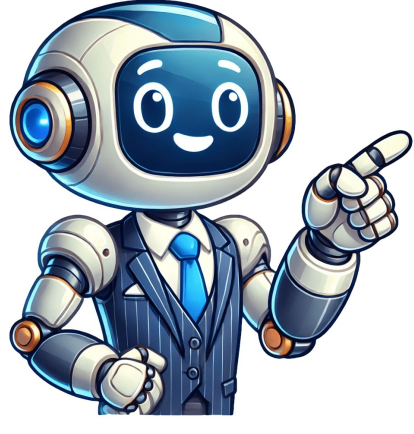


I'm not a robot

































[illegible]



teams should record every answer on standard templates. This makes it easier to compare candidates. Preparing for interviews is critical. Creating templates of phone interview questions for each role, mix questions about career development, personal qualities, technical skills, and role expectations. Interview questions to phone makes it easier to shortlist candidates. However, companies can derive more detailed information by combining interview answers and skills testing. Test candidate skills to verify verbal feedback and mix testing with interviews to find the ideal technical and cultural fit for each role. See how easy it is to create soft skills tests in your custom pipeline to start assessing candidates. Book a Demo Phone interviews are conducted with job candidates in the first round of the recruiting process and usually take around 30 minutes. HR teams generally call high-potential candidates before inviting them for in-person interviews. A productive phone interview screens candidates and allows HR professionals to explore relevant aspects of an individual’s work experience, qualifications, personal skills, and job expectations. The hiring manager can then discard unsuitable candidates and shortlist applicants whose skills match the job description. When conducting phone interviews, it’s important to remember what you’re missing. Unlike in video interviews, recruiters cannot see interviewees. You can’t assess body language or make eye contact. Everything revolves around active listening and verbal feedback. Above all, recruiters need to ask the right phone interview questions. If you ask stupid questions, you’ll get stupid answers. And phone screens don’t last forever. You need focused questions that get to the heart of the matter — fast. Record responses and dedicate the same amount of time to evaluate answers for every candidate. One of the best phone interview tips is to create an evaluation form to complete during the interview. Record every evaluation on a centralized online recruitment platform like Toggl Hire to make comparing candidates much easier. Evaluation won’t matter much if your questions are ineffective and vague. Let’s help you nail down the perfect structure with this list of great phone interview questions that help HR teams get the information they need. Although it might sound fluffy, this is one of the best opening phone interview questions. Asking candidates about themselves puts them at ease. The respondent can choose how to answer and showcase relevant aspects of their experience or skills. What’s a great answer to this question? The best answers to open-ended questions are structured and focused. The right candidate will know their strengths and understand the information recruiters need. Poor answers ramble and digress. This suggests the candidate has not prepared or is not paying attention. Good answers also link past experience and skills to the individual’s next job opportunity. For example, someone who raises money for charity by marathon running might connect their fund-raising to goal-oriented self-management. Further Reading: 20 Key Qualities of a Good Employee & How to Test Them Recruiters look for people who fit their company culture and professional roles. This phone interview question highlights candidates who have researched their future workplace and are enthusiastic about contributing. It’s a good phone screening question to weed out people who could be applying for any role at any company. What’s a great answer to this question? Good answers don’t replicate the “About Us” section on your company website or use superlatives to describe how great it would be to join the team. Strong candidates understand your mission statement and operations. They know what they can contribute in professional situations. This is another one of those ‘slightly vague but essential’ phone interview questions. Asking why candidates apply lets you identify those with genuine enthusiasm. It sifts out applicants who are just job hunting and aren’t engaged with the role. What’s a great answer to this question? Most importantly, we look for candidates who have read the job description and understand why they would be a strong asset to the team. Strong answers show passion for the work and communicate a desire to make a difference. Poor answers cite factors like convenience or wage rises as prime motivators. Be careful here though: strong candidates may well mention career opportunities as a motivating factor. Great hires are ambitious to further their career development and are excited about their next role. This question might seem a little cunning, but we’re not trying to trick people or expose issues with their previous employer. This phone interview question casts light on the candidate’s personal drive and honesty — two critical issues for HR teams. What’s a great answer to this question? Sometimes, good answers are very brief. People often move jobs for mundane reasons — internal restructuring or relocation to another city. Interesting answers deal with conflicts or mismatches between candidate ambitions and what their previous role offered. Look for clear, direct answers about what went wrong, not evasive answers about personal disagreements or boredom. Candidates should be clear about why their previous role left them dissatisfied and how shifting employers will progress their careers. This is one of the top phone interview questions because it goes “beneath the resume.” Paper resumes often don’t tell the whole story about a candidate’s responsibilities. Asking directly gives candidates room to talk about their achievements or projects. What’s a great answer to this question? Good answers reinforce information on the applicant’s resume or cover letter. But they also explain what the candidate learned from their role and the type of projects they completed. Impressive individuals want more responsibility. They desire to learn techniques