

How to Guides

PREPARE FOR A VIRTUAL INTERVIEW

There are two types of on-screen interview you might face as part of the graduate recruitment process: live and pre-recorded. Pre-recorded video interviews are often used to filter candidates at an early stage, sometimes instead of a phone interview. You are typically invited to log in to a system where you are asked to answer a series of pre-recorded questions.

Live on-screen interviews such as FaceTime and Skype interviews are closer to the traditional face-to-face interview.

Three key tips for a smooth video interview experience:

Tip 1: practise

Practise on your own beforehand, using your laptop to record yourself. Review the recording to see how you come across on screen. Check out your body language and tone of voice. Do you slouch, pull strange faces or fidget? Check you're speaking clearly enough and at a pace that will allow you to be understood. Ask a friend, parent or tutor to review your recording with you.

Some companies that host video interviews offer online practice sessions or online videos you can watch beforehand for advice and encouragement. Take advantage of these. You may also be given the option of a couple of practice attempts before you record your final video interview.

Tip 2: prepare

Make notes in bullet point format and keep them where you can see them easily. It's OK to glance at your notes for reference if you need to, but you shouldn't sit there with your eyes glued to a piece of paper, reading out answers that you've written down in advance.

Check any instructions carefully. Once you've started, you are usually not able to rewind or review your answers.

Tip 3: be professional and dress the part

Treat your Skype or video interview as you would a face-to-face interview. If you're in doubt about dress code check out the company website, and if it's still not clear, dress smartly.

Check out the background that your interviewer will see. Look at it on your practice recordings or take a snapshot of what's behind you. A relatively uncluttered background is best. Check the light levels, too. You want the recruiter to be able to see you. If necessary, shut out the wandering cat, silence the dog and warn your flatmates or family that you'll need some peace and quiet for a while.

If you're doing a Skype interview, think about the impression your Skype name will create and make sure it's professional.

When a live interview is under way, avoid talking over your interviewer.

What to expect from your video interview

Companies that host video interviews include Sonru, SparkHire, LaunchPad and InterviewStream.

You may find yourself under some time pressure. For example, you might be given 15 seconds of thinking time and 60 seconds for your answer, with a timer on screen indicating how long you have left.