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Video Interview **BFF**

Put Your **Best Face Forward** – Excellent Tips for Any Video Call

2020 has been far from business as usual. As we adapt to these changes and move to video-based communication, we've put together a checklist based on client and candidate feedback to help you put your best face forward.

- Check your connection.
 - Have you used this program before? Do you need to create an account?
 - If you must create an account or screen name, make sure it is work-appropriate.
- Have a backup plan.
 - Offer your phone number or alternate contact information, just in case the video call isn't working.
- Ask if it is ok to join the call early.
 - Sometimes interviewers will use the same virtual conference room for back to back meetings and you don't want to show up too early for yours.
- Allow extra time for technical errors—they could happen on either end of the call!
 - Be patient if issues arise—we are all in this together.
- Treat meetings/interviews as you would if they were in person.
 - Make sure you prepare as you would if this were occurring face to face.
 - Do your research on the company and your interviewers.
- If you're unsure what to wear, ask about attire. When in doubt, dress as you would for an in-person interview.
 - See what your outfit looks like on camera before the interview.
 - Make sure your bottom half matches the top—you never know when you may have to stand!
- Connect using a device with a camera to capture video and a microphone to capture audio.
 - Newer laptops have these items built in, but it never hurts to check—especially if you haven't used them before!
 - Most new mobile phones and tablets have these items built in as well. If you opt to use a phone or tablet, make sure to secure the device in a stable position so you can speak into the camera, hands-free.
- Check your lighting/camera angles.
 - Try to have a light source in front of your face. Positioning a desk lamp just out of frame can work wonders!
 - Adjust the camera to be at eye level or a little above—too much chin is not flattering.



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- How is your posture in the chair you've chosen? If you're interviewing from home, there is a danger of appearing too comfortable/casual in anything but a straight-back chair.
- Direct your gaze to the camera as much as possible—eye contact is important in any interview.
- Don't forget to smile!
- Have a quiet place for the call. Ideally, somewhere you can control noise and interruptions.
 - Turn off notifications on any apps—especially mail apps—you may have open during the interview—or close them entirely!
 - Make sure your phone is on silent.
 - Let members of the household know when you are on a call/interview and should not be disturbed.
 - Using a headset with a built-in microphone may help to project your voice better than the microphone in your computer or webcam.
 - Noise cancelling apps can help to eliminate background noise.
- The Mute option is your new best friend.
 - When you're not speaking, it is not a bad idea to mute your microphone. This eliminates sirens, excited pets, or other background noises.
 - Don't forget to take yourself off mute when you speak.
- Make sure you have a proper background.
 - Clean, organized and with minimal distractions. The simpler, the better.
 - Avoid having a light source or window behind you.
- "How are you?" Is a chance to make an impression.
 - Pleasantries can be a chance to show personality and make yourself memorable. Use these opportunities to talk about things that are exciting to you.
- Have some tissue, water and a cough drop nearby, just in case.
- Have a test call with a friend or family member.
 - Experiment with video conferencing before that all-important first interview!

Video interviewing is a new skill. It'll take time to be completely comfortable and remember, be as authentic as you can. It may feel awkward, but there's nothing wrong with showing that vulnerability. Be yourself. Mistakes and issues can happen and how you handle them showcases how you'll handle yourself in the remote or on-site workplace.

By following these tips, you can eliminate the stress surrounding video interviews. A successful interview is about showcasing your unique skillset and explaining how it makes you the best fit for the job. By minimizing the margin for error, you can be sure to put your best face forward every time.



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DO'S

Do be on time. Don't wait until interview day to figure out how to use the interview platform. Make sure you're familiar with the technology beforehand so you are not delayed in joining the call. Have a test call with a friend or family member if possible. If delay is unavoidable, let someone know immediately. Don't forget to apologize when you arrive. Please refer to our Video Interview Best Practices (attached).

Do dress the part. Look like you belong there. If you are unsure about what to wear, ask about the dress code. It will show how much importance you place on the meeting.

Do your homework. Make sure you have read enough about the company and person interviewing you (who is interviewing you, what is their position and history with the company?). Read the newspaper or other relevant journals to be sure you know what's happening. Google the company on the day of your interview to look for relevant news. Preparation will set you apart from the competition. Make sure you know something about the interviewer (ask for a bio when scheduling your interview), the company, their business and their competitors.

Do be prepared to give a verbal account of your background. Don't hurry, have a 1 minute introduction (or less!) that allows you to describe your background and experience, and in particular its relevance to this interview. This is your chance to shine and to highlight your accomplishments. Conclude with what you can bring to this role or company.

Do take notes. Take notes so you can remember what needs to be clarified or what needs to be answered. Let the other person know you are taking notes. It is especially important to clarify this in virtual interviews—you don't want to look distracted.

Do ask interesting and relevant questions: Have 3 questions about the business, the interviewer and the role at hand. Not generic questions, but strong and well thought-out questions.

Do investigate/probe. Don't be afraid to ask lots of questions. Challenge, carefully, anything that the interviewer says which you don't agree with or don't understand. Do it tactfully.

Do listen. This is one of the most important things you can do. Ask for clarification if you don't understand something. If you don't listen, you won't be able to ask intelligent questions nor will the interviewer think you are interested. Not listening wastes your time and theirs. You have two ears and one mouth; use them proportionately.

Do admit that you don't know the answer. Tell the interviewer that you need time to think about your answer. Don't be afraid to turn this to your advantage. If you cannot think of an



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answer tell the interviewer that you will get back to them. This is a good technique to use if you truly can't think of an answer because it gives you an opportunity to get back in touch with the interviewer.

Do be conscious of your body language. Gestures and movements are amplified on camera. Do be aware of how you nod your head, voice agreement and be aware of your non-verbal signals. All these minimize your impact and can be seen as less than authoritative. Nodding may also give the impression that you agree with everything said.

Do be clear on what you want by the end of the interview. You may just want to leave or you may want another interview. Ask what happens next and try to define next steps – i.e., what happens from here?

Do send a thank you note/email. Do it within a day or two, latest, of your meeting. An email is fine; a hand-written note stands out from the crowd.



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DO NOT'S

Don't ask 'pat' questions as if from a standard list. Be creative in terms of what you want to know about this company or opportunity. The more thoughtful the questions, the better the impression.

Don't ask closed-ended/self-fulfilling questions. Closed-ended questions are those to which the answers can only be "Yes," "No," or "Maybe". Examples: "Do you like your job?" "Can I make good money?"

Don't fill the vacuum. If the interviewer doesn't answer straight away, don't leap in with another question. Give them time to think. Allow yourself pauses, too. Don't be panicked into thinking that every second needs to be filled with words. Pauses make you look more rather than less in control.

Don't interrupt unnecessarily. If you've asked a question, listen to the answer. Don't cut across it in order to get to next question. If someone is listing 3 or 4 points, let them get to the end of the list before butting in. However, interviews do need managing and sometimes it's necessary to interrupt to keep up the momentum.

Don't answer your phone. Turn it off, not to vibrate but off to silent. Minimize your chance for distracting background noises as well. Find a quiet place and tell the other members of your household you have an important interview and are not to be interrupted. Utilize the "mute" function when you're not speaking to prevent ambient noises from distracting your interviewer.

Don't jump to conclusions. Try not to make up your mind one way or the other before the interview is over.

Don't end the interview if you think there's something important which hasn't been brought up. Summarize what you've learned and get clarification where necessary.

Don't make excuses if you're in-between jobs. Get to the point, explain your situation and do it succinctly.

Don't bad mouth your present employer or anyone else for that matter. That's just poor behavior and it will hurt your chances for progressing in the process.