



Have you been Skyped?

After a couple of weeks wait the company you are keen to join tells you they want to see you, but then drop the bombshell that this will be by Skype! So, does this totally alter how you prepare or should you treat this as a 'proper' interview? If you have never been Skyped before - or don't even have a Skype address/account – it could turn out to be far more nerve racking than meeting them face to face.

In today's connected world with fast communications technology Skype and video interviews are much better than they used to be, with limited delays and great picture and sound quality. Setting up an account takes a few minutes and most laptops have a webcam so you shouldn't need any new kit!

But how should you approach the interview? As with any interview, preparation is key. First off make sure that you confirm the time and date and give them your Skype address as they should 'call' you – make sure your laptop/PC is connected and ready to accept the call on the day and time appointed.

Next, take time to consider where you will be when the interview takes place. A quiet room is best where you will not be disturbed and you can fully focus on the meeting. Take a look at what will be behind you as well as you don't want them to see a messy background that distracts from you. Make sure the room is well lit and that you can sit comfortably.

In terms of dress code, wear what you would to an actual face to face interview – you want to make a good impression and demonstrate that you are taking it seriously and showing respect to the interviewer and their company. So, no pyjamas or onesies!

If you are not used to doing Skype meetings find a friend with an account and call them. This will help you get the lighting and positioning of the camera correct (you can see yourself in the corner of the screen) and get you used to the time delay you may experience during the conversation. You can adjust the height and angle of the camera so that it is at eye level which gives a more flattering view of you!

As with any interview eye contact and body language are important; sit up straight and focus on what the interviewer is saying and only answer when they have finished so that you don't talk over them. Smile and listen 'actively' so that the interviewer can see that you are focused on them. Try to look at the camera, rather than the picture on the screen, to ensure 'eye' contact and avoid looking at yourself in the corner of the screen, which can be difficult due to the distraction of checking yourself.

Depending on the quality of your camera and internet connection the subtleties of your body language and speech may not come across strongly so speak clearly and think about the tone and pace of your voice in order to convey a positive message. Being on screen will make most people feel a little uncomfortable and this will affect your natural interaction with someone so it is important to try to overcome this so that you give a great first impression. Relax and be yourself! Remember though that the interviewer may not be a veteran of Skype interviews so bear with them as well – feeling confident on camera takes practice!

Be prepared for a technical hitch - if your connection goes during the meeting and you can't hear what is being said, explain and say you will call back if it is really bad. Your goal is to make a good impression and get invited to meet face to face!

