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Strategies for a Successful Virtual Interview

One of the most frequently asked questions that I get from today's job seekers is "how do I prepare for a virtual interview? The virtual world of work is here, and it often starts at the interview process. For many, they find the virtual approach easier as they are able to interview in the comfort of their own familiar surroundings and it means not having to manage a stressful commute or find parking at an office in a part of town that they might not be familiar with. For others, this can mean an addition stress on top of what you already might experience with interviews in general because the process is new and unfamiliar.

Luckily, there is a way to prepare for the big day and with some effort and strategy you too can "ace the virtual interview". The following are some of the tips that Lauren Landry from the Harvard Business School Online offers in her [article 9 Tips for Mastering Your Next Virtual Interview | HBS Online](#).

1. Test your Technology

Do this as soon as you agree to the interview! Internet connectivity, microphone and camera are all essentials to the process. The day of the interview, test all of these and make sure they are working. The last thing you want is to find yourself trouble shooting something while your perspective employer is looking on. It doesn't look like you are prepared and possibly might affect your chances at getting hired.

2. Set the Scene and Minimize Distractions

First impressions are everything and now this also applies to your surroundings when you are being interviewed virtually. Ask yourself, where is the best place for you to take the interview? Ideally you want to be in an area with optimal lighting that is by a window. Don't forget to clean up the clutter and remove anything that does not reflect the professional image you are trying to make. Eliminate all distractions like cell phones, TV, pets and close windows to keep outdoor noise to a minimum.

3. Sit Down Prepared

During the interview is not the time to be searching the internet, clicking for answers. You need to be as focused and prepared as possible so do your research ahead of time and take notes for quick reference. Have your resume in front of you in a hard copy so that your key points are easily at your fingertips. Be prepared to answer common interview questions such as:

- Why are you interested in this role?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Tell me about a challenge at work and how you dealt with it?
- Why are you leaving your current role?

Don't forget to come prepared with your own interview questions. Here are a few to consider:

- What does a typical day in the life of this role look like?
- How would you describe the ideal candidate for this position?
- Can you walk me through the next steps of the hiring process?

4. Monitor your body language

Although the opportunity to communicate confidence changes slightly with a virtual interview, you can still convey enthusiasm and focus. Sit up straight, smile, and keep your camera at eye level. Keep your focus in the camera when talking, not the image of the hiring manager.

5. Be Yourself

Interviews are still about determining whether or not you would be a good fit for the company's culture. This can be challenging because of the physical disconnect with the virtual process. It's difficult for the interviewer to gauge your passion and excitement through the screen so it becomes even more vital that you convey your enthusiasm when answering questions. Give them a reason to push you through to the second interview by highlighting how you can help the organization and how you are set apart as a strong candidate.

Not unlike the in-person interview, ultimately the key to acing a virtual interview is preparation. Being comfortable with the technology, testing your connections ahead of time and doing your research are all essential to having a successful interview experience. Get connected to Career experts who can support you. Our professional employment services are available to you and can help you get Employment that works for you! If you require assistance with Interviews or other components of your return-to-work goals, Holly is available for one-on-one employment support.

Contact Holly today: holly.rye@hrmfrc.onmicrosoft.com and take the first step to getting back to work.

SOURCE: Landry, L. (02 October 2018). 9 Tips for Mastering Your Next Virtual Interview Harvard Business School online <https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/virtual-interview-tips>