

Preparing for a Virtual Interview

Imagine that you've been searching for a part-time job, and now you've found one you like! Were you surprised when told your interview will be held virtually?

Take time to prepare for virtual interviews. They call on skills and behaviors that are different from in-person interviews.

Test, test and retest your technology—Familiarize yourself with the equipment and software you will use. Make sure your internet connection and video conferencing program are working.

Practice, practice and re-practice—Set up a FaceTime or Skype call with someone you know and practice interview questions. The more you practice, the more confident you will be during your virtual interview.

Choose your interview spot—A couple of days before your interview, find a non-cluttered room without background noise. Sit in front of a blank wall or a wall with an attractive display. This is not the time to show your athletic trophies, hobby corner or cluttered bedroom. Make sure you have good lighting—natural light is best.

Tell others not to disturb you. Put a sign on your door that says, "Do not disturb. Job Interviewing occurring." Shut your pets away.



Gather your materials. Print your resume and highlight any points you want to make during the interview. Arrange paper and pen nearby for taking notes. Prepare a list of questions, but do not become distracted by reading your notes too often. It's better to say, "I have a few questions. May I ask those?" and then take a few seconds to look at your questions.

Dress professionally. Dress as you would for an in-person interview. Wear something clean, conservative and business casual. Your dress will communicate your level of professionalism. Do not wear a nice top and pajama bottoms, for instance, in case you have to stand for some reason. Take your cap off.

Make good eye contact. Arrange your computer so your face and shoulders on screen look like a picture in a frame. If using a laptop, raise the screen to look directly at you by placing a box under it. No interviewer wants to look at your nose as you talk downward to the screen. Look directly at the interviewer.

Use good body language. Sit up straight. Lean in, but not too far. Keep gesturing to a minimum. Don't cross your arms or legs. Nod and smile genuinely when the speaker talks.

Action: Think of a job you would like to obtain, and understand that you will be interviewed virtually. Where will you set up your computer? What will you wear? What advance preparation will you make?

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Note to teachers: Employers are expected to continue with virtual interviewing after COVID-19, especially for first interviews, because of its efficiency. While the technology component is new, professional interviewing behaviors have not changed. *Job Ready Career Skills* provides 40 lessons on Finding a Job, Completing Applications, Resume Writing and Interviewing that can improve your students' abilities to find employment, now and later. [Click here to access sample lessons from Job Ready Career Skills.](#)

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