

GET THE JOB

Video Interviewing Tips

Interviewing remotely was already one of the hottest trends in hiring before the pandemic made video conferencing a way of life.

Employees have discovered that they can spread a much wider search net, and companies benefit because the talent pool deepened dramatically. It's a win-win situation, until something goes wrong with the process.

Interviewing from your own home can give everything a casual feel that might not be the best approach with a prospective employer. Here's how to navigate this tech-driven innovation in job searching.

GET COMFORTABLE WITH THE TECH

Employers are increasingly using platforms like Google Hangouts, Skype and Zoom to conduct interviews, in particular during initial culling ses-



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sions when there is an abundance of applicants. Unfortunately, the task of narrowing down first-round candidate can begin very early in an interview with someone who's unfamiliar with the technology. Do yourself a favor and try everything out — in particular, the microphone — well before you go live for an interview. Check your connections. Make sure the call-in number is with you, as well any needed meeting codes. Review the connec-

tion process. Don't hesitate to rehearse, ensuring that you're comfortable in front of the camera. Enlist friends, if needed, to critique your performance.

BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS

It's easy to become so comfortable in our homes that we don't pay attention to what might be in frame during an interview. You don't want interviewers to be distracted by an unmade bed, unprofes-

sional artwork or posters, too-bright camera-facing lights, or a view of your toilet with the seat up. If there isn't a suitable place to hold your interview without such distractions, consider a more appropriate digital background. If you find yourself routinely participating in video interviews, it could make sense to create a more permanent studio in your home. Hang background paper in a neutral color; you may choose to purchase additional lighting. The high-

est-end versions of these studios also include more expensive microphones and webcams.

DRESS TO IMPRESS

Once you've found a neutral, quiet point in your home to set up, consider what you're wearing. Dressing for the job you want is just as important in the remote setting as it has always been in person. (That includes below the waist, in case you end up having to stand up to retrieve something.) Some colors also work better than others: Shades of blue tend to reproduce well on screen, while reds and other so-called "hot" colors can be distracting to the interviewer.

BODY LANGUAGE

Creating an engaging online persona is critical to making a good first impression. Look straight into the camera, just as you would in person, and not at your reflected image or elsewhere in the room. Make sure your actions convey confidence and engagement, but make sure they don't become excessive. Offer a firm nod to say hello, then lean forward when speaking. Remember that too much motion can result in blurry images on the other end of your connection, meaning the interviewer won't be able to make out your facial expression.