

## THE VIDEO INTERVIEW EXPERIENCE

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September 24, 2012

Video interviews are becoming more commonplace in the workplace. As hiring becomes more global, both for employers and candidates, video interviewing is a way to expedite the [interview process](#). Hiring managers and recruiters can conduct first round interviews more quickly, save on transportation costs, and get the interview process started much faster using video conferencing than they can schedule in-person interviews. For candidates for employment, it's easy to interview right from home. It saves on travel time and video interviewing, if you prepare in advance, can be less stressful than interviewing in person.



Here at HCA West Florida, we too have introduced this tool into our interview process and have found it not only productive from a cost perspective but beneficial for both the candidate and hiring manager to meet face to face during what used to be just a phone conversation.

In order to prepare yourself for this new experience, I wanted to pass along a few helpful hints that will make the most out of your video conversation.

### Look At The Camera, Not The Screen

Eye contact is critical in an in-person interview, and it adds a nice touch on a video interview as well. Pretend your webcam is the person interviewing you. Keep looking at the webcam as you would be looking at your interviewer.

### Dress Appropriately

Be careful if you are considering dressing "business on top and casual on the bottom." Dress professionally from head to toe. Don't make the mistake of dressing waist up. If you shift in your seat, you don't want your pajamas or sweatpants showing! Dress in light colors against a darker background or dark colors against a light background. Plan ahead so you look your best.

# Smile and Focus

One of the easiest rules to remember when interacting with anyone is simply to smile. There is nothing more engaging than smiling throughout your call with a friendly expression. Also important is to make direct eye contact. When you scan the room or look away from the camera, you might appear untrustworthy or indifferent. The person with whom you are speaking deserves your full attention so make sure to stay focused and friendly.

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## Background Check

While you are the focus of the call and the video; remember that there will be background material that the viewer will see. Think about how your webcam is set up and what can be detected behind you. Are you in sitting so that a blank wall is behind you or is there a cluttered book shelf or large painting behind you?

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## Lighting

Check to be sure you have enough lighting that doesn't create shadows or throw too harsh a look into your screen.

Video interviews provide the opportunity to showcase your skills and talents from the comfort of your home. Smile, be confident, and prepare to ace your interview using technology that makes the hiring process more comfortable and cost effective for you and your prospective employer.

Here are more tips from another source.

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## Top Ten Tips for a Skype Interview

1. **Do a trial run a few days before the real interview, with a friend on the other end to give you feedback.** Treat this trial run the same way you'll treat the real thing, including wearing the outfit you'll wear for the interview. Your friend can tell you if you're talking too loudly or not loudly enough, if the pattern in your shirt is playing oddly on camera, or if you're washing yourself out with overly bright lighting.
2. **Pay attention to your physical background.** You'll look much [more professional](#) sitting at a desk or table and against a neutral background without any clutter. Make sure that you don't have wine glasses, cigarettes, or clutter visible in the background.
3. **Pay attention to the lighting.** Aim light at yourself from the front, not from behind you. A lamp with diffused lighting about six feet in front of you works well. You can also try covering your light source with a cloth to soften it. And make sure that you're not backlit from a window or light source behind you; if you are, you can end up appearing on the screen as just a dark silhouette.

4. **Keep other programs on your computer closed, especially if they might make noise during the call.** You don't want a beep every time you receive a new email, for instance, or a reminder popping up of that [other interview](#) you have tomorrow.
5. **Position yourself correctly.** Don't sit as close to the computer as you normally would. Instead, sit a bit farther back so that your face and upper shoulders are framed in the shot. Additionally, place the computer slightly higher than you normally do, so that it's capturing you face-on and you're not looking down at it. (An easy way to do this is to simply prop it up on some books.)
6. **Use the highest-speed Internet connection you can.** On slower Internet connections, video may not align well with the audio and can cause awkward time lags, so use the fastest connection you can. If nothing else helps, try plugging your computer directly into your Internet cable, rather than using a wireless connection.
7. **Remember to look into the camera, not at the picture.** If you look directly at the image of your interviewer on your computer screen, you'll appear to be looking slightly away from her. Instead, looking directly into your webcam will read as direct eye contact on your interviewer's end.
8. **If you find the image of yourself distracting, cover it.** Skype, for instance, will include a small image of yourself in the corner of your screen. If you tend to watch the image of yourself rather than watching your interviewer, change your setting to remove that window altogether—or just cover it with a sticky note.
9. **Plan for technological difficulties.** Keep your computer plugged in so the battery doesn't die, and [keep your phone](#) on hand in case the interview mode changes at the last minute.
10. **Don't hesitate to tell your interviewer up front that this is your first time doing a video interview.** That will help break the ice, and most interviewers will be very understanding (and inclined to cut you some slack if you seem uncomfortable).

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*“I won't send you anyone I wouldn't hire myself.”*

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