Ten Zoom Interview Tips for Job Seekers

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Zoom is a video conferencing software that is becoming more popular for business meetings and remote/video job interviews in particular.
It's completely free for the job seeker, and the employer should handle most of the setup, but there are still some important things you need to know (and mistakes to avoid!)
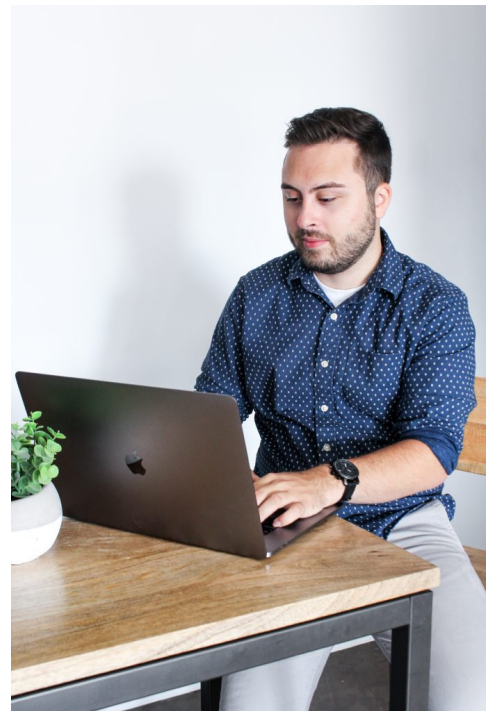
What is a Zoom Interview?

Zoom is a video conferencing software that lets you connect remotely for video or voice-call meetings with one or more people. You can turn video on or off, similar to Skype, but if an employer is setting up a Zoom interview for a job, then they likely want to see you on video.
You should treat your Zoom interview like any other video job interview, but you should also get familiar with the platform and technology so that you're comfortable. And you should download the app ahead of time so that you're ready.
(Zoom has a smartphone app for Apple or Android, as well as a downloadable app for computers).

What Do You Wear to a Zoom Interview?

Your attire for your Zoom interview should be the same as an in-person interview. This will vary depending on your industry and position, but most likely means that you should wear business attire. Avoid clothing that is distracting or brightly colored. Avoid large earrings, colors like pink or bright yellow, etc. It's best to look professional, but without anything that will distract the interviewer. The focus should be on the conversation, and your outfit shouldn't distract from that.

How to Prepare for a Zoom Interview: 10 Tips

1. Get familiar with the technology

Download the app ahead of time (it's available for mobile phones as well as computers at the Zoom website). Make sure you have your meeting link and access code from the employer, too. They should set everything up and provide this info. If not, ask them for it.

Also test your own technology – your microphone, your webcam, etc. Make sure everything is working and looks good so you can avoid any last-minute issues that will cause stress and possibly delay your interview.

2. Set up a distraction-free area

We talked about setting up and testing your technology above, but it's also important to find a room or area of your home that's best for your Zoom interview. Pick a spot that's quiet and distraction-free. Eliminate visual distractions like items on the floor, distracting items on the wall behind you, etc. A painting or picture on the wall is fine, but 10 colorful posters isn't ideal. You want the interviewer to be able to focus on your answers and what you're saying, and distractions in the room will hurt their ability to do this. Shut your windows in the room, too, to eliminate unnecessary noise like lawnmowers, cars, etc. And if you have kids, make sure they're occupied so that they don't interrupt the call.

3. Be on time but not early

Many employers are new to using Zoom for their interviews, and they may use the same "meeting room" or link for multiple job seekers. So you may be entering a "room" that was being used to talk to another job seeker before you. So I recommend entering your Zoom meeting or interview 2-3 minutes before the scheduled time, but no sooner.

4. Prepare answers to the most common questions

Don't get so sidetracked by setting up the technology that you forget to prepare for the interview itself – mainly, how you plan to answer the top interview questions employers ask.

Also, think about any potential concerns they may have about your background in particular and how you'll address those. Anticipate the questions they're likely to ask, practice your answers, and you'll feel more relaxed in the interview.

5. Write down questions to ask them

Employers want to hire people who ask good questions in the job interview. This shows them that you're excited to work for them and that you're curious about their job. This is true in every industry, for every type of job. If you're not asking good questions in each interview, it's a possible reason why you can't find a job.

6. Choose your interview outfit

As mentioned earlier, you should dress professionally – the same way that you would for an in-person interview.

7. Speak slowly and clearly

Before your interview, practice talking slowly and clearly. Even if you have a great internet connection, the Zoom call might cut out for a fraction of a second here and there, and you'll be much easier to understand if you're talking slowly and not rushing through your responses. This will also make you seem more relaxed and confident, which the hiring manager will love.

8. Work on your body language

Avoid tapping your hands or feet, clenching your jaw, or doing anything else that will distract from your answers or make you appear nervous or tense. Eye contact is also important. Practice looking into your webcam as you talk, rather than looking at the video of yourself in the corner of your screen. That will help it feel more like a real conversation and will help the interviewer feel like they're getting to know you better.

9. Double-check the date, time, and time zone

The last thing you want to do is miss your interview because of a time zone mix-up. So check the email from the employer and be sure that you've put the meeting on your calendar at the right time, on the right day. You don't want to miss your interview and have to reschedule – so check everything and never assume that everyone is in your time zone. You could be interviewing with people from other office locations if it's a large company.

10. Don't be afraid to ask for clarification if you need it

It's okay to ask for clarification on something or ask the interviewer to repeat a question once or twice in your interview. This is true in any job interview and especially a video interview. If you didn't hear a question clearly, ask them to repeat it. If you're unsure what exactly they're asking, ask them to clarify. You don't want to do this 10 times in an interview, but it's fine to do it a couple of times, and it's a lot better than answering before you're sure what they're asking.

At the end of the day, it's just like any interview. You need to give great answers. You should ask great questions, too. Just make sure you're comfortable with the technology before going into the conversation so that you can focus on those tasks.