# Best Practices
## FOR HOSTING A VIDEO INTERVIEW

Hosting a video interview isn't all that different from hosting an in-person one, but there are a few things to keep in mind as you aim to create a great experience for candidates. The guide below compiles the best practices from our 20-plus years of video interviewing expertise into a reference we hope you'll find helpful.

## SETTING THE SCENE

Use a plain background with a light color and full lighting to prevent unnatural shadows or highlights on your face.

Avoid using the digital backdrops offered in some video conferencing tools as they can put extra stress on your bandwidth and cause technical issues.

Frame the shot, making sure to find a static, solid background like in a home office or area free from appliances, beds, couches, or other cluttered spaces.

Frame yourself appropriately for the camera by allowing participants to see your head, shoulders, and a portion of your upper torso – avoid close-ups or being too far from the camera.

Close the door to the room you'll be using and make certain that pets, children, and other possible distractions are managed.

If you're in the office, be sure to have a solid backdrop to avoid the possibility of team members walking in the background or looking into the office through a window.

Avoid hosting the meeting from a conference room. If you have multiple participants, it's best to have each person attend from his/her own computer/office.

If a conference room is the only choice, sit as close to the camera as possible, and ensure all participants in the room are visible and their audio can be heard.

## WHAT TO WEAR

Dress in solid colors like blue, gray, or yellow, if possible. Avoid stripes and patterns.

Dress appropriately from head to toe. Wearing shoes while attending a video interview or working from home helps get you in the right mindset.

Be prepared to stand up. During the interview, you may need to get up for some reason, such as to adjust lighting. You don't want to be caught wearing a suit jacket and tie or nice blouse with your sweatpants and tennis shoes.

## TECH CHECK AND PRACTICE

Before the meeting, do a pre-check of audio and video. If possible, connect via hard-line cable to the internet and be sure to have a phone and the number to call as a backup to video, and share this with all participants in advance of the event.

Establish a comfortable camera/eye contact.

Think of the camera as the person. Don't let your eyes wander or turn your body away.

Move your camera as close to the monitor as possible. People see you from the camera, not your screen, so look at the camera even if it does not feel natural. It can help to enlarge the screen of the person you are speaking with as much as possible – maybe even place a small post-it on your screen or near your camera to remind yourself to look in that direction.

## FACILITATING THE MEETING

Start on time.

Introduce yourself and others if anyone else is joining from your organization.

Keep the microphone audio muted until the meeting begins.

Make sure everyone knows how to mute audio and pause video. This is important because unexpected interruptions can occur – a cough, a sneeze, etc.

Do a mental check-in before you begin. It helps to have some small talk at the beginning of the interview – weather, sports, etc. Chat. Engage. This not only relaxes participants but helps you check on audio levels in case you need to adjust.

## BE MINDFUL OF YOUR PRESENCE

**Remain focused.** Refrain from side conversations, whispering, instant messaging, or checking your phone or email.

**Call out off-camera actions.** If you are taking notes, be sure to verbally acknowledge that you'll be doing so. This will avoid any misreading of your actions.

**Talk naturally** – clearly, slowly, and at a normal volume.

**Act naturally** – avoid too much gesturing, which can distract from what you are saying.

**Don't interrupt people**; wait for a natural break in the conversation, and be sure to offer pauses and natural breaks, knowing that it takes a couple of extra seconds in this format for others to chime in.

**Don't forget that you are on camera at all times**, even if you can't see others or the meeting hasn't officially begun. Mute and disable the camera, but assume you are always on regardless.

**Be yourself**. Smile and engage, just like you do in person.

Making a personal connection via video conference isn't impossible. It's just a bit more challenging.

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