HOW TO PREPARE FOR A VIRTUAL INTERVIEW

**Test Your Technology**

The minute you agree to a virtual interview, test your technology to ensure you’re set up for success. Check your internet connectivity, and confirm your camera and microphone are working. If the picture is grainy or you’re experiencing an echo, you might need to buy a mini webcam with a built-in microphone—which is hard to do five minutes before the interview, so don’t procrastinate.

If your computer audio does not work, you can dial into the meeting. You will still be able to see the interviewers via video, but you will be talking over your phone.

On the day of, test your equipment and internet connection again. Technical savvy is one of the top 10 traits employers are looking for, and by fumbling around with your audio or lighting during the call, you give the hiring manager a reason to question whether you’re the right candidate for the job.

**Set the Scene and Minimize Distractions**

While testing your technology, determine where to take the interview. Find a room with optimal lighting, preferably near a window, or a blank wall to guarantee you’re the focal point of the conversation. Whether you sit on your living room couch or in your home office, tidy up your surroundings. It’s hard to convince employers you’re detail-oriented and organized when there’s laundry visibly piling up in the corner.

Once settled, eliminate all distractions. Turn off the TV, silence your cell phone, and close any nearby windows to muffle neighborhood traffic.

**Sit Down Prepared**

Just because you’re on a computer doesn’t mean you can search the web for answers mid-interview, so avoid clicking around. You want to appear focused and ready to answer any questions without the help of the internet. Research the company ahead of time and jot down notes for easy reference. Also print out a copy of your resume, so that you don’t forget key talking points

**Monitor Your Body Language**

You can’t firmly shake a hiring manager’s hand or as easily exude enthusiasm via video. But what you can do is monitor your body language.

The main way to communicate confidence is to sit up straight, smile, and keep the camera at eye level. Research shows that employers are more likely to remember what you said if you maintain eye contact, so keep your focus on the camera when talking, not on the image of the hiring manager.

**Dress the Part**

You might be sitting near your bed, but you shouldn’t look like you just rolled out of it. Dress as you would for an in-person interview.

**Immediately Follow Up**

Within 24 hours of the interview, send an individual thank you email to everyone you met. Not only will it show you value their time, but it provides you the opportunity to resell yourself and express the unique strengths you bring to the role, or share any talking points you forgot to address.

If there was something specific you bonded over, mention that in the email so you stay top of mind. Or if an interviewer brought up a particular business challenge, use the follow-up as a way to propose potential solutions. Just keep the email concise; you want your note to leave a lasting impression, not immediately end up in the trash.