



INTERVIEWS TELEPHONE & VIDEO

"BOTH ONE-WAY VIDEO INTERVIEWS AND PHONE INTERVIEWS GIVE EMPLOYERS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS AND GAIN MORE INSIGHT ON A CANDIDATE'S ABILITY TO FULFILL THE DUTIES OF A PARTICULAR POSITION. BUT THAT'S WHERE THE SIMILARITIES END. UNLIKE PHONE INTERVIEWS, VIDEO INTERVIEWS GIVE THEM A MORE COMPLETE PICTURE OF A CANDIDATE"

In recent years, employers are doing more first interviews in non-traditional ways. A potential employer may want to do a preliminary interview on the phone. Or the employer may choose an electronic face-to-face via videoconferencing. Here are tips for acing those interviews.

There are two types of video interview: a regular face-to-face interview in real time via a video feed, or a pre-recorded interview where each candidate will be given the same set of questions with the same amount of time to respond. The candidate's answers are recorded and watched back later.

All forms of video interview can be nerve-wracking, for many of the same reasons as other interviews, but also some unique ones. It can be harder to gauge body language and other conversational cues over the internet, for instance, which can make it feel a bit stiff and awkward.

With pre-scripted interviews, there can also be a lot of pressure because you have a time limit in which to answer the question, and it's not so much a conversation as a presentation – so hopefully these tips will help you prepare.

DO THESE THINGS AHEAD OF TIME:

- Turn off distractions. Have your phone/computer charged and ready to go in a quiet room – away from a radio, television, family, roommates, pets, or anything else that may make noise or take attention away from your task.
- Gather your tools ready.
 - CV
 - Pen and paper to jot down notes during the interview
 - Company research (with relevant information highlighted)
 - Questions to ask about company and position
 - A loosely written outline of points to make or items to cover as you talk about the position
 - Comfort items: tissues, a glass of water
- Check your internet connection is working in advance and everything is set up ready to use e.g., camera, microphone, battery charged etc.
- Check the strength of your WIFI and move to an area where it is the strongest, so you are confident with your connection throughout.
- Whether you are on a telephone or video call it's a good idea to ensure your background setting is presentable. It looks and feels more professional and sets the tone for the conversation ahead.
- It's a good idea to ensure you've closed any Apps or Alerts that may interrupt your interview.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- Dress the part for the interview, whether it is a telephone or video interview. Experts say if you're dressed in a professional manner, you'll come across that way.
- If the employer says they will call you at a specific time and doesn't, wait 10 minutes and contact them. It will show that you are proactive.
- Maintain a good posture throughout, whether in front of a screen or talking over the phone, it helps with your breathing and the quality of your voice.
- Talk only when necessary. Especially when on a telephone interview, since you lack the visual cues of body language to assess whether you've said enough, perhaps mark the end of your response with a question, such as "Would you like more details or does that answer the question?"
- When on a video interview maintain eye contact with the interviewer and retain a formal posture throughout, your body language needs to give the interviewer confidence in you – answering well but slouching in your chair is not going to impress anyone.
- The bonus of having a Telephone or Video interview is that you can have your notes close to hand and make sure you get your key points across. Try to revise these prior though to ensure you stay focussed on either the video screen or don't sound like you are reading straight from a book or website.
- Smile – whether you are in front of a screen or on the telephone a smile will always come across well and remember to be enthusiastic.

PRE-RECORDED INTERVIEWS

- The pre-recorded format can feel unnatural to some people. Try to imagine that you are having a live conversation. Your preparation for the interview will be especially useful in this setting.
- Make sure that you have closed other apps or windows on your computer that could interrupt the conversation or slow the internet connection. Set your phone to silent before you begin the conference.
- For pre-recorded interviews, make sure to read the instructions carefully before you record your interview. You should be told how long you'll have to answer each question and what the time limit is on each recording, as well as if there's an option to re-record your answers.

CLOSING THE INTERVIEW

Let the employer end the interview. Follow up with a post interview thank you message and reinforce your interest in the company and the job role you applied for (*if you wish to take it any further*).

A LITTLE CHECK LIST FOR YOU

On the day of your interview, review this checklist as you're setting up:

Ensure that you won't be interrupted, either by locking the door or by alerting others that you can't be disturbed (a note on the door of the room as well as the door to the outside may be helpful).

- *Clear the desk space, except for a notepad and pen/pencil for you to take notes.*
- *Have a copy of your CV and any other notes ready for you to reference.*
- *Set out a glass or bottle of water for yourself.*
- *Check that your webcam is working.*
- *Check that your audio is working.*
- *Close any windows, tabs, or applications on your computer that you're not using.*
- *Check your internet connection and make sure you're not downloading anything in the background.*
- *Set your phone to silent if you are having a video interview.*
- *Check that the background behind you is neutral and free from clutter.*
- *Adjust the lights in the room. If things appear dark or dim, you may want to bring in an extra desk lamp to brighten the space.*
- *Be presentable and professional throughout.*

IF THINGS GO WRONG

There's always a very small chance things could go wrong. Here are some backup plans to have ready just in case:

- **If your video or audio stops working**
Before the interview, ask the interviewer for a phone number where you can reach them if you experience technical difficulties. If the video cuts out, call them at that number. Ask if you can continue the interview by phone or if you can reschedule, if you can't get things working.
- **If noise interrupts the conversation**
If noises (sirens, construction, etc.) interrupt your interview, apologise for the interruption, and ask for a few moments until the noise has subsided, if you feel it's needed. You may want to mute the microphone if the noise is severe.
- **If someone enters the room unexpectedly**
If family members, housemates or pets enter the room while you're interviewing, apologise to the interviewer, ask for a few moments, mute your microphone, and turn off your camera, and then step away to deal with the interruption. Make sure that the room is secure before beginning the interview again.

REMEMBER WE ARE ALL HUMAN, PREPARATION AS ALWAYS IS KEY, IF YOU HAVE PREPARED YOUR QUESTIONS, POTENTIAL ANSWERS AND EQUIPMENT IN ADVANCE YOU KNOW YOU HAVE DONE YOUR BEST TO INTERVIEW WELL.

