



How to Ace Your Video Interview

Video interviews are on the rise, especially in the midst of COVID-19 as companies look for ways to find talented employees while maintaining social distancing guidelines. We know video interviews can be intimidating, but what are some things we can do to feel more confident?

Know Your Interview Format

Video interviews typically take one of two forms: live or pre-recorded. Live interviews resemble conference calls, where you log on and have a live conversation with the interviewer. Live interviews most resemble an in-person interview; they just happen over a screen instead of face-to-face.

Pre-recorded video interviews can be a little trickier. These involve recorded or written questions prepared by the interviewer. These are played or flashed up on-screen for the interviewee, who then has a set amount of time to respond. For these types of interviews, it's especially helpful to prepare ahead of time by reviewing anecdotes and personal responses to common interview questions so that you can deliver a concise response.

If possible, ask which type of interview you will be participating in beforehand.

Set Up Technology, Test, and Practice

One of the biggest fears around video interviews is the feeling that it's easy for something to go wrong. Maybe your microphone cuts out or the video freezes. Help alleviate some anxiety by preparing your technology and interviewing space ahead of time.

- Test your internet connection to make sure it's strong enough to support a video call. If your home internet is weak, many libraries have private rooms you can reserve to conduct interviews.
- Download and run all technology at least a couple hours before your interview is scheduled to begin. Whether it's Zoom, Skype, SparkHire, or any other platform, download and test it long before the interview begins. If you're able to, set up a call with a friend to test the connection and get a solid feel for the layout.
- Close all other applications and tabs on your computer that may interfere and cause your video to lag. Turn off all notifications, and silence your phone.
- Ensure there is a neutral background in your interviewing space. Bookshelves with appropriate books and furnishings, plain walls, or curtains are all acceptable.
- Have water and a notepad nearby. One benefit of video interviews is that you can also have notes and reminders handy to refer to, so feel free to prepare a sheet with examples and anecdotes to have at the ready.

Look Professional

When it comes to physical appearance, prepare as you would for an in-person interview. Shower and dress professionally. Strongly contrasting clothing can be difficult on camera, so trade out white and black pieces for grays and muted colors. Avoid strong patterns in favor of solids since patterns can appear more distracting on camera. And be sure to put on the whole outfit. You wouldn't want to stand up for something mid-interview only for your interviewer to catch a glimpse of your PJ bottoms.

Also practice good posture when on camera to maintain a professional appearance. Sit up in your seat, place your feet flat on the floor, and use good eye contact. When speaking, look at your camera rather than at the interviewer because it will create a better sense of eye contact for them. When the interviewer is speaking, you are welcome to watch them and respond accordingly.

One other thing to consider with a video interview is camera positioning. It's ideal to keep your camera at or just above eye level, rather than have it looking up at your chin. Frame the shot so that you are showing from the waist or chest up. Being too close to the camera with only your face in frame can be too intimidating.

A Few Final Notes

It is just as important in a video interview as in person to be on time. Have all of your equipment tested and ready to go before your scheduled interview time, and sign in a minute or two before you are scheduled to begin.

Finally, once the interview begins, ask the interviewer for their phone number just in case you do encounter technical difficulty. Even with the utmost preparation, sometimes things still happen, and you'll want to be able to call and ask to continue as a phone interview or reschedule.

We wish you the best of luck with any upcoming interviews and invite you to call on the Career Action Center should you need any help preparing. If you'd like any assistance, please email us at careeractioncenter@edcc.edu.