



Tips for a Successful Video Job Interview

Do you have a video interview on your schedule? As hiring becomes global and more employees work remotely, video interviews have become commonplace.

For hiring managers and recruiters, they're a way to quickly conduct 1st round interviews, save on transportation costs, and get the interview process started much faster than scheduling in-person interviews.

For some positions, the entire process may be handled virtually. A Zenefits survey reports that, during the COVID-19 pandemic, 88% of hiring managers conducted virtual interviews, while 12% of hiring managers continued to conduct in-person interviews.

Types of Video Interviews

Your interview may be a live video chat with a hiring manager or recruiter, or you may be invited to participate in an on-demand interview. With an on-demand interview, you will record your responses to a series of interview questions for the hiring manager to review at a later time.

Tips for a Successful Video Job Interview

The key to a successful video interview is to practice beforehand, so that you avoid technical problems and feel confident with the process.

Keep in mind; a video interview carries as much weight as an interview conducted in-person, so you will want to make sure that you're well prepared to interview remotely.

Review the following tips to make sure you ace this type of interview.

What to Expect

What should you expect during a virtual interview? The video platform will vary depending on the company, but a recent survey reports that employers typically use.

- Zoom: 43%
- Skype: 12%
- Google Meet/Hangouts: 19%
- Microsoft Teams: 7%
- Cisco WebEx: 5%
- Other: 14%

Zoom ranks even higher as the most-used platform in another report. The Zenefits report notes that Zoom is the most commonly used interviewing platform (72%), followed by Skype (43%) and Google Hangouts (27%).¹

Surveyed companies reported that most interviews lasted under an hour:

- Under 30 minutes: 36%
- Between 30 minutes and 1 hour: 48%
- Over 1 hour: 16%

If you've got multiple interviews in a single day, be sure to give yourself a time buffer in between so you have time to get set for the next interview.

Advance Planning

Take the time to prepare for your interview in advance. In most cases, everything will go smoothly, but it will be less stressful if you practice in advance.

- Do a trial run a day or two before the interview.
- Check your webcam and any headset or microphone as if you were going to do the actual interview. If possible, use the same video technology that you'll be using during the actual interview. That way, you won't have any last-minute installation issues or password problems right before your interview.
- Your camera should be at eye level (not above or below). A poorly placed camera can result in unflattering double chins or weird shadows. Check to make sure your sound equipment works properly.
- Regardless of location, make sure that you send any materials (resume, portfolio, etc.) that the recruiter needs in advance.

Check Your Background

During your test run, take a look at the background that shows up in the video. Does it look cluttered or distracting?

Plan to have your background be tidy. A plain wall is ideal, or an office-like setting. You may be able to choose an online background to use, depending on the video platform you're using.

Pay attention to the lighting, too. You do not want to have light sources behind you since that will leave your face in the shadows.

What to Wear

A recent survey reports that most employers prefer that job candidates wear business casual, but many don't have a preference.³

- Doesn't matter: 44%
- Business casual: 52%
- Business formal/professional: 4%

The camera angle should show you from the waist up because your face is the real focal point. But if there is any possibility you will need to stand up, make sure your pants or skirt is professional. You don't want to be the person whose inappropriate interview attire gets noticed.

During the Video Interview

Make sure the table and your surroundings are clean and neat. You don't want to distract the interviewer. If you're interviewing in your home, make sure that you are in a quiet space with no barking dogs, children, music, or other sounds.

As well, turn off your phone and any alerts on your computer to avoid getting thrown off by emails or instant messages during the interview. The microphone will pick up any noise in the room, so don't tap your pen or shuffle papers.

Make eye contact, and remember, that means looking at the camera (and not the picture-in-picture image of yourself).

Use the same good posture you would use during an in-person interview. Avoid making a lot of hand gestures—even with a great Internet connection, there can be lag time, and hand gestures can stutter on the screen.

The Video Interview Process

- The company selects candidates for video interviews.
- Arrangements for an interview are scheduled.
- The company will provide instructions on how the interview will work.
- There will typically be 10 - 15 questions related to the job the company is hiring for.

Other than you're not meeting the interviewer in-person, the interview process will be the same as an in-person interview. The interviewer's objective (to screen candidates for employment) is the same. You will be asked the same type of interview questions. Also, be prepared to ask questions, as well.

What's most important is to consider this type of interview is just as important as if you were meeting the interviewer in their office. The value, for yourself as well as for the hiring manager, is equivalent, and interviewing successfully, however it takes place, is the key to getting hired.

What Employers Look For

What do employers want to see when they review videos from candidates for employment?

- **Answer the questions asked**, not the questions you wish were asked. Recruiters and hiring managers want to know you can do the job required, so they ask specific questions. A video is a faster way for them to screen seekers than traditional applications, so don't give them a reason to not consider yours.
- **Show creativity**. In your responses, relate an experience that demonstrates how you can perform the job required. If you are recording interview responses in advance and applying to be a chef, for example, record your answers in the kitchen while you're preparing a dish.
- **Be presentable**. Make sure you are dressed and groomed appropriately and practice your answers, so you have the best representation of yourself as possible. Videos are a great way to stand out from the other applicants who have only their paper applications or online text resumes. The best videos get forwarded and replayed many times.
- **Have a resume and application ready**. Video can get your foot in the door, but standard materials still get used at some point in the process. Make sure your experiences and best points match what you're saying in the video.