

Tips for Conducting a Successful Online Interview

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Have you conducted a job interview using video services such as [Skype](#), [Tokbox](#) or [HireVue](#)?

If you haven't, chances are you know someone who has. It takes (on average) 8 weeks to recruit and hire a new employee. During this time, productivity can will suffer; other employees have to take over the work left undone by the exiting worker, usually with no knowledge of the processes involved and with little training. Therefore, it becomes urgent to recruit and hire the new employee as quickly as possible.

To manage the process, more employers are turning to online interview technology to help them identify viable candidates. Why? Online interviews can

- save time and money
- greatly simplify interviewing logistics
- provide valuable information that phone interviews can't.

Online interviewing has revolutionized the hiring process. With just a few clicks, an interviewer can now virtually meet various applicants (in diverse locations) and determine their potential. This saves time and money.

However, while a video link does a pretty good job of replacing an in-person meeting, making the transition to this technology has its challenges. So if you're new to the world of online interviewing, or would simply like to improve your process, use this list of tips to make your video interviews a success:

Check your software and equipment. As the interviewer, it's your responsibility to ensure that things go smoothly. Complications of a technical nature that arise during the interview can reflect negatively on both you and your company. So be prepared in the following areas:

- Before the interview, make sure both you and the candidate have the appropriate software installed
- If you're using new technology, take the time to become familiar with it and test your connection settings.
- Conduct a test interview with a colleague to avoid connection, sound and video problems.
- Make sure you have a solid broadband connection and connect via Ethernet, if possible.

Adjust lighting. What looks good to your eye may not look good when viewed through a webcam.

Make sure there are no bright lights (from a window, floor lamp, etc.) coming from behind you, as it will make your features hard to distinguish. Instead, set up a light source somewhere behind your computer, so that your face is adequately illuminated.

Create an appropriate frame. Your candidate will see what's behind you. Doublecheck that the area in your webcam's frame conveys the image you want to project. If you work in a cubicle, see if a conference room is available. This will provide a quieter, more professional setting. Adjust the camera so that your head, the top half of your torso and hands are all visible when you're seated in your chair. Communication is part verbal and non-verbal (body language, posture, facial expressions, etc.), so it's important to make the upper half of your body visible in an online interview.

Don't let your guard down. It's natural to think that, because the candidate will not be physically in your office, "the pressure is off." Don't fall into this trap. As the interviewer, you still set the standard, pace and professionalism level. It's important to be as prepared as if the candidate was sitting right in front of you. Have your list of questions and the applicant's résumé handy so that you don't have to rifle through drawers or get up from your seat during the interview.

Look into the webcam. When conducting an online interview, you may be tempted to watch the candidate on your computer screen while you're talking. Make sure you (at least occasionally) look directly into the webcam when speaking and listening. This may seem awkward at first (and may require some practice) but by looking into the camera (just like TV anchors) it gives the candidate the impression of direct eye contact.

Adjust your interview speed for video delays. Video chat technology is nearly real-time, but slight delays in both sound and video can make you prone to talking over one another. Take things a bit slower than you would in a face-to-face interview and wait for the candidate to stop speaking before you begin. Slowing the pace will make the experience less stressful and confusing, and it will enhance the level of understanding.

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