

Virtual Interview Tips

The Center for Career & Leadership Development offers virtual mock interviews. Visit mga.edu/ccld on how to schedule an appointment.

IN WHAT WAYS ARE VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS THE SAME AS IN-PERSON

- x STILL DRESS PROFESSIONALLY. Look your best on camera, avoid bright colors and patterns and opt for solid colors instead. If you are wearing a tie, wear a solid color rather than a patterned one. If you wear glasses, adjust the height in the room to reduce glare from the lenses. While it's likely that the interviewer will only see your upper half, it's a good idea to wear professional pants or a skirt in case you need to stand up for any reason. Plus, there are personal benefits as well. To this point, how you handle current or difficult situations are common questions. Also, always have at least a couple of questions to ask them at the end. Not asking questions at the end of the interview shows a lower level of interest, as it is very unlikely you will receive all the information for the job based on the job description and interview.

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HAVE ALL NECESSARY PAPERWORK NEXT TO YOU

BODY LANGUAGE

- x Maintain eye contact Eye contact is very important in interviews though with virtual interviews it can sometimes be tricky. While you will be tempted to look at the screen while you answer a question, try to direct your gaze at the webcam when you are answering questions as this will align better with the interviewer's eyes on the other end. After you have finished answering, then look back at the screen. When listening, nod and smile to show you are engaged, but be mindful of how often you nod. You should nod so that your interviewer knows you understand what they're saying. Nodding your head too much can come across as though you're not really listening.
- x Use hand gestures sparingly While hand gestures can be used to help emphasize a point, waving hands in front of a screen repeatedly can become a distraction if overdone.
- x Be mindful of the nervous habits you may have Nervous habits like twirling hair, playing with jewelry, and tapping or picking your nails will be noticeable and distracting in an interview and can indicate a lack of confidence.
- x Maintain good posture by sitting in your chair with your back straight and your shoulders open. Feet should be planted on the floor and arms can rest in your lap or on the desk.

PHONE INTERVIEW TIPS

Employers choose to conduct phone interviews for a variety of reasons. Phone interviews are sometimes called "pre-screen interviews" and are done to make an initial introduction, clarify issues on the same, or discuss the specifics of the position more. Companies can save time and effort by screening applicants by phone against very strict criteria before asking them to come in for an interview. Phone interviews are also used to screen someone who is interested in a position that will require extensive telephone contact with others. It is a good way to see if a person's skills match what a company is looking for by putting them in the environment where the person will be using those skills. A big difference in a telephone interview as opposed to a virtual or in-person interview is that both you and the interviewer are deprived of visual cues and body language, so you have to pay attention to inflection and tone. However, the best part about a phone interview is that you can have your key talking points in front of you and won't forget them."

Here are some additional tips specific to phone interviews:

- x It can be helpful to stand in front of a mirror in order to keep good energy and to remember to smile (a person can hear it through the phone).
- x Still dress nicely and fix your hair so that you feel good about yourself and have more confidence.
- x Keep your phone on and in front of you 5-10 minutes before you are ready in case the interviewer calls you a moment or two before the agreed upon time.
- x Get your voice ready and practice speaking a few minutes before the start of the interview to ensure you sound alert, not groggy or scratchy.
- x Do not feel the need to fill every moment of silence with words. When you're asked a question and do not have an immediate response, it's okay to pause to think through your answer before you start speaking. Reversely, if you've said what you needed to say and your interviewer hasn't responded yet, there is no need to start speaking. It gives the interviewer space as the interviewer is likely taking notes and might need a few seconds to catch up.
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