



How-to do a Virtual interview Well

An interview is the first way a company gets to know you and understands what you could contribute to their future and a newer trend is to do early interviews virtually. It is important to position yourself well and present the right image and there are more things to think about when you are in a virtual situation.

Virtual Interviews

Over the last few years companies have been changing their interview process. Companies now are conducting a virtual interview before an in-person interview to see if you are a right fit before bringing you into an office. Remote jobs have been becoming popular and doing a virtual interview shows how well you can work and use a computer. Virtual interviews can be on many platforms some examples are Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet. Here are some things to consider when interviewing virtually:

- **Prepare for the interview** – When you find out the platform that you will be using for the interview it is important to test out the platform before the interview to see if everything is working properly. Check your speakers to see if you can hear and check your mic to see if you are able to talk through it. Also check to see if your camera is working. Find a family member or friend and have them set up a quick meeting to make sure that everything is running smoothly.

Something that you can do to help prepare is recording yourself on video. This is a great tool to use to see how you look while interviewing on camera. This will then help you see how you answer questions as well. By using this you can work on your answers to the questions and fix anything that needs to be tweaked.

Use this time to review your resume and the job description and consider how your past experience might help you exceed in the role. Make sure to research the company and find out their values and mission statement. Check their blog on their website to see if they have any news or special projects that they have done. Companies love when someone comes in with knowledge on what the company is doing or what achievements that they have done. You can find information about a company by doing a simple Google search and looking on their website or LinkedIn Profile. Having this information fresh in your mind will help you feel more confident during the video call.

- **Think about your background and space** - Find a clean, quiet area of your living space where you can take the call. If you do not have a quiet space, then go to your local library and rent a



room where you will be free from distractions. Make sure to let anyone you are living with know that you will be on an interview and that you can not be distracted while you're in your interview. Having someone interrupt you or walk in your view of the camera can come off as unprofessional.

- **Arrival** – For a virtual interview it is a little different than an in-person interview. However, it is still important to arrive no more than 10 minutes before the start time. Logging into the meeting right at the time can show the interviewer that you are not prepared or eager to get started. A quote to remember for an interview “Early is on time, where on time is late.” Use this quote whenever you have an interview to remind yourself that arriving early is always a better option to show your eagerness.
- **Dress as if you are in person** – Even on a video call it is important to dress as if you were going for an in-person interview. Dressing up can help promote confidence and can make you feel good about yourself. When doing interviews, it is always important to dress professionally. Make sure to not wear any distracting colors or patterns. A safe bet is to go with a plain colored shirt.

For guys make sure to wear a button-down shirt with a tie and nice dress pants or khakis. If wearing a suit makes you feel confident, then go for it! For girls, it is important to wear a blouse or a nice dress shirt that is a solid color. A suit jacket is acceptable as well if you are comfortable wearing one. Wearing dress slacks or a skirt is appropriate and professional.

Even during a virtual interview, it is important to make sure that you are well-groomed. People can still see your head while on a video call. Make sure to shower and to comb your hair to look neat and groomed. For guys, make sure your beard is well-groomed or shaved before an interview.

- **Make eye contact** – When doing a virtual interview, it is important to make eye contact. This can be hard if there are multiple of people doing the interview, however what you want to do is look at your camera lens. Looking at your screen makes it look like you are not looking them in the eyes. A tip you can do is put googly eyes or get stickers that have eyes on them and put them by your camera so that it trains you to think that you are looking someone in the eyes.
- **Resumes and paper** – You may be thinking how can I bring my resume to an interview if it is over a video? There are a couple of ways that you can make sure that your resume ends up in the hands of the interviewer. The first way is by sending the person an email with your resume attached. (Make sure to have your document titled professionally. Ex. Jane Doe Professional Resume 2022, Jane Doe Resume 2022.) If you do not have the interviewers email address, then



you can use the chat feature on the video platform. All you have to do is copy your document file and paste it in the chat.

Having a pen and paper by you is important, so you can write down any information that you receive. Make sure to ask the interviewer if you can take notes. It's crucial to do this, because if you don't ask to take notes, they may think you are looking down and either not paying attention or on your phone.

- o **Greeting and questions** – When you log onto the interview it is important to make a great first impression. Unlike an in-person interview you are unable to shake hands. The first thing to do is greet the interviewer(s), introduce yourself, and ask how they are doing. Make sure you are firm and have confidence in your voice. Look the interviewer(s) in the eyes by looking at the camera. As soon as you enter the platform the interview starts, so it is important that you create a good first impression. **The first impression is a lasting impression!**

The person(s) conducting the interview will usually come prepared with a set of interview questions to ask you. The first question that interviewers ask will be some sort of variation of “Tell me about yourself?” This is the time when you want to talk about your background and experiences that relate to the job. This would be a time when to talk about any accomplishments that you have received either in previous roles or in school. Do not say anything negative about previous employers. When the interviewer asks this question, they aren't asking about your personal life, however at the end of your response you can throw in any hobbies or activities that you like to do. This can show the interviewer that you can be personable.

A good interviewer will ask you to describe times when you had to accomplish a specific task and how you went about it. This is called Behavioral Interviewing and works under the principal that the only predictor of future behavior is past behavior. If your interviewer isn't aware of this technique, you can help them gather better information by answering that way. For instance, if the interviewer asks you for a time, you had a challenge with a co-worker and how you handled it, you can describe a specific situation and the actual outcome. You will want to have an answer to a variety of questions thought out ahead of time. For example:

What is your biggest strength?

What is your biggest weakness?

What is your greatest professional achievement?

Tell me about a challenge or conflict you've faced at work, and how you dealt with it?

Tell me about a time you took charge on a project?

How do you like to be managed?



- **Questions to ask at the end of an interview** – At the end of an interview it is critical to have at least 3-5 questions prepared to ask the interviewer. It is also important to have a couple of extra questions ready just in case if the questions you had prepared were already answered during the interview. The interviewer will usually say “Do you have any questions for me?” This is the time to ask any questions that you had prepared or any questions that may have come up during the interview. Do not end an interview saying that you have no questions to ask. This may come off to the interviewer that you are not interested or that you don’t care about learning any other information. Some good questions to ask include:

Why do you like working here?

How will my success be measured in the first 90 days of employment?

What does the career path look like in this position?

What do you find most challenging about working for this organization?

Finally, the most important question to ask at the end of the interview is “Thank you for your time and consideration, what are the next steps in the interview process?” You always want to end on this note by thanking the interviewer and asking them what the next step is, so that you know what to expect in the next given days/weeks.

- **End of the interview** – Once you have asked your questions and the interviewer is saying goodbye. Make sure to say thank you and to wave goodbye with a smile. This shows the interviewer how excited you are with having the interview. Once you get done with the interview and log off the next step will be to send a thank you email. When sending a thank you email you want to thank the person who interviewed you and explain how you are excited for the next steps. This can help you stand out from other people who may not of sent an email after.
- **Follow up** – You should know how well you did after an interview usually by the way it ended and how you felt at the end. After asking “What is the next step in the process” question you should ask know what to expect on when you will hear back from them. Give the person at least 5 business days after the interview to get back to you as they have other job duties as well. It is important to be respectful of their time. If it was an interview with a temporary or placement service, you can follow up every three days. If you aren’t getting responses to your emails, switch to phone calls and vice versa.

Interviews can be stressful, however by being prepared, organized, and knowing the right tools you can set yourself up for success and achieve your goals.