loud. Practice delivering each answer in 5 to 10 seconds.

5. Do An Exercise-Call

Always call a friend for exercise before calling someone who could be influential in your search. Having a friendly voice at the other end can do wonders before an important call.

6. Call The Gatekeeper

Before calling a potential contact direct, try this: call the company's main number and ask for the name of the contact's administrator. Call that person direct, and use his or her name.

7. Ask The Gatekeeper For Advice

Using a person's name (the gatekeeper's) may win you favor. Be polite and brief, and understand you may not get through during that call (and that's okay). Realize it's an opportunity to demonstrate your flexibility. Ask the gatekeeper to suggest what you should do.

7 1/2. Determine The Best Time To Call Back

If asked to leave a number, you can say you will be in and out for the next several days and it would probably be best for you to try to call. Ask when he or she thinks it would be best.

8. Get Referrals

Research companies, reconnect with all your past contacts, and seek referrals. Introductory calls should be calls to persons to whom you are referred. It's easier to get through a gatekeeper if you call and mention that Mr./Ms. suggested you call.

9. Keep It Brief

Treat your personal contacts as you would influential persons: have a script and keep it brief. Brevity helps to ensure they don't avoid your next call.

10. Avoid Voicemail Jail

If you get sent to voicemail, you can try "0" to get an operator and perhaps find another number or person. Do not leave a voicemail. If you do, you cannot call back anytime soon. You placed the ball in their court.

In a job search, we sometimes attach the "phone call" to all sorts of negative emotions, the greatest being rejection. Practicing the basic skills outlined above will lessen an instinct to avoid the phone. This is the first step in overcoming phone phobia. Also, learn from experience. As they say, if you want to learn golf, play golf. After a few calls, following your exercise call to a friend, it starts to get easier.