

Virtual Interviews

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A **virtual interview** is an interview that takes place remotely, often using technology like video conferencing and other online communication platforms. While the questions and conversation may look the same as an [in-person interview](#), there are some additional aspects to consider when preparing for a video interview.

KEY ASPECTS OF THE VIRTUAL INTERVIEW

Familiarity with the different technologies

Job seekers need to be versatile and prepared as they participate in interviewing strategies of the 21st century. Being comfortable with different technologies is critical to compete in this labor market. Some of the technologies you may need to be familiar with for virtual interviewing include: *Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Team, Google Hangout, WEBEX, Montage, RIVS, Spark Hire, Jobvite, Vidcruiter, Interactly, Refrek, Intervue.*

This may sound like a lot of platforms, but do not be intimidated. These platforms are quite intuitive and have a lot of crossover technical components that will allow your interview experience to be seamless. Be sure to test your internet connection speed to produce a smooth video and practice on your platform beforehand to ensure you feel confident with the technology.

Use of verbal & nonverbal cues

Verbal and nonverbal cues are critical in any interview. These cues are heightened in a virtual interview. Below are suggestions to consider as you prepare for your interview:

- *Posture and physical positioning* - Maintain an upright, physical posture when addressing recruiters. Avoid slouching in your chair. This may be interpreted as disinterest or lack of enthusiasm for the position.
- *Eye contact* - This is often overlooked when conducting a web meeting. Our natural instinct is to look at our computer screen. When recruiters are engaging with you, this might seem a bit awkward. When answering questions, be sure you are looking directly at the camera. This shows confidence and gives the impression that you are looking at the hiring manager directly.
- *Digital handshake* - Because this interaction is a virtual format, this does not provide the opportunity for greeting people as we normally would do. Try some nonverbal cues to say hello such as a head-nod or smile. These are warm, welcoming gestures that encourage engagement and conversation.
- *Engagement through facial expressions and vocal tone* - Because our audience can only see a small portion of our physical body, managing facial expressions is that much more important. Be sure you engage your audience through smiling, affirmative head nods, and showing interest as that will convey a positive message to the individual hiring.

Be conscious of the physical environment

Your physical environment will tell just as much about you as the way you answer questions in the interview. Below are a few suggestions as you prepare for your interview:

- *Background* - Be sure you are interviewing in an environment that is clean, organized and professional. If a recruiter sees a cluttered, messy background with lots of paperwork, posters, or clothes, this may convey the wrong message. Maintain a clean environment as you normally would at work.
- *Work through/acknowledge potential distractions* - There are a lot of potential interruptions that may cause a distraction during a video interview. Loud televisions, cell phones, people (children, spouse) and family pets tend to be the biggest distractions. Be strategic in the environment that you choose where there are the least distractions. Silence any and all technology such as cell phone, televisions, and email reminder notifications that may interrupt your conversation.

Utilize strategies like any other interview

Research employer - Be sure to understand the employer inside and out regarding the goods they manufacture, the services they provide, and their overall organizational mission. Conduct comprehensive research by connecting with current employers on LinkedIn, talk to Gateway faculty who may have a strong understanding of the industry, and research the organizations website. Sites like indeed.com and glassdoor.com allow you to conduct research and learn what current and past employees have said about the organization.

Dress professionally - Dressing professionally provides a confidence boost as well as conveys a positive self-image that will be appealing to the employer. Even though employers will only see a portion of you, be sure you dress as you would to any professional job interview.

Role-play - It is a good professional practice to role-play with someone you trust before the interview. Practice with instructors, colleagues, or Career & Employment Services staff to ensure you feel confident and prepared for your interview.

Prepare to answer behavioral based interview questions - Be prepared to answer situational questions of how you would respond in certain circumstances. Be sure to consider the STAR method when answering, which addresses a detailed description of the Situation, description of the Task at hand, the appropriate Action you took, and the Result of your action.

Follow up after the interview - The more excitement and enthusiasm that you share the stronger case you will make for someone to hire you. Following up with your interviewer is a professional courtesy but also allows you to show continued interest. Be sure to ask for your interviewer's email so that you can send an appropriate thank you note to them and reiterate your interest in the position.

Other Resources:

[20 Video Interview Tips to Help You Dazzle the Hiring Manager and Get the Job](#) – The Muse

[9 Tips for Mastering Your Next Virtual Interview](#) – Harvard Business School

[Ferguson's Career Tips: 4 Strategies for Nailing the Video Interview](#) – Films On Demand

[Getting Started with Zoom](#) – Gateway Resource

[Student Technology Resources](#) – Gateway Google Site

Please Note: This document was created by Career and Employment Services (CES) at Gateway Technical College. It is intended to be a guide and may not be all-inclusive to meet your specific needs. Check out the CES website at www.gtc.edu/ces for additional resources or to make an appointment please call (800) 247-7122.