

Interviews conducted via video conferencing require a unique type of preparation in order for success. Consider and apply the points below:

DRESS

- Dress professionally – from head to toes. You may have to move in front of the camera
- Don't expose bare shoulders – especially if you are only viewed 'shoulders up' on screen – it will look like you aren't wearing clothes
- Avoid clothing with patterns - solids work best

ENVIRONMENT

- Turn off radio/TV /cell phone, etc. Even white noise from fans, zen-like waterfalls, loud air conditioners, space heaters, dehumidifiers etc. can be distracting
- Put pets away, close the door, and make sure roommates, family members etc. are aware of the importance of a quiet environment
- Consider putting a note on the door to prevent delivery people or visitors from ringing the doorbell which may trigger pet noise or background sounds
- If possible, set up your computer in a room in which you're least likely to hear outdoor noise – from trucks, children, etc.
- Create a neutral background/wall with minimal visual distractions. Keep pictures/equipment to a minimum
- Preview your appearance and background on screen before connecting with the conference call - you should be the focus of the video – not the scenery behind you
- Create optimal lighting. Turn on lights in the room and/or close window blinds to avoid harsh glares and shadows on your face
- Do not eat, drink or chew gum. If you must take a sip of liquid, drink water – not carbonated beverages. Verbally pardon your pause, sip, then put the drink safely aside

TECHNOLOGY

- Test your microphone sound level and video well in advance of the actual meeting, then again 15 minutes before the call
- Adjust the focus of the camera. Most cameras have the capability to fine tune the crispness of the video. Its best to have a friend "connect" with you via webcam to tell you how you appear as you adjust the settings
- Close ALL other programs not necessary for the call – email, instant messaging, office products such as Word or Excel, and close internet browser windows. Not only are these a potential distraction, but they could also affect your connection quality
- If possible, hard wire your computer vs. using wireless. If you do use wireless, try to be as close to your router as possible for the strongest connectivity
- Sometimes firewalls can impact your connection/speed. It may be helpful to temporarily disconnect from VPN or firewalls for the call
- Look at the camera, not at the screen when you are talking. You would never look at yourself in a mirror if you were interviewing in person – so think of the camera as the interviewer's eyes and look into it/them
- Adjust your chair so the camera is at eye level – don't look down at the camera
- If you wear glasses, ensure you are not picking up glare; remove the glasses or wear contacts if either are feasible options
- Do not use any of the effects your camera may offer (bunny ears, cowboy hat, etc.)

MOVEMENT & PACE

- Be careful with too much movement - heavy movement further accentuates video choppiness. If you communicate with heavy gestures - be careful! Clasp your hands in your lap or hold on to a piece of paper. Keep it under control
- Facial reactions translate differently when onscreen so it's important to compensate with extra enthusiasm and concise answers
- Speak succinctly - and pause for a few moments before talking after being asked a question to compensate for the slight time lag
- Watch your body language - it's easy to forget they can see you! Don't look bored (chin resting on your hand), or slouchy, and don't look away from the camera when answering questions (remember - think of it as the interviewers eyes). Be careful with stretching & scratching
- If you have a high desktop and rest your arms on it, it's extra-important not to slouch, so that your shoulders aren't at your ears

GENERAL

- Login 10-15 minutes before the call in case you have technical problems and/or to ensure you are ready when the interviewer begins
- PRACTICE! Find someone that will practice with you using the same video technology you will be using during the interview, if possible. That person should point out background & environmental distractions, and give you honest feedback on your appearance (including where you are positioned in the screen, annoying movements, sound levels, etc.).
- Consider recording yourself on a site such as [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) so you can see yourself and make adjustments.
- Be prepared for the types of questions you are likely to be asked; practice the answers so you can judge for yourself how you will appear
- At the conclusion of a call, be sure the call is fully disconnected before you 'relax.' You're still on camera until the session truly ends