and build experience as part of your team. This phone interview question assures recruiters that a candidate understands their future role and their personal goals fit their company’s strategy. Sometimes, applicants misunderstand the work involved or the level of seniority. This question removes ambiguities instantly. What’s a great answer to this question? Look for answers matching your role requirements. Candidates should be enthusiastic about taking your position. They should be comfortable with the responsibilities and skill requirements needed to perform well on the job. Ideally, the candidate would also express a desire to build their skills within your company culture. Successful hiring strategies secure the skills companies need, plugging gaps before they damage business performance. This phone interview question is crucial because it verifies the candidate has (or claims to have) the skills you need. What’s a great answer to this question? Candidates should clearly describe their skills, and these skills should align with your job description. Stronger answers refer to soft skills or competencies that match your company mission, even if they aren’t necessarily on the job advert. Maintaining a harmonious, productive working environment is critically important. But every workplace differs, and candidates feel comfortable in different environments. Phone interview questions about the working environment give a better sense of whether an applicant will suit your business culture. What’s a great answer to this question? Strong answers line up with your unique company culture. For example, if you rely on remote teams, answers might focus on a desire to work remotely while staying connected to colleagues. Office-based companies may value answers about seeking a close team dynamic and face-to-face collaboration. Context is everything. Skill levels matter little if employees can’t see eye-to-eye with managers. Some people thrive with hands-off management, while others need more encouragement and contact. This question identifies what category the candidate falls into and whether they suit your managerial approach. What’s a great answer to this question? This is another one of those contextual interview questions where the “right” answer depends on your company’s requirements. If you use small, autonomous teams at arms-length from HQ, candidate replies focusing on freedom and initiative are ideal. However, you might prefer candidates who value face time with managers and a closer collaborative relationship. This question expands on question six but adds an important new element: challenge. It asks candidates to describe how they will solve workplace problems and add value to your organization. What’s a great answer to this question? Good answers show confidence and dynamism. Interviewees should express a desire to operate outside their comfort zone and grow their capacities. Their answers should reflect challenges relating to your work environment — not general issues like “working as a team” or “building resilience.” In this question, “X” is a critical tool, application, or technique related to the job under consideration. Specific interview questions like this verify experience. HR teams can strike off those without the requisite skills and schedule skills tests as part of the next interview to find the most competent hires. What’s a great answer to this question? Strong answers are honest and well-informed. If a candidate claims to have experience in Python or software engineering in Microsoft Azure, they should cite examples of their work. Answers should connect previous experience with future roles, suggesting personal development pathways to enhance the candidate’s abilities. Good screening interviews combine specific technical queries with questions probing candidate personalities. This question is great because it lets applicants advertise what sets them apart. It filters out individuals who lack ambition, creativity, and drive. What’s a great answer to this question? Strong answers set the interviewee apart from the pack. Great candidates communicate a deeply felt passion for something — whether performing music, charity work, supporting family, or environmental activism. People with real passion love to discuss their favorite pastimes or causes. They don’t talk vaguely or mechanically. Look for answers suggesting the breadth of character and emotional intelligence — vital soft skills that add to any company environment. This is one of the best phone screen questions to ask candidates because it forces interviewees to show commitment and ambition. Candidates can showcase a desire to add new skills or responsibilities to their resume. They can also suggest how they will contribute to your business goals over the medium term. What’s a great answer to this question? Strong answers connect the candidate’s future to your business. Ideally, the applicant should see your company as a place to build their capabilities and thrive — not just as a stepping stone to higher-paying roles elsewhere. Ambition is good, so look for candidates with a drive to improve. However, commitment to the role and your company is really important. Further Reading: 6 Steps to Create a Professional Development Plan This quick housekeeping question can save a lot of confusion later in the recruitment process. If candidates expect double the wage you can offer, there’s little point in moving them forward. You can save valuable interview time with realistic candidates instead. What’s a great answer to this question? Simple: candidates should state their honest salary expectations. If their salary range is in the right ballpark, there may be room for negotiation. A good answer should recognize this and ask about benefits that may compensate for slightly lower pay, like health insurance or other perks that add value to the position. Time to hire is critically important. Quick hires help you fill positions smoothly and get started with onboarding or training. This popular phone interview question establishes