

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE PRESCREENING INTERVIEW

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The prescreening interview, usually a phone or video interview, has become a popular approach for Human Resource Managers (HR Managers), to weed out candidates that are not a good fit for a job position. This method saves the HR Manager, and the company, time and unnecessary costs of bringing candidates in for a formal interview, and then finding out that they are not a good fit. At the same time, the candidate should be ready to answer some relevant questions pertaining to the job, that would indicate a good match, and invite them for a formal interview.

A prescreening interview is not equivalent to the formal interview. It is a short, condensed set of questions, that focuses on the technical skills to perform the job, rather than personal attributes. It is important the job seeker identify if they have the desired skills before the prescreen interview.

The HR Manager will want to know why you are applying to their company, and what your goals are. They will ask about your past work experience, so it would be good idea to know what your work related accomplishments are. You will be asked about your salary expectations. You may prefer to give a range rather than a set amount, allowing for further negotiations during a formal interview, or job offer. You will be asked when you are available to start. Lastly, you will have a chance to ask some good questions. This will provide an opportunity to see if the company is a good fit for you.

Before the prescreen interview, find a quiet location where you will not be disturbed during the interview. Have your résumé, the job description, and any other relevant information with you, to refer to if needed. You might want to take notes, so have a paper and pen handy. If you're not able to talk when the call comes in, ask if you can reschedule, and set up a time that will work for both of you, as early as possible.

The prescreening interview will usually last about 15 to 20 minutes. The HR Manager may end the conversation by saying he/she will call you in a few days to let you know if you have been selected for a formal interview. As a courtesy, they will usually call either way.