

VIRTUAL INTERVIEWING

POWER INTERVIEWING

PROFESSOR P



Preparing People for a Competitive Workforce.



Many job interviews are now taking place over Zoom or phone. Virtual interviews are similar to in-person interviews in many ways but have important differences.

The online interview format works best when the interviewee is credible and the interviewer is prepared. You should prepare so that you can have a natural conversation without clicking around or reading directly from a script, which can seem rehearsed and unnatural.

Recruiters will look for how you express yourself to understand whether you are a good fit. Use tools such as your body language, facial expressions, and interview preparation to convey your confidence and personality as it relates to the position.

Be prepared to talk about a common interest, ask how your interviewer's experience has been with virtual interviews, or by finding some other neutral topic with which to learn more about your interviewer.

You may also be asked to give answers without prior knowledge of the questions. If this is the case, prepare like you would for an in-person interview by planning for commonly-asked interview questions, researching the company, reviewing the job description, and preparing relevant examples of your achievements and experience.

Technology-Dependent Delivery.

Both presenters and users must be proficient in understanding the technology and its requirements:

- Computer with sufficient memory
- Hard drive with sufficient space
- Recording and editing software
- Webcam, high-quality smartphone, or video camera
- Microphone
- High-speed Internet connection
- Software including Skype, Google Meet, or Zoom

Synchronous Format.

Presentations delivered in real-time are synchronous. Zoom or Skype is held online and is viewable by guests with an internet connection. Though initially delivered synchronously, these platforms can also be saved for later viewing. They can include a single speaker, a panel, or a group collaborating in real-time across time zones. The facilitator or presenter can obtain participant feedback, respond to questions, and adjust the content during the interview.

Advantages:

- Allow for maximum engagement, and questions are conversational in tone
- Precipitates a connection between the speaker(s) and receiver(s)
- Candidates can receive immediate feedback from the hiring manager or search committee

Disadvantages:

- The candidate has just one chance to achieve goals
- Members of the search committee can be distracted or unavailable because the interview begins very late or very early in their time zone

MINIMIZE TECHNICAL GLITCHES

At least **a day before your interview**, check your technology to ensure it works effectively and can be used to communicate effectively. That means having a functional computer that meets technical specifications, downloading necessary software, and ensuring the internet connection is strong enough to sustain streaming video. If you are using a laptop, ensure the battery is fully charged.

In the **10 to 15 minutes before your interview**, check your internet connection and sign in to the video or phone meeting the HR representative or hiring manager has provided. Check the sound and video to ensure everything is in working order in time for your conversation. Turn off notifications on your phone and computer. Finally, unmute audio and video on your screen when the meeting is ready to start.



Asynchronous Format.

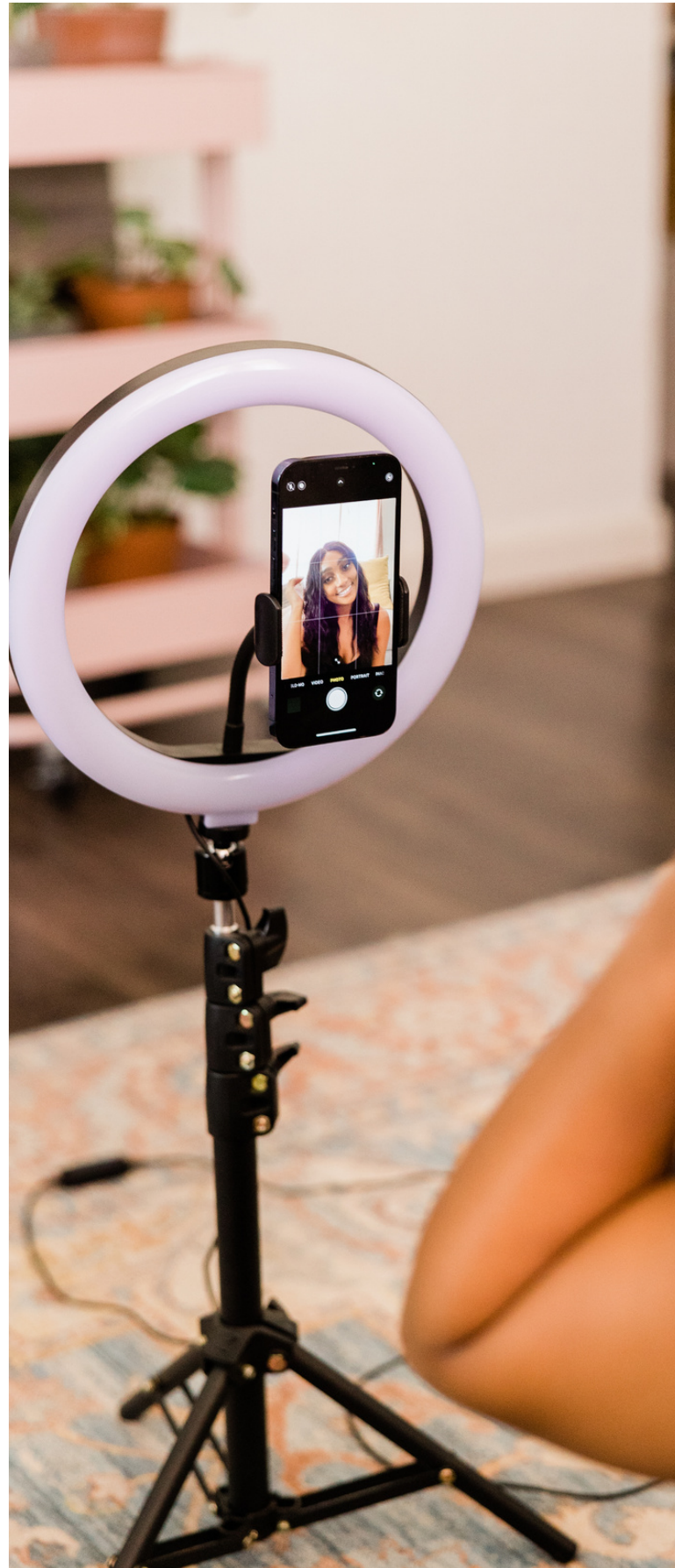
Video interviews recorded and played back at another time are asynchronous. You will be instructed to record your voice or video answers to interview questions provided by the employer. A human resources staff member later reviews recordings, so while it may be awkward at the time, it's crucial to convey the same energy and enthusiasm you would if speaking to a live person.

