

**sélect'**

# **Excelling at Telephone and Video Interviews**



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## First Things First

Congratulations for making it to the interview stage! This is your opportunity as well as your interviewer's to figure out if this is the role for you. Make the most of it.

## Telephone & Video Interviews

Telephone and video interviews are very similar to a face-to-face interview in as much as how nerve-racking they can be. This little guide is designed to help you stay calm and prepare yourself as much as possible.

Preparing for your interview - whether it is a video interview, telephone or a more conventional interview - is much the same.

- Ensure you have learnt about the company and what they are trying to achieve
- Check out their website and social media pages
- If you know your interviewer's name, research their position in the company and who they are (if you have organised the interview through a recruiter, you can quiz them about your interviewer and the company culture)
- Prepare some educated questions to ask at the end of the interview
- If the role involves a lot of telephone usage or customer interaction, be prepared for a role play
- Think about the STAR interview technique (see [page 4](#) for more details)
- More interview advice can be found on our website [here](#).



# Preparing for the Video Call

## 1. Get the Space Ready

Make sure you're in a quiet room free from both audio and visual distractions. The filming area behind you should be clean, clear and not contain any sensitive or inappropriate information - aim for a blank, neutral coloured wall.

## 2. Secure & Stable Internet Connection

Never conduct a video call over a public or insecure WiFi Hotspot. These connections are often unreliable, meaning you risk losing your call midway through the conversation or having the entire conversation intercepted by an unauthorised third party. You should only use internet connections through your own private network provider (such as Home Broadband or 4G mobile data).

## 3. Prepare Your Questions & Answers

It's often much harder to keep a video conversation engaging than a face-to-face interview. Making sure you know exactly what you're going to talk about will help keep the conversation flowing and give the whole experience a professional polish that your contact will remember positively.

## 4. Obtain & Check Your Equipment

Make sure you have checked every piece of technology that you'll need to use prior to the call. This includes your battery life on a mobile/laptop, any webcams or microphones, speakers and lighting. As well as making sure it works, make sure you have everything you need within reach!

## 5. Know What You're Doing

Familiarise yourself with the program e.g. Skype and all of the associated tech that you'll be using during the call. The whole experience will become a negative one for your contact if you're unable to find the right button when you need to!

## 6. Have a Backup Plan

Software & Technology isn't perfect - make sure that if all else fails you have an alternative solution to hand. For example, this could be FaceTime or WhatsApp - just make sure your contact knows what the plan is too!



## Conducting The Call

### Be On Time

Being late for a video interview is just as bad - if not worse - as being late for a face-to-face interview.

### Look at the Camera, not the Screen

Depending on where your camera is located, looking at the screen may create the appearance of disinterest or distraction. This could subconsciously affect the flow of conversation between you and your contact - looking at the camera will make it seem as if you are directly addressing your contact.

### Be Aware of Distractions & Interruptions

Whilst you may have prepared to minimise distractions, often there are unexpected events that pose the risk of detracting from your conversation. The same is true for your contact - if something appears unexpectedly at their end, remain calm and do not break your composure!

### Look Smart & Professional

If you're conducting a video call, make sure that your attire is appropriate and that you look exactly the same as you would in the office or when attending an interview in person. Avoid any loud colours or striped/floral patterns that may interfere with the camera's picture quality.

### Be You +10%

Webcams and Microphones aren't quite as good as the human eye or ear at picking up subtle sounds or cues. This means that whilst on a video call you will need to ensure that your diction, volume and facial expressions are very slightly more expressive than usual - this is a tricky skill to master, so it's worth running through a few practice runs with a friend to make sure that your conversation style is intelligible and appropriate.

## STAR interview technique

The STAR interview technique is a format you can use to respond to interview questions without rambling. Using this method of answering interview questions allows you to provide concrete examples or proof that you possess the experience and skills for the job.

**S**ituation                    |                    **T**ask                    |                    **A**ctivity                    |                    **R**esult

**S**ituation: Set the context for your story.

**T**ask: What was required of you.

**A**ctivity: What you actually did.

**R**esult: How well the situation played out.

For example you could prepare examples of when you have;

- Dealt with a difficult situation
- Provided excellent customer service
- Overcome an emotional situation
- Demonstrated going above and beyond to sort a situation