How to Prepare for a Skype Interview

1. Look at the camera, not at yourself:

This gives the impression of looking straight ahead and into the eyes of the person opposite you, like you would during a traditional interview. If you find your eyes wandering back to the screen, put a sticky note beside the camera to act as a reminder to make digital eye contact. Although we’ve become masters of staring at screens, it is crucial to stay engaged in the interview. Remember to blink normally and use small gestures to show that you are part of the conversation.

2. Know your surroundings:

Whether you’re planning to interview at home or in a café, your location is going to be an extension of the interview room and should be treated as such; a neighborhood café may be appropriate for a grassroots marketing firm, but not a transnational corporation. Ensure there is no loud music, background chatter, dogs barking, or street noise as it will make understanding difficult for both you and your interviewer.

3. Pay attention to the details:

Ensure that you have a work-appropriate username, a strong internet connection with a working microphone and camera, your computer is plugged in, and distractions like other programs or alerts are minimized. Remember that shiny jewelry, small patterns, glasses, and large movements tend not to translate well online. Give as much consideration to your outfit as you would for a traditional interview.

4. Master the Digital Handshake:

Master the “digital handshake” to begin the interview. Internet lag makes little gestures difficult to read, and little gestures are important! We’re used to physical cues for greetings, so lean slightly forward toward the camera and give a little nod—this will demonstrate that you are engaged and is a good replacement for the handshake.

5. Use a cheat sheet:

One perk of a remote interview is having a cheat sheet (or sticky notes) with information you want to touch on in front of you. These can be reminders for your posture or actions, key pieces of experience and skills, or information about the company. While they can help, don’t rely on them throughout the interview as your interviewer will notice you’re reading off of a sheet.

6. Relax, practice, and be comfortable.

Even if this is your first Skype interview, go in knowing that you’ve done all you can to prepare. Practice with a friend or family member to gain confidence. Remember: if something should go wrong or you experience technical difficulties, it’s a chance to demonstrate how you handle new situations, so use it to your advantage!