

## TELEPHONE JOB INTERVIEWS CAN BE A TRAP!



Good news! All of your hard work searching for a job has paid off and you've landed a telephone interview with a prospective company. This is an amazing opportunity, right? Actually it's yes, and no. You have finally made it to "round one," and that is definitely something to be thankful for, something that you can celebrate. But not so fast! You still have to get to "round two," which is either a phone interview or the more-than-important "face-to-face" interview, which is the only goal that you should have for the possible outcome of a phone interview. However, you should know that the telephone interview can sometimes also be a trap. It is very important to keep in mind that most interviewer, at almost every single step along the way in the hiring process, are trying to find every possible reason to not hire you as quickly as possible. Just because there is something in your brand that caught their attention--whether it be your degree, the company that you are currently working for, the school that you went to, your experience, your accomplishments or your achievements--does not mean that they are necessarily looking for a reason to hire. Not yet anyway. It is very important to be aware that the bigger the company is, the more you should be on high alert during the telephone interviews. Many times, these initial calls come from screeners who are expertly trained to sound upbeat, happy and friendly all the time. Their disarming nature can easily cause you to "let your guard down" and some things that you shouldn't say and come across as unprepared. The fact here is that it is their job to eliminate as many candidates as possible, and also as fast as possible. Remember that a large company will receive over 1,000 resumes for any posted position. Even if the screeners speak on the phone to just 10 applicants, they still will be speaking to about 100 people. Often the first call from a screener is positioned at, "I simply want to have a brief preliminary conversation with you." Then, you can go ahead and acquiesce because it will seem rude not to say anything. After all, it is just a "preliminary" phone call and you certainly want to have a shot at the prize. This is exactly what the phone screeners are hoping that you will do. When you are caught off guard, it is easy to slip up and say things that you shouldn't say, be in an environment where you can't focus and most likely not demonstrate the sufficient knowledge of the company or the opportunity. In these very short five minutes, the first impression you make has a high degree of probability of not being the "winning" impression you that you really need to make. The phone screeners get to knock another candidate off their list and now they only have 99 more people that they have to take to.