

# How to “Virtually” Ace Your Interview

A few years ago, online or virtual interviews became a bit more common. Whether it is skype.com, zoom.com, Google Hangouts, or a variety of other options, we were able to be in separate rooms, cities, or even countries. For example, I interviewed from Columbus, OH with a company starting their workday at 9:00 am, which was 9:00 pm my time.

Things have gone more towards this path with working from home and social distancing due to the COVID-19 event. Whether we have previously done virtual interviews or not, we now are forced to embrace this if we want to continue looking for our best career path. Getting a good Perspective on this will help.

Here are a few tips to help you have *virtually* the best interview you can:

- 1. Prepare for the Interview.** Just like going into their office, be prepared. Research the company and the position, dress for the part (insert Batman joke here), present yourself in the best way possible. Now that you are ready, is your interview room ready? Check your lighting to ensure you don't show only half your face or shadows running across you. Check your background and make sure there is no dirty laundry or inappropriate gag gifts sitting around. Are you able to limit interruptions in that space (close a door to keep out the kids, dogs, probing spouse)?
- 2. Check Your Technology** You may want to check a few different technologies and set up accounts for them. Some companies will use Zoom, some Skype, some Webex, and many more. Download a couple of them and run test interviews with a significant other or friends. Make sure you know if your video will start right away (no one wants caught on video unprepared), how do you use your mic or change mics, are you using wifi or ethernet (I suggest the latter). This also gives you the opportunity to show you can do the work remotely for them because you understand how to use the technology needed. And close Facebook and other tabs for now.

- 3. Check Your Body Language** While you are checking your technology, notice how you act on video. Many people act differently in person than sitting at their kitchen table. Do you lean on your hand, keep pulling at the earphone cord, tap your pen on the table, or any other idiosyncrasies?
- 4. What if things go wrong?** We've all seen the videos, people running through the background, dogs barking, videos going out. There are a few things you can do to limit or deal with disruption. First, get a phone number so can call in and finish the interview if online conferencing goes down. You can keep your mic on mute while they are talking to limit potential interruptions. Some programs can be muted and will come off of mute while holding down the space bar. If you have disruption, calmly apologize and if necessary, mute and go off video to deal with it. Everyone is in the same boat and there should be a little lenience. If they aren't understanding, do you really want to work there?
- 5. Remember, YOU are interviewing them too.** Somewhere a long time ago, there was a misconception created that you need a job. That perspective is only one side. What if they need you? Even better, what if you both need each other? It's completely understandable that you need a job to pay the bills. Don't settle. Find something that makes Mondays a good thing.

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*Get Perspective, get the tools, and get going!*

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