

# Phone & Video Interviews

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# Why Phone Interviews

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## Used to screen the shortlist

- From analysis of CV there may be more people than they want for face to face
- Employer is looking for the best few from a longer list

## Saves time for employer and candidate

- Can be quite short eg 20 min
- Face to face interviews will be with several different people from the employer
- Minimises any travel costs, especially important when recruiting internationally

## Validates CV

- Chance to explore what was interesting on the CV
- Begin assessing whether you are someone they want

## Used by recruitment agencies

- Quick way of selecting candidates for a shortlist

# What happens

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Usually similar format to face to face

- Mix of motivational and competency based questions
- Tend to be shorter than face to face - can last from 20 minutes to 1 hour

Other possible formats

- Standard set of questions with little interaction and almost no feedback
- Automated interview with recorded questions and respond by pushing buttons on the phone

# Preparation

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## Be ready for the interview

- Get a good night's sleep

## Find a quiet place where you won't be disturbed.

- If you take or make the call at home, make sure other members of your household are aware of it
- Ideally, you should be sat at a desk so you have all the information in front of you

## Make sure the phone works

- If you're using your mobile, make sure it's fully charged and you're in a location that has a good signal
- If you're using a house phone, stay close by so that you are ready to answer it
- For a long call a headset can be more comfortable

## Have information you need to hand

- Copy of the job description, your application form, CV, and your notes on the organisation
- Remember to have your computer turned on and relevant files open
- Check your internet connection so you can look things up
- As with any interview, it pays to prepare what you want the interviewer to know about you
- Have a pen and paper to hand so you can take notes during the interview

# During the call

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## Find out about the interviewer

- The name of the interviewer, write it down
- What is their role – will you be working for them, or are they in HR
- Check the job they think they are interviewing for

## Sound positive, interested, and enthusiastic.

- Although they can't see you smiling will give your voice a more positive sound
- Keep the tone fairly formal and avoid over-familiarity
- Some people like to stand up as it gives your voice more energy

## Be patient

- There might be brief periods of silence while the interviewer makes notes.
- Resist the temptation to interrupt the interviewer in your enthusiasm to reply.

## Be Clear

- Avoid the overuse of verbal spacers, such as "you know" or "I mean," or "like," or "erm."
- Keep it simple and speak at an even pace, neither too fast, nor too slow.
- Ask for clarification if there's anything that you don't understand
- Don't read prepared answers as this will sound wrong

# What may they be looking for

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## How confident is the applicant

- Are they comfortable on the phone?
- Do they manage silences - without jumping in?
- Do they speak clearly and concisely?
- Do they listen to what the interviewer has said?

## Specific competencies

- Examples that back up what you have said on the CV
- Evidence of job related technical skills
- Examples of soft skills e.g. team working

## Success is a face to face interview

- Very rare to hire on the phone interview alone

# Video Interviews

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Becoming increasingly common

- May use Skype or Google Hangouts

Similar to phone interview, but you get the non verbal communication as well

- Still need to prepare and have everything to hand

Sometimes you may have to record your responses

- They will watch at a later date

Technology can be a problem

- So test and practice beforehand
- Stay calm if there are problems
- Make sure you have their phone number to hand in case of problems
- If possible use a laptop rather than a phone

# Video Interviews Top Tips 1

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## Follow the employers instructions carefully

- Get in touch if you are unclear about anything
- Don't leave it until the time of the interview

## Make sure you know how to use the equipment

- Set it up beforehand and try it out with friends or family
- If you're using equipment at the organisation's office, arrive in plenty of time so you can learn how to use it
- You need to feel confident with the technology and calm before you start

## Avoid being disturbed

- Put a sign on your door if you're at home
- Put your mobile on silent
- Take the landline out of the room
  - They may need to call you if there are technical problems



# Video Interviews Top Tips 2

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## Set up the picture

- Adjust the camera so that it's focused on you, and the microphone is close by.
- Clean and tidy the table in front of you - this is part of the impression you create
- Don't sit with your back to a window – or you will be a silhouette
- Make sure that the wall behind you is plain - you want them to look at you not a poster
- Remove anything you don't want them to see - old boxes, a ticking clock, drying washing, TV that's on....

## Dress as you would for any other interview.

- Avoid dazzling the camera by wearing brilliant white or bright colours, small stripes, or busy patterns.
- Go for solid, plain colours

## The microphone will pick up all the noise in the room

- Don't fidget or tap your pen
- Minimise any noises from nearby rooms eg dogs, washing machines, radio or TV

# Video Interviews Top Tips 3

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## Make eye contact

- Look straight into the camera - not at the person on the screen
- You need to know where the camera is
- Smile - just as you would in a face to face interview
- It's useful to switch on the picture-to-picture feature - so you can see how you come across
- But try not to look at it too often - you will appear to be looking down or to the side