

Telephone Communication

Since telephone communication is used on a daily basis to conduct the business or work of an organization, it is essential to demonstrate effective telephone skills while engaged in the job search process.

Do's and don'ts

- Always identify yourself immediately and let the listener know the reason you are calling. You may need to introduce yourself several times before finally connecting with the right person. Be patient!
- When conducting cold calls or networking calls during a job search, if the person is not available, leave your name and let them know that you will try to reach them at another time. Be sure to follow up instead of expecting a call back.
- If you are responding to a job posting or advertisement and the ad invites you to call or lists a telephone number, then it is appropriate to leave your name and number for a call back.

To network, identify contacts

Conducting telephone conversations with key people in organizations within geographical areas of interest can be a highly effective job search technique and provide many additional resources regarding future opportunities. The down side is that key staff are often unavailable by telephone.

In a proactive job search

Organizations of interest are first identified and then contacted directly via telephone or email to discuss future opportunities or firm visits. You can learn much about an organization and the opportunities that exist for you through a telephone call. Writing letters is more passive than telephone communication.

Preceding a cover letter and resume

One should first call or email an organization to find out to whom the cover letter and resume should be addressed. Never address correspondence, "To Who It May Concern".

After mailing a cover letter and resume

It is appropriate to contact the organization by telephone to confirm that your job application packet has been received.

Sample telephone dialogues

"Hello, this is Chris Planner. Could you tell me the name of the person in your organization that hires interns? (Quickly write down the name.) Could you connect me with _____? Thanks."

"Hello, this is Chris Planner. I would like to confirm that you received my application for the summer internship."

"Hello, this is Chris Planner. I interviewed for an internship with your organization several weeks ago. I would like to check on the status of my candidacy for this position."

"Hello, this is Chris Planner. Is the Transportation Planning Director available?"

Response: I'm sorry; Mr. McCall is in a meeting right now. Would you like me to transfer you to his voice mail?

"Yes, but first could you please confirm the spelling of his name and suggest a time when I might reach him?"

Leaving Voice mail messages...

"Hello Mr. Jones. I'm Chris Planner, a student in the planning program at ISU. I'd like to discuss the possibility of a summer internship with you. I'll drop a resume in the mail so you will have that on file and will try to reach you another time. Thank you!"