Looking Good on Camera

Most Flattering Angle. Elevate your webcam to make sure it is slightly above your head and then point it down towards your eyes. This will help create better eye contact and avoid people looking up into your nostrils or chin.

It Is All About Lighting. Move around your home to test this one out. Position a light source (lamp, window) behind your computer to make sure light is falling nicely on your face. Your entire face should light up, not producing shadows on one side of your face or the other. Lighting behind your head, or from the left or right, can create unwanted facial shadows.

Dress the Part. Although remote, you want to dress professionally for your interviews. If you choose to only dress professionally from your waist up, be careful with your angles or reflections from mirrors behind you. You may be showing more than your interviewers want to see.

Double Check. Most virtual platforms give you the opportunity to see how you look on camera before going live. Take a moment and make sure you are looking as good as you feel on camera. Better yet, practice your approach with a friend or your CDO in advance and ask for their views on how to make sure you look your best on camera.

Perfect Your Environment

Neutral Backgrounds Are Best. Your background should be as composed as you are on screen. Consider a neutral background—like a blank wall—to draw the interviewer's attention to you. Bookshelves or composed living room backgrounds also work, but be mindful that interviewers may be reading the book titles or watching the pet or loved one behind you. If you prefer, you may also use a background provided by your school or a pre-loaded background, if the virtual platform provides for it.

A Quiet Place. Avoid high-traffic or noisy areas around your home where possible to limit background noise. Use headphones or earbuds with clear voice capability to reduce or eliminate background noise. If you cannot avoid high-traffic or noisy areas around your home, use your "mute" feature to limit noise when the interviewer is speaking.

Be Comfortable. Interviews may have you sitting for quite some time. Pick a good chair, with good back support, and test it out in advance. To avoid slouching or fidgeting get up in between interviews to refresh your body before you sit back down.

Good Connection. Make sure your internet is working and that you have good, reliable internet connectivity throughout your interviews. If your internet is susceptible to interference or to freezing, do not take chances it will work the day of. Move to a better internet location or download and install a hotspot app on your cell phone. Even if your internet and connection is perfect, expect there will be technological issues and plan a contingency just in case. If a technological issue does arise, make sure you have the telephone number of at least one interviewer or the interviewing firms' IT support to relay and address the issue.

Test the Platform. Virtual platforms vary. Download the platforms used by prospective employers well in advance of your interview and take some time to familiarize yourself with how to use them. Test the platform with a friend or with the employer's IT personnel before interview day to make sure everything is working properly.

Be Present, Limit Distractions

Active Listening. Virtual platforms can unintentionally limit or mute your body language. Much like trying to check your blind spot on a driving test, you might have to animate yourself a little bit more than normal to convey the right impression. Consider active listening skills like nodding up and down and leaning forward on your chair to show engagement. Avoid crossing your arms, sitting slouched, or fidgeting too much. Fatigue will make active listening more difficult to implement as the day wears on, but try your best and remember to treat each interview like it is your first.

Turn Off Notifications. While it is good practice to hide your cell phone, tablet or other device during interviews, please also remember to turn off the email notifications on your computer before you start. These "pop-ups" notifications often draw your eye into the corner of your computer each time they occur, disrupting your engagement. Ignore them and do not worry—your emails will be there for you to answer during your breaks.

Speaker View. We all have a tendency to look at ourselves on camera. This is particularly true with multi-view options, where you can see all those participating on a remote call. To maintain eye contact, set your view option to "Speaker View" (or platform equivalent) so you are seeing only one interviewer at a time. This trick will keep your eyes looking forward and connected to everyone you are talking with.

Put the Notes Away. Interviewers can tell if you are reading or asking questions off a page. While we want you to ask questions, reading questions off a word document or on the papers beside your computer lessens your engagement and pulls attention away from the conversation. Try to memorize a few questions ahead of the interview and, if you get through all your questions and there is still time, only then ask the interviewers if they mind you taking a moment to look at your notes for a further question or two.

Prepare Your Mindset

Embrace the Mock Interview. Perform one or two mock interviews, with friends or your CDO, ahead of your interview. Make sure the interviewer has a copy of your application ahead of time and don't give them direction on what to ask (to keep the mock interview as authentic as possible). Ask the interviewer for feedback and try again with another interviewer. As you conduct these interviews, try changing your answers to similar questions. This will keep the interview fresh and will help you avoid rehearsed answers.

Think Ahead. Firm websites often answer many base-level questions about their student program, including whether the summer is rotational/non-rotational and what their mentoring and feedback systems look like. While questions on these topics are welcomed during interviews, questions that go beyond the website are likely to signal greater interest and create better engagement between you and your interviewer.

The Night Before. Try to relax and to do something that puts you in a more peaceful mindset—like exercise, a good book or a movie with a friend. Make sure you have a good dinner and get to bed early. Being well-rested will help to keep your mind sharp and energy levels high the next morning.

The Day Of. Make sure to drink plenty of water and to eat snacks throughout the day. Schedule time in your calendar if necessary. While being well-rested is key for your morning interviews, food and hydration are key to keeping your energy up throughout the afternoon and evening.

Life Happens (It's Okay)

It Will Not Be Perfect. While we encourage everyone to prepare, we also accept that unforeseen issues will arise. Lost internet connection. Barking dogs. Construction noise. Kids running in the background. Life is hard to contain, so be forgiving and accept these real-life scenarios without judgment or criticism.

Smile. We know virtual interviewing is not ideal but we are all in this together. Remember to smile and to make the most of an excellent opportunity to get to know your future colleagues.