

How to Prepare for a Virtual Interview

“You’re on mute” became – for better or worse – one of the most used phrases among remote workers in 2020. The new digital world we live in has forced many of us to learn how to use technology that supports remote work and virtual meetings, including virtual job interviews, that we didn’t have to know before.

With a projected 87% increase in the number of Americans working remotely by 2025, compared to pre-pandemic numbers (2020 Future Workforce Pulse Report), it’s safe to say the work from home/work from anywhere trend isn’t going away.

If you are one of the countless applicants seeking a remote or hybrid position, your level of competency for various technologies will play a vitally important role in your virtual interview and, eventually, the job itself. Here are some tips to help you prepare for an online audition.

Test Your Equipment

Aside from the basics of testing your computer’s volume, microphone, and camera, find out which video platform you will be using for your interview and become familiar with it. Doing so will help you determine if you need to download a program or update your computer ahead of time. You don’t want to be late to your interview and elicit unnecessary anxiety because you neglected to do a technical run.

Prepare for the Worst

Charge your computer and make sure you have strong Wi-Fi to support your online meeting. If your area has a weak signal, plan to relocate to one that has a reliable network. The last thing you want is for your computer to die or to lose connection during your interview.

Adjust Your Surroundings

Be mindful of what interviewers can see behind you by previewing your backdrop on camera. Remain the focal point by ensuring your environment is clean, quiet, and clear of distractions. If you are connecting from home, make sure pets, children, or other adults in your household refrain from entering your designated space and causing background noise. Also, silence your phone and keep it facedown to eliminate unnecessary disruptions.

Look the Part

In addition to previewing your backdrop on camera, preview yourself! Position your webcam at eye level, and ensure you are in a well-lit area. Avoid sitting in front of windows to prevent yourself from looking like a silhouette. Represent yourself well and dress professionally as if your interview was in person. Not only will this boost your confidence, but it will also show hiring managers that you are serious about the job. Avoid flashy accessories, loud colors, and busy patterns when selecting your attire.

Practice Body Language

Sit up straight and make eye contact to convey confidence, engagement, and interest. One Harvard Business Review study reported that “eye contact is the first step to building trust with your recruiter.” Rehearse in front of your webcam or a mirror to improve facial expressions and hand gestures. Smiling, nodding your head, and displaying proper body language nonverbally communicate enthusiasm, understanding, and interest to your interviewer.

Doing the due diligence of rehearsing answers to frequently asked questions, preparing questions for your interviewer(s), and doing research on the company you intend to be a part of is only part of the equation. Mastering the art of interviewing on-screen is the other. Leverage your chance of landing the job by preparing ahead of time.