Preparation For A Successful Job Interview On Video During The Covid-19 Outbreak

The coronavirus is changing the way we conduct our professional lives. We've found that more than half of professionals in the U.S. are now changing their in-person meetings to either phone or video. Many recruiters and hiring managers are switching to in-person interviews to video for health and safety reasons.

While the questions and conversations are likely to be the same, there are some differences between interviewing in-person versus through a digital screen. If you're in the process of getting ready for a job interview on video, here are some best practices to get you set up for success.

Test your internet connection

Check your internet connection speed to help ensure your video will come across smoothly. It's also a good idea to download the virtual meeting tools that are used to conduct interviews, like Microsoft Teams and Google Hangouts, which are currently being made available for free test runs. Before your video interview, make sure your interviewer has your cellphone number in case you need to conduct the interview over the phone. If something does go wrong, try to relax and–if you can–make light of the situation. How you behave under stress is an important signal to your interviewer.

Prepare your interview space

If you're doing the interview from home, choose a quiet, well-lit space with a neutral background. It's important to remember that video interviews give a peek into your personal life, so make sure that your space is clean and free of distractions. If possible, keep pets and family members in another room during the interview. Turn off all your phone and computer notifications. One of the benefits of virtual interviews is that you can have resources around you, so consider having a few large note cards at hand that highlight why you're the right person for the job.

Dress the part

Just because you're meeting your interviewers virtually doesn't mean you should take the interview any less seriously. It's important to dress as you would if you were going to the interview in person. Doing this will not only help you feel more confident, but it'll also give a good impression to the person on the other side of the screen. Know that what you wear shows up differently on video, so consider avoiding bright-colored clothing or large pieces of jewelry that can be distracting. And, make sure your bottom half matches your upper half, in case you need to get out of your seat for any reason.

Practice beforehand

We've found that 54% of job seekers say the interview phase is "moderately to extremely challenging" due to lack of confidence and uncertainty. Carve out time before your interview to do your research on the role and company. Video interviews can be more awkward than those that are in-person, so try to pepper in recent news you've read about the company and personal anecdotes in your answers to lighten the conversation. This will also help you sound less robotic. Do a couple of practice runs with friends or family to get comfortable and ask them to share their feedback. And check out tools like LinkedIn Interview Prep, which can help you answer the most common interview questions.

Be patient

If you really want the job, make that crystal clear in your "thank you" email after the interview. The same applies if you're not interested in the role. Finally, be patient if a recruiter or hiring manager is taking longer than usual to get back to you. Hiring requires buy-in and approval from a number of different people. Without the ability for everyone to physically be in one room to provide feedback and collectively agree, your interviewers may need a bit longer than usual to make a decision.

Finally, staying informed during this rapidly evolving situation is critical, so make sure you're reading the news and take the time to ask your interviewer how they're doing.

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