



How to Perform Well in a Virtual Job Interview

A virtual job interview requires the same thoughtful preparation as an in-person meeting, plus attention to your technology and surroundings. Your goal is to make the conversation easy to follow so the interviewer can concentrate on your qualifications.

These eight steps will help you prepare, communicate clearly, and handle common online interview challenges.

1. Test Your Technology Beforehand

Confirm the interview platform, date, time, and time zone. Open the meeting software in advance and check whether you need an account, installation, or update.

Test your camera, microphone, speakers, and internet connection. A short practice call with a friend can reveal problems you might miss on your own. Charge your device or connect it to power, and close unnecessary applications.

Keep the interviewer's email address or phone number available. If the connection fails, try to rejoin and send a brief message explaining the problem. Ask about switching to a phone call if necessary.

2. Create a Comfortable, Professional Setting

Choose a quiet location where interruptions are less likely. Let others nearby know when the interview will take place, and silence notifications on your devices.

Use an uncluttered background and place a light in front of you rather than sitting with a bright window behind you. Position the camera near eye level and check that your face is clearly visible.

Dress appropriately for the workplace and choose comfortable seating. An elaborate home office is unnecessary; the priorities are clear sound, adequate lighting, and a setting where you can concentrate. [CareerOneStop's virtual interview guide](#) offers additional preparation tips.

3. Prepare Examples That Demonstrate Your Qualifications

Review the job announcement, research the employer, and reread the résumé and cover letter you submitted. Identify the skills the employer needs and prepare examples showing how you have used them.

For questions about past experiences, organize your response using the **STAR method**:

- **Situation:** What was happening?
- **Task:** What needed to be accomplished?
- **Action:** What did you personally do?
- **Result:** What happened, and what did you learn?

Keep the background brief and give more attention to your actions and results. Practice aloud so your answers become clearer, without memorizing them word for word.

4. Speak Clearly and Allow for Connection Delays

Online conversations sometimes include slight delays. Let the interviewer finish speaking, pause briefly, and then respond.

Speak at a comfortable pace. If you both begin talking at once, stop and let the interviewer continue. If the sound breaks up, ask for the question to be repeated rather than guessing.

It is also acceptable to pause before answering a difficult question. “Let me think of a relevant example” gives you a moment to organize your response.

5. Keep Notes Helpful and Discreet

One advantage of an online interview is that you can keep a few reminders nearby. Prepare a short sheet with key accomplishments, questions, and any details you want to recall accurately.

Place it near the screen so you can glance at it without repeatedly turning away. Use keywords rather than complete paragraphs.

Avoid reading scripted answers or searching for information while the interviewer is speaking. If you need to consult a document, explain briefly: “I’m checking the project figures so I can give you an accurate answer.”

6. Show Attention Naturally

Look comfortably between the interviewer’s image and the camera. Looking at someone on screen does not always appear as direct eye contact, so there is no need to stare into the lens throughout the meeting.

Choose a comfortable posture and allow natural gestures. Your most useful signs of attention are listening carefully, answering the question asked, and responding thoughtfully to follow-up questions.

If several people are interviewing you, note their names and address them naturally. Ask for clarification when you are unsure who spoke or what they meant.

7. Ask Questions That Help You Evaluate the Job

Prepare several questions about the role and organization. Listen during the interview so you can build on the discussion rather than asking something already answered.

Useful questions include:

- What would you want the person in this role to accomplish in the first three months?
- How does the team communicate and share feedback?
- What are the biggest challenges facing the team?
- How is success in this position measured?

An online interview does not necessarily mean the job is remote. Clarify expectations about location, working hours, travel, and equipment when those details matter to your decision.

8. Close Clearly and Follow Up

Before the meeting ends, ask about the next steps and expected timeline. Thank the participants and briefly express your continued interest if the conversation has strengthened it.

Send a concise thank-you email, ideally within 24 hours. Mention a specific topic from the interview and connect it to a relevant qualification. Include any information or work sample you promised to provide.

[CareerOneStop’s follow-up guidance](#) recommends a prompt message that reinforces your interest and appreciation.

A successful virtual interview does not require flawless technology or a polished performance. Prepare your setup, know your examples, and focus on a clear, useful conversation.