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# The **5–Minute** Phone Screen Script

Know if they're worth an interview  
before you waste an hour

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# How to Use This Script

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This script is designed to be printed and used during a live phone call. It takes five minutes and gives you a clear, scored decision on whether a candidate is worth an in-person interview.

- 1 Print one copy per candidate**

Print this script before each phone screen. Write the candidate's name, the date, and the position at the top. Use a fresh copy every time.
- 2 Follow the script in order**

Start with the opening. Move through knock-out questions first — if a candidate fails on salary, location, or availability, end the call politely. No need to continue.
- 3 Score character questions immediately**

For questions 5–7, circle a score from 1 to 5 right after the candidate answers. Don't wait until the end — your first impression is usually the most accurate.
- 4 Use the scoring guide to decide**

Add up the three character scores. 12–15 means advance, 8–11 means dig deeper, below 8 means pass. Check the box and move on.
- 5 Keep every completed script**

File the scored scripts together. When it's time to decide who to interview, spread them out and compare. The numbers make the conversation objective.

## PRO TIPS

- ✓ Ask every candidate the same questions in the same order. Consistency makes scores comparable.
- ✓ Listen for specific examples, not generalizations. "I'm a hard worker" means nothing. "I stayed until 11pm to fix the billing error" means everything.
- ✓ If unsure about a score, go with your gut and write down why. You can adjust after comparing candidates.
- ✓ Don't sell the job during the screen. Your only goal is to evaluate — save the pitch for the interview.

# Phone Screen Script

● 5 MINUTES

Candidate \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. OPENING 30 sec

"Hi **Name**, thanks for taking a few minutes to chat. I'm **Your Name** from **Company**. I've reviewed your application for **Position** and wanted to have a quick conversation before we decide on next steps. This should take about five minutes — does that work for you?"

## 2. KNOCK-OUT QUESTIONS 2 min

1. "This role pays \_\_\_\_\_. Does that work for you?"

Pass  Fail

2. "The position is \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_. Is that something you can commit to?"

Pass  Fail

3. "When would you be available to start?"

4. "Are you currently interviewing elsewhere or considering other offers?"

## 3. CHARACTER QUESTIONS 2 min

5. "Walk me through why you're looking to make a change right now."

NOTES \_\_\_\_\_

SCORE (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

6. "What did you like least about your last position — and how did you handle it?"

NOTES \_\_\_\_\_

SCORE (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

7. "Tell me about a time things didn't go as planned at work. What did you do?"

NOTES \_\_\_\_\_

SCORE (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

## 4. CLOSE 30 sec

"Thanks for your time, **Name**. I have a good sense of where things stand. We'll be in touch within **timeline** with next steps. Do you have any quick questions for me?"

Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_ / 15

● 12-15 Advance ● 8-11 Maybe ● Below 8 Pass

DECISION:  Advance to Interview  Hold  Pass

# This Script Is Phase 7 of a 10-Phase System

This phone screen saves you hours of wasted interviews.

But screening is just one step. The full system covers everything from writing the job description to onboarding your new hire.

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