Use of Technology in Interviews
(Phone and Web Video)

Overview

Whether employers are screening job applicants over the phone before doing an in-person interview or using video conferencing (Skype, Google+ Hangout) in lieu of an in-person interview, the use of technology in interviewing has become increasingly popular. If you’re selected for a phone or video interview, it’s imperative that you prepare for it just as carefully as you would for an in-person interview.

Example Phone/Video Interview Preparation

Northwestern’s University Career Services has created a helpful and short video to guide you through preparing for a telephone/video interview. In addition to the video, use the tips within this document to equip yourself with the tools to have a successful interview.

Before Your Interview

| Confirm the Interview. | • Before the interview, confirm all the details including the date, time, and who you will be talking to.  
• Be sure you know whether the interviewer is calling you or if you need to make the call. Be mindful of time zone differences. |
| Choose an Interview Space. | • Use a quiet, comfortable, and private space that is void of distractions (e.g., pets, people).  
• Ensure your background (what the interviewer will see behind you) during a video interview is professional, clean, and well lit. |
| Dress the part. | • Consider looking the part by dressing professionally; it will help you feel more poised and collected throughout the discussion.  
• DO dress professionally for any video interview! |
| Check your connection. | • Ensure your internet or phone connection is working properly to avoid any technical issues during the interview. |
| Do your research. | • Prepare to discuss the company and your role if you were hired by researching the job and the organization.  
• Prepare questions to ask the interviewer that illustrate your knowledge of the company, position, and industry for which you are interviewing. |
| Keep your resume handy. | • Have your resume viewable so it can be easily referenced.  
• Create a short list of your top qualifications and skills specific to the job to help you more quickly respond to questions. |

During Your Interview

| Be formal and professional. | • Answer the phone by stating your name, in a pleasant tone, so the interviewer knows the right person has been reached. |
### Use the interviewer’s title (Mr. or Ms. and their last name) during the conversation, only using a first name when you have been asked.

### Demonstrate excitement.
- Smile, sit up straight, and speak in a clear, emphatic tone of voice. You want to convey that you’re excited!
- Have a mirror nearby to watch your body language (and your smile!).

### Remain calm and comfortable.
- Listen to the question, ask for clarification if needed, and speak slowly and clearly when you respond. Take a few seconds to gather your thoughts but don’t take too long.
- Silence between your response and the next question is very common; the interviewer(s) are likely taking diligent notes.
- Mind your body language; it can affect how you respond and your comfort level.

### Take notes.
- Have a pen and paper available for note taking throughout the interview. The notes you take will help you remember important discussion topics, which can be helpful as you ask questions at the end or as you send a thank you.

### Ask next steps. Say thank you.
- Ask for the interviewer’s email/mailing address.
- Tell the interviewer thank you and ask about next steps in the process.

To sound as professional as you would if you were meeting the interviewer face to face, also remember:
- Don’t chew gum or eat during the interview.
- Don’t rely on filler words (e.g., “like”, “um”).
- Have a glass of water close by, in case you need a sip or two during the conversation.
- Standing up is an option to consider. Sometimes you can focus better when you’re standing.
- Don’t ramble on so the interviewer can’t interject or ask more questions.

### After Your Interview

#### Relax.
- Take a minute to reflect on the conversation and your responses (the hard part is over!).
- Ask yourself: what could I have done better and what excited me about the discussion?

#### Follow up.
- Send a thank you note immediately and reiterate your interest in the position. Try to include specific references to the topics discussed (e.g., a particular aspect of the job that sounds like a good fit or excites you); reference your notes for any inspiration.
- If there are any qualifications you weren’t able to address or discuss, be sure to include them in your thank you. Continue to demonstrate your competency and that you’re a good fit for the position.