

GET THE JOB

Acing the Remote Interview

Remote interviews — like remote work — are here to stay. And while remote interviewing has some definite pros, like no traffic and sitting in a spot where you're comfortable, there are also some pitfalls you can avoid.

Here are some tips from the Harvard Business Review on how to ace the remote job interview.

SET UP YOUR SPACE

Depending on how confident you are, you can wear formal interview clothes on top and joggers on bottom, however, you need to realize that a virtual interview, no matter how comfortable it is, will not be as personal as interviewing in person.

But there are ways to make sure the interviewer is getting the right impression. Set up your interview space to be clean and uncluttered to keep the interviewer's attention focused on you. Harvard Business Review says that, contrary to previous research, unconscious biases were less likely to make themselves heard when candidates had a clean backdrop. Nearly all of the recruiters the publication spoke to said they preferred virtual backgrounds of office settings to other virtual choices (say bye to the beach).

PREPARE FOR THE UNEXPECTED

Make sure you're familiar with the



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platform of the interview — Zoom, Teams or GoToMeeting — before the interview. Download it and set some practice calls with friends and family, and make yourself familiar with all the features. Practice muting and unmuting, turning up the volume, adjusting video and sound quality and more. In 22% of successful remote interviews, candidates offered the interviewer tips for video call shortcuts, Harvard found.

If something happens that flusters you, it's OK to ask for a second to your-

self. Your interviewer will appreciate your ability to stay calm under pressure instead of fumbling around for a button or your notes.

Speaking of notes, Harvard suggests no more than one page of notes nearby. Make a printout of notes with crisp bullet points that's easy to see and read from your interviewing spot. Try making flashcards with each point you want to make. They're less distracting, Harvard says, and will avoid awkward pauses while you scroll or read through

a lengthy document.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

While you've got someone on the line to check your hardware and software, rehearse the interview as well. Practice speaking at a pace that's lively, but not so fast an interviewer can't keep up. Harvard suggests aiming for 115 words per minute. You can count how many words you speak in a minute by using a speech-to-text converter and divide the word count by the time you spent speaking.

Use hand gestures when you're speaking, too, to help connect to your interviewer. Remember to keep an open posture and not cross your arms. Look into your webcam, not at your reflection (you can turn that feature off in many remote platforms) and keep yourself a few feet away from the camera.

HAVE A CONVERSATION

It can be tempting when you're technically the only one in the room to go off on a monologue, but work hard on having a conversation with your interviewer. Genuinely show interest by asking questions. Harvard suggests:

- How does the team communicate right now?
- What collaboration tools do you use?
- How do you monitor remote work?

Try to avoid questions you can easily find online. Don't be afraid to do some research beforehand and find out if you and the interviewer happen to share any mutual interests. Talk to them about articles they've posted on LinkedIn or conferences they attended.