

Being Your Best On Camera During An Interview

Virtual communication is a way of life. We conduct business or share information via video chat, e.g., Zoom, Webex, FaceTime, etc. People have asked me how they can become more confident and comfortable when appearing on camera.

My suggestions fall into three categories: preparation, delivery and follow up. (Bonus: Many of these tips are good for on camera job interviews, too.)

Prepare

Know your message. What does the interviewer want from you, and why? Ask your host or call screener what the interviewer wants from you.

Write down key messages. You will likely not read on camera, but you will prepare yourself to deliver your thoughts concisely. Say them aloud to see how they sound.

Have notes. It's OK to refer to your notes. People would rather you deliver a key point concisely than have it meander all over the place. Some interviewees will even make a point of their notes by saying something like, "I have thoughts here..." as they raise their piece of paper.

Alternately, you can use a notes function on your computer screen. Position the notes close to the camera, and you can refer to them without losing eye contact.

Pay attention to the basics. Provide adequate lighting. Make sure you are in a quiet place. Keep your background clean and free of clutter -- better a bare wall than a messy office. Dress appropriately (Casual is just fine). Avoid colors that clash in video. Comb your hair, so it does not distract from people listening to what you have to say.

Be yourself.

You have been selected to be interviewed because you have a perspective that others want to know. Keep this thought in mind as you prepare. It will give you the confidence you need to succeed. Authenticity is what viewers and listeners crave. Deliver it to them.

Deliver

Look at the camera. Maintain eye contact with the lens. It is not easy; you will tend to look at the interviewer on your screen. When you have an essential point to make, look at the lens of your camera.

Keep your answers concise. This way, the interviewer can ask you more questions.

Integrate stories. Relate your insights to anecdotes and stories. These can come from your own experience or things you have read.

Share data. If you have valuable information, share it. If possible, show it on the screen. Most video chat programs allow for screen sharing. You can also give your interviewer information in advance.

Relate your answers to the experience of your interviewer. For example, if she is an author, familiarize yourself with her writing. This technique allows for a more interesting conversation

Follow up

Ask for a copy of your interview, preferably on video.

Watch your interview. Before you get hypercritical, take a deep breath. You are likely your worst critic. Have a colleague, friend or spouse look at it, too.

Listen for content. Did your answers make sense, or did you get lost in thought? How could you say it better the next time?

Watch your body language. Did you look at the camera? Did you seem interested, or did you look off-camera as if you were bored?

Make notes on what you can do better the next time. You will get better with practice. And more practice.

Credit: <https://www.smartbrief.com>