Advantages:

- Audiences can view the interview as many times as they want
- The candidate can refine the final performance before it is released to the hiring team

Disadvantages:

- Recording too many times may result in the candidate appearing less natural to the hiring team
- Lack of immediate feedback and the loss of direct interaction between the candidate and the hiring team



Location. Location. Location.

The best place to take an interview in your home is a quiet location with few distractions. If you share a space, tell people you are sharing space with about the area you'll be using for your interview, the time of your interview, and that you and your quiet space will be off-limits during that time.

Respectfully explain to everyone living in the home that it should stay quiet with limited distractions during this time. If possible, you might also place pets in a designated room during critical working hours.

Unnecessary movement can be distracting. Try to place your computer on a table or desk instead of your lap or couch. If you shake your legs, you don't want the hiring manager to think you are experiencing an earthquake. If the chair you are seated in swivels, avoid spinning or switch to a stationary chair.

Lighting.

If the audience can't see you, they're less likely to absorb your message. Check to make the light is bright and even. Try to [eliminate shadows](#).

Backgrounds.

Select a room that is also clean and professional-looking so the interviewer can focus their attention on you and not what is around you. If you don't have a dedicated office space, you can use a bedroom or guest bedroom, kitchen table, or cleared-out closet space.

Suggestions:

- Bookshelves that are clean, and dust-free, with items that connect the audience to the position
- Degrees that are clean and dust-free.
- Virtual Backgrounds – Don't use them!



Professional Attire.

Avoid loud clothing patterns. Blue is a safe color for a screen, while green can be tricky. Pastels and shades of brown are generally acceptable, but you must consider your background color to avoid blending in.

Avoid wearing jewelry that moves (like long earrings) or makes noise (such as bangle bracelets) to minimize distractions.

In a virtual interview, you should dress the same as in a face-to-face interview. Doing so makes you appear professional, excited about the opportunity, and more prepared and confident.

When an interview takes place from a remote location like your home, you should expect it to be just as formal as one in an office—if you're unsure, business casual is a good standard to follow. A great outfit example for men and women is a button-down shirt and blazer with slacks.

Think about it, would you rather someone complain that you are overdressed or underdressed for the interview? You are interviewing for the job, not the person on the other side of the screen.



Body Language.

Interviewing over video or phone limits the ability to communicate with body language. It is important to utilize body language in a clear, professional way. For example, if you get an unexpected question, make sure to stay poised and take a moment to collect your thoughts.

Sit up straight and ensure your camera is placed, so your face is in the middle of your screen (not too much blank space above or below your head). In most interviews, you shake hands with your potential employer at the beginning and the end of the discussion. It's an important body language cue that helps you establish the relationship. Instead, find other ways to greet and exude enthusiasm, like smiling and giving a confident wave with eye contact.

Know where to look. Don't look up at the ceiling or down at our notes for more than a few seconds. Your eyes should not wander. Look at your camera as if you are making eye contact. When interviewing online, the camera is your substitute for making eye contact with your hiring manager or search committee.

If you are on a laptop, place your notes (prepare them in landscape) over your screen to stop yourself from looking at the screen. The display can also provide a quick way to have essential points available, so you do not need to keep looking down at your keyboard. Add a sticky note to your screen reminding you to smile and make eye contact!



Build Rapport.

Building rapport is important in any business relationship because it allows you to separate yourself from other candidates by building a personal connection with the interviewer.

When you interview in person, your enthusiasm, body language, handshake, and early small talk help you build that connection with your potential employer.

When communicating virtually, finding ways to establish rapport is still necessary. Be prepared to talk about a common interest, and ask how your interviewer's experience has been with virtual interviews or by finding some other neutral topic with which to learn more about your interviewer.

Demonstrate your enthusiasm, but be sure to modulate your voice, pausing for emphasis.

