Online Interviewing: Everything You Need to Know

At its simplest, an online interview follows the same formula as a face-to-face interview but is instead held over an online platform such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Due to its ease of use and efficiency, online interviewing is becoming increasingly prevalent.

As a result, there is more competition for jobs as many more candidates can be interviewed in a shorter period of time. This is why it is important to know the key elements to focus on when preparing for an online interview, increasing your chances of success.

In theory, online interviews are much more convenient, however, it also means that you will have to take into account factors that you wouldn't have had to think about for an in person interview.

You will need to conduct the typical preparation you would undertake for a traditional interview. We recommend that you prepare according to these key points:

- Research the company, including their services, history, future plans and company culture
- Research your interviewer
- Stay updated on relevant industry news
- Go over your personal attributes and information
- Prepare answers to common questions
- Prepare questions that you can ask the interviewer

Find more information in **'How to Prepare for an Interview'**

Advice for Online Interviewing

Set up in a quiet and neutral environment

- It is important that you conduct the interview in a quiet environment to ensure there are no disturbances or distractions. If you are in a house with other people, inform them about your interview and make sure they know not to enter the room you are in
- If there is a possibility that distractions are likely, we recommend that you inform the interviewer beforehand and apologise. This is so if an interruption does occur, you are both prepared and it is less of a surprise
- As well as this, it is important that you are in an area with a neutral and professional background. Preferably a blank wall rather than a messy kitchen (don't worry, we all have one!)

Focus on your body language

- If it's a video call, your body language will play a vital part in the interview. The interviewer will still be able to see you and will be relying on your body language to help form an impression of you. By maintaining positive body language throughout the interview you will be able to present yourself effectively and convey your enthusiasm. Make sure you don't slouch, that you sit up straight and that you keep fidgeting to a minimum
- You can show engagement with the interviewer while they are speaking by looking directly into the camera and using non-verbal cues to indicate that you are listening. These non-verbal cues could include nodding or smiling when they say something that you particularly agree with or find interesting

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Make sure all the technology is working

We are well aware that technology can be very unreliable at times, especially when it decides to stop working at the most inconvenient times! This is why you need to make sure everything is working before the interview begins. In order to do this you should:

- Check your camera and microphone both work and are of good quality. A good way to do this is by doing a test run on the software, with a friend joining the meeting room so that they can see if it's all working correctly
- If you don't have a device that has a working microphone or camera, or that is unable to run the required software, see if you can borrow one from a friend or member of family
- Make sure your internet connection is running at a good speed
- Have plenty of charge on your device, it helps if you have it plugged in throughout the interview

Punctuality is still an important factor in online interviews. As a result of this, it is essential that you join the meeting room around 10 minutes early. This is so that if any other issues arise, you have plenty of time to fix them before the interview begins.

Be prepared

- Be prepared for all eventualities. Some examples of this include having some water with you, having a pen and paper with you in case you want to make any notes (but make sure they are kept far from the microphone) and having your CV & the job spec

Present yourself professionally

- Even though you won't meet the interviewer in person, you will still be visible so you should still dress in a professional manner as it is vital in making a positive first impression. Your appearance will not only help you appear more confident, but it will help you feel more confident, leading to you answering the questions in a more effective and professional manner
- Another way to improve the presentation of yourself is by positioning yourself in the middle of the camera. You should also make sure there is clear lighting that avoids any dark shadows across your face. This will help with the interviewer's overall professional impression of you

The most important thing to remember is that an online interview is still an interview. This means that you will still have to portray yourself in the most organised and professional way possible in order to convince the interviewer that you are the best candidate for the position. The most effective way to do this is by trying to remain calm and relaxed, which also allows you to showcase your skills and personality to their fullest potential.

We wish you the best of luck if you have an online interview coming up in the future, and we hope that this guide will help you achieve your dream placement! However, if you still have any queries after reading this, our consultants are on hand to answer any questions you may have concerning these tips, or about interviews in general.

If you are interested in working with our specialist consultants, you can find contact information directly on our website, alongside job adverts and CV submission forms. Our website also contains many more articles to help guide you through your career.

We look forward to hearing from you!

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