

Mastering the Art of Skype Interviews

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Skype video interviews have become a common part of the interview process. They allow managers to get the process started quickly, and save money and time. It's important to treat and prepare for a Skype or video interview just as you would an in-person interview.

Here are some tips on taking your video interviewing skills to the next level and acing your next Skype interview!

Prepare Ahead of Time

- Download Skype and create an account (for free!) well in advance of the interview if you do not already have it set up.
- For video interviews, “dressing to impress” isn’t just about your appearance and clothing. It also includes your account profiles. The interviewer’s first impression of you will be your Skype username and profile picture. Make sure both are appropriate and prevent an initial bad impression. Since Skype is free, you can always create a professional account for business purposes on top of an account purely for personal reasons.
- Familiarize yourself with the program so you can easily navigate and troubleshoot if needed.
- Conduct a couple trial runs with friends to become more comfortable and check your internet connection, audio, video, lighting and background.
- Get your equipment and location interview ready. The interviewer will notice your background and surroundings, so you want to make sure you set up the equipment properly and find an appropriate place to have the video call. Check off the following items to prepare:
 1. Set up the camera at eye level to avoid any awkward angles.
 2. Choose a quiet location.
 3. Pick an area with a plain background and remove anything distracting.
 4. Make sure surroundings are clean and tidy.
 5. Find the right lighting to ensure the interviewer can see you clearly.
 6. Do not sit with a window or other light source behind you as this will create shadows on your face.

Leading up to the Interview

- Ask for the interviewer’s Skype username and connect with them on Skype the day before. This will make it easier to video chat at the time of the interview.
- Identify and mitigate any potential interruptions. Let everyone know ahead of time that you will be interviewing and secure any pets. Close all open windows and programs on your computer except for Skype. It’s best to even make your profile invisible or unavailable to avoid interruptions. You will also want to turn off your phone and any alerts on your computer so no noises or messages pop up and distract you from the interview.
- Dress the part, head to toe, by wearing the same attire you would for an in-person interview (business professional!). While the camera should show you from the waist up, if there is any

chance you will need to get up in the middle of the interview, you want to make sure your pants are professional. Keep in mind that the outfit you're wearing also works for video. Certain colors look great while others may appear too bright. Stick to neutrals, shades of blues and solids over patterns.

- Log in at least 10 minutes early to make sure everything is still working properly and allow yourself some time for troubleshooting any last minute glitches.

During the Interview

- Introduce yourself and confirm that the interviewer can hear and see you well.
- Keep a copy of your resume and any other documents handy. One of the benefits of a Skype interview is that you can have a cheat sheet so you don't have to memorize everything. Just be sure you are taking quick glances at it as you don't want the interviewer staring at the top of your head the entire time. Have pen and paper available to write down any notes or questions during the conversation.
- With a video interview it can be easy to forget, but body language is just as important as in an in-person interview. Make sure your body language expresses that you are interested and engaged in the conversation. Here are some quick hits on proper body language:
 1. Have good posture, smile and be energetic.
 2. Use your hands effectively and appropriately to communicate key points.
 3. Be careful of overdoing it with large gestures as there may be a lag in the video and these movements could drag across the screen.
 4. Make eye contact with the interviewer with a goal of maintaining it 60-70% of the time. To do this you will need to look directly at the camera and avoid watching yourself on the screen.
- On top of being mindful of your body language, be aware of your speech. Try not to talk too fast and articulate your words so nothing you say is missed. Also remember that the microphone can pick up any noise, so don't shuffle around papers or nervously tap your pen or finger.

After the Interview

It's important to follow up with a Thank You Letter just as you would any other interview. Do not follow up with a Skype message unless requested to do so.