a possible start date and helps you plan other stages of the interview process, making it one of the most practical questions to ask. What’s a great answer to this question? Speed is good, but only if candidates treat previous employers with respect. For instance, the individual may only need to give two weeks’ notice. However, this could be highly disruptive if they’re busy with a campaign or project. Good phone interview answers commit to joining as quickly as possible while assuring you that they’d be handling the transition smoothly in their current job. This is one of the best finishing phone interview questions because it turns the interview into a two-way street. Asking for questions challenges the candidate to enquire more about the role or your company. This is a final chance to demonstrate curiosity and to ask about the company’s mission and values. It also offers a window to clear up any confusion from other interview answers. What’s a great answer to this question? Many candidates have nothing more to ask, and that’s fine. The interview may have passed smoothly without a hitch. But it’s nice to hear candidates asking for information about the tasks and responsibilities linked to their potential roles. A good answer shows a thought process marked by initiative and engagement, leaving a positive final impression on the hiring manager. The 16 questions above are applicable in most screening interviews. Use them to create scripts tailored to your hiring needs. If necessary, perform test interviews with your recruiting team to ensure you’re collecting sufficient information. However, the core questions above aren’t all you need to make a great hire. There are plenty of other valuable questions to ask candidates. It’s important to consider as many as possible when creating interview templates, and you may also want to keep some follow-up questions in reserve. Here are 34 more potential phone interview questions that get results... What skills have you learned in the past year? What skills would you like to learn in your next role? What do you consider the strongest and weakest parts of your skill set? Can you give me an example of putting your skills into practice? How do you identify areas where you need to improve your skills? How do you help colleagues improve their skills? What methods do you use to stay informed about new developments? How do you think companies should encourage employees to learn new skills? Do you prefer to learn in classroom or workplace settings? Can you describe relevant experience from your previous roles? Tell me about one professional challenge that makes you suitable for this role What is the best job you have ever had and why? Why did you feel it was time to move on from your current job? Who do you turn to for reliable career advice? Do you think you may change careers completely in the future? In your last job, name one significant change you made to the company’s business operations What professional achievement gives you the most pride? How would you describe your management style? Would you need to relocate to take this position? Do you have any work-from-home requirements? What are your professional ambitions? How do you evaluate success? How do you communicate potentially unpopular decisions? How do you ensure other employees are rewarded for solid performance? How much time do you need to master a new job? What are your expectations regarding the working week? Do you prefer flexible arrangements? How did you find out about this role? What do you think about our brand/business vision? Have any public figures inspired you to improve your working style? Why do you find them inspirational? What makes a comfortable working environment? How do you chill out after a stressful day at work? Are you applying for other jobs? Could you see yourself returning to education in the future? What unique quality will you bring to our company’s culture? When planning phone interview questions, consider interview length and choose between interviews to screen or assess candidates. Phone screening interviews aren’t in-depth explorations of a candidate’s history and character. They’re short, to-the-point calls to filter applicants and create workable shortlists. A typical length would be around 15-30 minutes. That translates into 5-6 candidate screening questions with ample answering time. Full phone interviews go deeper. These interviews last 1-2 hours and usually substitute for in-person meetings. Interviewers ask strategic interview questions based on core and role competencies. For instance, the interviewer may set aside 30 minutes for a single teamwork role-play question. That would never happen in a phone screening interview. Businesses often lack the time to schedule both types of phone interviews. Small companies or start-ups might try hybrid interviews lasting 45-60 minutes. You can combine behavioral or situational questions with skills testing to assess candidates without consuming too much time. When an initial phone screen interview only lasts 30 minutes, asking the right questions is all-important. As a recruiter, build tailored templates with suggestions from this cheat sheet of phone interview questions. Don’t stuff the template with too many questions. Give candidates time to think and answer. Focus on role-related queries to separate great candidates from the herd. When you have a shortlist of potential hires, use skill testing to assess candidate strengths and verify their resumes. As a full-cycle hiring platform, Toggl Hire provides a comprehensive library of tests featuring questions crafted by experts in each role. Sign up for Toggl Hire today to explore your options. Tailor skills tests to your role requirements and then use our other hiring features to boost your candidate experience. Juste loves investigating through writing. A copywriter by trade, she spent the last ten years in startups, telling stories and building marketing teams. She works at Toggl Hire and writes about how businesses can recruit really great people.