

# VIRTUAL INTERVIEW GUIDE

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*Virtual interviews are becoming more common, whether used as a screening interview or the sole interview in the hiring process. There are specific considerations to keep in mind when completing a virtual interview. See the tips below to help you be prepared and polished for your next virtual interview!*

## Technology

- Try to be somewhere with strong internet connectivity.
- Plug your device in during the interview so you can be sure your device won't die, and you won't be distracted by the battery.
- Test that the platform (Zoom, Google Meet, Skype, etc.) works properly on your computer a couple of days before your interview and test again the morning of your interview.
- If your video is grainy or the audio has an echo, you should consider getting a webcam. You can borrow one from WCU IT services if you'd prefer not to purchase one.
- As the interview gets started, ask or confirm what you will do should you get disconnected. Our internet can be spotty, even if you are on-campus, and it will show professional polish to ask at the beginning and reduce your stress should the video freeze or drop.

## Background and Environment

- Be stationary for the interview in a quiet and clean space. Do not be walking across campus, riding in a car, etc. If you are using your phone, use a phone holder or secure way to prop it up to keep it still during the interview.
  - Be in your space alone. If this isn't possible, ensure that anyone else is off-camera and quiet.
  - Test your lighting before the interview. Be well lit and keep lighting consistent across your face. You might avoid being in front of a window, as the lighting can change.
  - Consider using headphones to prevent room echoes and to help ensure you can hear the interviewer well.
  - Ensure that the camera is at eye-level, stack it on books if necessary. Make sure your head and shoulders are in frame.
    - Do not have your computer in your lap so that you are looking down at the camera. This feels informal and often leads to bad lighting and jostling of the computer/camera.
  - Be mindful of your background in the video. You want to have a clean background that is not too distracting. If possible, sit in front of a solid color wall or one with a few personal items you don't mind an employer seeing.
    - Do not be sitting on your bed or in front of an unmade bed. Avoid having clutter/laundry behind you. Remember, this is replacing an in-office interview, and you want it to feel like a professional, clean setting.
- \*\*There are spaces available for you to reserve on-campus to have a quiet, clean space. Two specific way options: you can reserve an interview room with the Center for Career and Professional Development (email [careerservices@wcu.edu](mailto:careerservices@wcu.edu)) or a study room or recording booth in the library via their website.\*\***

## Attire and Presentation

- Dress just as you would for an in-person interview. When in doubt, dress in a business professional suit over business casual.
  - Though we all love the comfort of being at home, be sure to wear your suit's slacks or skirt and not pajama bottoms. You never know when you might hop up because of a water spill or a pet interruption.
- Consider how the colors of your outfit will show on camera and against your background. Test them in advance to ensure that the colors don't cause the camera's focus to shift and adjust.
- Keep your accessories simple. Earrings, necklaces, or bracelets might catch the light and cause a glare or make distracting noises if you move.

- If your glasses have a glare, you might try adjusting your location and lighting. If this isn't possible, you can angle your glasses slightly down by moving the glasses arms higher above your head as it often helps reduce glare.
- Sit with good posture and face the camera during the interview. Your body language is still important. Occasionally lean towards the camera to show engagement, as you would in person.
- As much as possible, look into the camera rather than at the screen. This creates the feeling of eye contact.
- Do not have other windows open on your desktop (other than notes to yourself). Do not switch your windows at any time, as this can cause a change in lighting, and the interviewer might infer that you are distracted.
- If you find yourself becoming distracted by the self-view, consider hiding it during the interview. Just don't forget you are on-camera!

## Set Yourself Up for Success

- Check your screen name before the interview begins, especially if you are using an old account or often use funny nicknames for your screen name.
- Prepare the space by decluttering your desk and having a notepad, pen, and glass of water within reach.
- Avoid fidgeting with pens, hair, clothing, etc. If you need something, grab a quiet stress ball, and keep it out of the frame.
- Research the organization and position before the interview, then review your notes immediately before the interview begins to refresh yourself.
- Print your resume before the interview to have it handy on the desk for your reference.
- Take notes during the interview, and especially be sure to get the interviewer's name.
- If asked to type an answer through the chat portion of the video call service, make sure your grammar is correct before hitting send.
- If you have a few critical things you want to be sure you state in your interview, write a small note to yourself on a post-it that you can have next to or near the camera. This might include things such as key skills and experiences, the company's mission statement or buzzwords, or perhaps a connection you have to the organization.
- Send a thank-you email to each interviewer and personalize them by addressing any connections you made with them or specific answers/projects they discussed.
- Practice – Use Big Interview ([wcu.biginterview.com](http://wcu.biginterview.com)) to practice interviewing on camera. Big Interview has detailed interview how-to videos and mock interviews available for WCU students. You can even receive AI feedback on your recorded mock interviews.