

## **Recommendations for Effective Phone and Video Interviews**

**By John Casey**

### **PRIOR to the phone/video interview:**

- Determine range of time available for the interview.
- Define who is going to call and when to expect the start of the interview.
- Share cell numbers with the interviewer as a backup.
- Prepare a list of key skills/experiences that you want to discuss.
- Make sure your work area is clean and not distracting and the area is brightly lit.
- Use a cordless landline or landline if possible and stand up while interviewing and walk around in a planned circle Easier on the lungs and makes you less nervous.
- Turn off the “call waiting” feature on your phone.
- Have planned looks into the mirror so you smile during the interview. We can all “see” smiles over the phone.
- Arrange a bottle or glass of water, note pad, pen and resume.
- Plan for possible interruptions from dogs, children, etc.
- Do a trial run.
- Meditate for a few minutes beforehand to calm your nerves.
- If you receive an unexpected, unscheduled call for an interview, politely and professionally decline saying you are about to begin an interview or meeting and take their number and schedule a time convenient to you.

### **Video Interview Issues:**

- Best lighting is an incandescent lamp or ring light or window behind the videocam that floods your face with soft light. <https://blog.flock.com/6-tips-for-proper-workspace-lighting#equipment>
- Eye contact: Most difficult part is to look directly at the videocam and talk to the videocam and not to the image of the interviewer in your monitor, unless you are selling the top of your head.
- Make sure background is simple and professional. Look for spears coming out of your head.
- Dress as if you were going to a face-to-face interview. Do not wear bright clothes or patterns.
- Practice using the video platform (Skype, ZOOM, Teams, etc.).
- Make sure who is calling whom.



**During the phone/video interview:**

- Start and end all interviews with a thank you for their time and the two or three key reasons for your interest in this opportunity.
- Make sure your posture is professional (a mirror is helpful).
- Pace yourself...this is a marathon, not a sprint.
- There can be a slight delay on video interviews...do not interrupt the interviewer.
- If the employer interrupts you, it's a clear signal for you to listen and move on.
- Be an EXPERT listener...the employer will ask you what they want to know and often give significant clues as to what they want you to talk about.
- Take notes, but short buzzwords, so you don't lose important eye contact.
- Smile and nod the head while listening.
- Tell the interviewer how convenient it would be for you to make a face-to-face interview  
Ask the interviewer what the next step is, timing for the next step and when can you expect to hear from them.

**After the phone/video interview:**

- Thank you notes are appropriate but should be limited to two to three lines expressing your interest and not a rehash or resell of what was covered in the interview. Thank you notes are just that...to say Thank You.
- If the employer has a known concern a second note (after you've slept on it) covering factual new information is appropriate.
- In your follow on thank you email suggest several "safe" face to face interviews that show interest and creativity. Or have it part of the end of the interview.