

Interviewing with Skype?

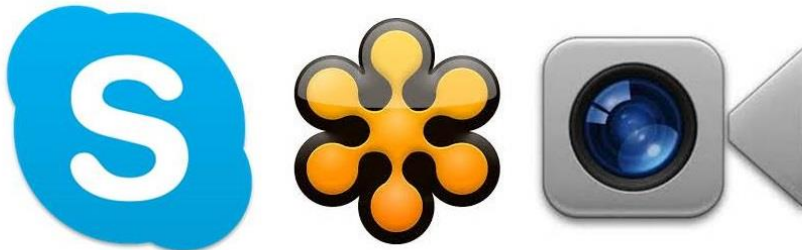
By Nancy Anton, *The Voice On Recruiting*

The nature of business demands that companies do everything they can to reduce spending. And for the past 10 years or so, the hiring interview process has been impacted as travel expenses continue to rise. Interviews that once were in person are migrating to become high tech internet adventures.

More often than not, companies are now using WebEx, Skype, GoTo Meeting, or other web based programs to bring you, the candidate, together with the hiring manager for a face to face conversation.

Get ready! This could happen next to you.

Directions to your next interview



Get comfortable using new technology

It's in your best interest to familiarize yourself with new technologies as they arise. Make it a point to proactively use Skype to talk with your friends or family. Experience with this type of program will make it far easier for you to "score" when you are in a business situation.

In today's competitive talent market, understanding and using technology is expected. A person who is enthusiastic and curious about technology will be far better off than candidates who believe they already know enough about technology and don't need to progress any further.

Your reaction to accepting a web-based meeting can make or break your opportunity to be considered for the job

Last year I was considering a very interested candidate, and invited him to interview. He didn't have a webcam attached to or embedded in his computer. He tried his best to get the interview changed to phone only. It became obvious to me, as the recruiter, that he wasn't cooperating or embracing this form of communication. The last conversation was ended with me saying, "If you are able to get access to this technology, please let me know. If the position is still open, we would be happy to consider you." We ended up moving on to another candidate.

Another very memorable interview was a candidate whose cat knocked over the coffee cup on his desk during our video interview. He jumped up to prevent the coffee from spilling onto his lap, only to reveal that he was wearing sweat pants underneath his suit jacket. If you are wondering, we didn't hire him, but we had a good laugh that day.

Here are a few tips to help you be more successful with video interviewing for jobs and other business opportunities:

Practice builds confidence. Embrace the technology and be ready to use it. Buy a webcam if you don't have one as part of your equipment and get used to using it. Practice mock interviews using the equipment, as well as with different online meeting software platforms. Download Skype software and practice using it both in business and in personal situations. Know your account name and password and know how to get it up and running quickly.

Look at the camera (not the screen). The red light is your friend. If you are not looking at the camera properly, you may come off as distracted or unhinged. Look at the camera both when you are speaking and when you are listening. Visualize the other person at the other side of that red light. Angle is important too. I find that those who are looking up at the camera or straight on look far better than those who have the camera too low, and have the "up your nose shot". Remember, whatever is closest to the camera will appear to be larger than anything else.

Stage it. What is behind you in the view? Is it distracting to the person who is watching you? Keep it simple...turn your furniture around, or place a privacy screen behind you. Don't allow the caller to get distracted by a messy workspace, unusual posters or personal property. Keep it visually professional. Natural lighting is optimal. Avoid having a bright light above or behind you. This causes too much glare and can be irritating to the viewer.

No distractions. Kids and pets need to be out of ear shot and in another room. Don't be interrupted by that barking dog, or the cat that jumps on your keyboard, or the crying baby. Keep the house quiet. If you have small children at home, get a sitter or spouse to entertain them far away from your meeting space. Silence your cell phone to prevent other interruptions. Close down any other programs that you have running on your computer (like Facebook). I would also recommend no beverages at your desk during the interview. Why risk the spill?

Dress professionally and look relaxed. Treat this video meeting just as if it was an in-person meeting. Get fully dressed. Sit up straight with both feet on the floor -using physiology of excellence. Make good eye contact (with the camera), use good body language, and remember to smile. Avoid tapping on the keyboard or playing with things on your desk. This is just a bit harder to see on the screen, but your viewer will sense your random movements. Such distractions all build up to and leave a lasting impression.

Have a back-up plan. Whatever can go wrong, will go wrong. So it's best to be prepared. It is vital that you have a call back number for the person you are speaking with and make sure they have your number. There are times where the audio is on the phone and the visual is on the web. Make sure you have both available to you.

Be prepared, but also have a sense of humor. Just like an in-person interview, anything can go wrong. Be prepared and be comfortable. Handling the situation with grace and humor goes a long way to a successful interview.

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About the writer: Nancy Anton, CPC has been a corporate recruiter for over 15 years and has worked for many different industries and Fortune 100 companies such as Cigna, MassMutual, Legrand and General Electric. Nancy is branded *The Voice On Recruiting* and is a writer, trainer and speaker in the industry. Sharing her experiences with hiring managers, job seekers and other recruiting professionals brings better understanding of the hiring process and more successes for all. Nancy has a Certified Personnel Consultant designation; a Bachelor's of Art in Economics and lives in Murrells Inlet, South Carolina. Link in with Nancy at www.linkedin.com/in/nanton2007/en



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