

Lights, Camera, Action!



Are You Ready for a Video Interview?

BY MARIBETH GUNNER PULLIAM



With video technology becoming more mainstream in the workplace, you may want to consider adding a webcam to your job search toolbox. Instead of a traditional in-person or phone job interview, many employers are turning to virtual video interviews when screening and recruiting potential candidates. Whether you are an experienced professional or a first-time job seeker, awareness of this growing trend is essential when preparing for your next job interview.

For many companies, video interviewing is increasing in popularity as a convenient and cost-effective method for interviewing applicants. Employers like this option as it allows them to screen multiple candidates more efficiently, and saves them time and money on transportation costs. With video interviews, hiring managers can review, replay, and compare the candidates' recorded responses more easily and efficiently.

As the applicant, you may be presented with one of two types of video interviews. One is an asynchronous version, also known as a one-way interview, for which you use your webcam to record your responses to pre-established questions and submit them for review by hiring managers. The second option is the live video interview, also known as a two-way interview. In this format, you speak directly to employers and interact in real time with the use of your webcam and video software. Two-way interviews are also generally recorded for later reference and employer review.

Although you may be wary of conducting video interviews, with the right practice and preparation, this format can be beneficial and have positive results. A video interview gives you the opportunity to showcase your talents and skill sets and promote your qualifications from a distance through both audio and visual modes. The two-dimensional aspect is especially helpful if your credentials are not an exact match for the job requirements, as you have the same advantage as in an in-person interview to convey your willingness and ability to learn. Other benefits of a video interview include saving time and money by eliminating travel and transportation costs, and reducing stress by interviewing from the comfort of your own familiar space.

Here are some tips for a successful video interview:

Be comfortable with the technology — familiarize yourself with the webcam and software you will use.

Test all settings and connections ahead of time. If using a laptop, make sure the battery is fully charged.

Have a Plan B. Be prepared with contact numbers if the technology fails and you need to reconnect by phone.

Clear your workspace. Your background must be professional and neat. Also, clear your computer desktop of any open applications to omit potential distractions.

Make sure you have quiet space to conduct the interview so you will not be disturbed.

Ensure proper lighting. Soft lighting strategically placed to accent your face is recommended.

Dress professionally — wear the same interview attire that you would wear to an in-person interview.

Gather reference resources ahead of time. Be ready with a copy of your resume, the job description, and pen and paper for notes.

Speak clearly and with purpose — be engaging and show interest and enthusiasm.

Use appropriate body language and make eye contact. Look directly at the camera, and make sure your posture, hand gestures, and other non-verbal cues project an open and confident demeanor.

Practice! Before the actual interview, record, and review your performance. (See box below for information about Excelsior's video tool for students and alumni).

Be early and stay late. Be ready at least 5–10 minutes prior to the interview. You do not want to appear tardy or rushed. Wait to shut down your computer until after the employer has said goodbye and signed off.

Although the video interview presents a different format, it's important to remember the basics of successful interviews. The process and guidelines are the same as in-person interviews: Do your research on the company, practice your interview skills, exude professionalism, and follow up with a thank-you note.

READY YOUR WEBCAM AND POLISH YOUR INTERVIEW SKILLS

The Career Center offers a free mock interview tool so students and alumni can practice and perfect interview skills, anytime. Users can choose from more than 100 practice interview questions and more than 50 prerecorded interviews aligned with various career fields, and record their mock interviews. The recorded interview videos can be saved with a secure URL and shared with others to gain helpful feedback. To learn more and access the mock interview tool, visit [EC JobLinks](#).

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