



10 WAYS

TO NAIL A DIGITAL JOB INTERVIEW

These days, the job application process can start with a Skype interview, which may sound like a breeze, but as **Kimberly Gillan** finds, there's a fine art to getting it right.

So you've sent off your shiny new cover letter and a sparkling CV, and your dream employer has just offered you a Skype interview – boom! But before you begin to cheer at the prospect of being able to wear your Ugg boots in this job interview – err, they're hidden, right? – there are a few things you might want to consider so that you can put your most professional foot forward and score the gig.

DRESS THE PART

You may think you can get away with dressing from the waist up (see right), but Karen Winfield of corporate training centre PD Training (pdtraining.com.au) says dressing well is as much about your headspace as it is about making a good impression. "They may not be able to see your shoes, but dressing properly is part of the process of feeling and channelling that you are professional," she says. Same goes for hair and make-up; you want to present yourself on Skype the same way as you would for an in-person interview. "Dress the part with an outfit that suits the culture of the company you're interviewing for," reaffirms career coach Kate Southam (katesoutham.com).

STYLE THE SPACE

Think about where you want to position yourself: a messy bedroom or cluttered lounge doesn't scream 'professional'. "Choose a neutral background so there are no distractions for the interviewer," Winfield says. "The ideal background is a clear wall." In saying that, if you have a framed uni degree or qualification, hang it behind you. "A little 'stage craft' is a great idea," Southam says. Also, if your chair swivels, swap it for a still option. You're likely to unconsciously swivel throughout the interview, which can make you look nervous.

1 GET THE LIGHT RIGHT

You want the light in the room to shine on your face, but not so bright it makes you squint. "Lit from behind makes you look like some secret interviewee who doesn't want to be identified," Southam says with a laugh. "Lit from above can look a bit Halloween. Natural light from the front on to your face is best."

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3 SWITCH OFF YOUR NOTIFICATIONS

Turn off calendar alerts, newsfeeds and software updates; they could all cause a distraction or make you pull a face if they pop up onscreen mid-interview. "Keep your focus on the interview by turning off pop-ups and set your Skype status to busy," Winfield says. "Ensure your mobile is turned off and out of sight." Nothing worse than an urge to scroll through Insta mid-interview, right?

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5 TIME IT RIGHT

If you live in a busy household, try to schedule a time when you have the place to yourself. If that's not possible, then brief your flatmates to keep a lid on it. "Make sure everyone knows that you're absolutely not to be disturbed unless the house is on fire," Southam says. "You also want to avoid the day when the weekly neighbourhood leaf-blower is in action or the times when the local school is out."



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6 TESTING, 1-2-3

Make like a big-time muso and do a soundcheck. Small sounds can be amplified on video calls, so don't click pens, wear bangles that jingle or sit on a chair that squeaks. "Do a technical check before the day to make sure everything is in working order, including the mic if you're using one, the internet speed and connection, as well as your computer," Southam suggests.

7 REHEARSE YOUR SPIEL

Whether you stand in front of a mirror or recruit a friend to be your spotter, Southam recommends doing a mock interview to help you pick up any weird gestures or habits that could send the wrong signal, such as scratching your ears and nose or even brushing your hair out of your face. "You want to know if you make a smirk or look away when answering a question or if your hand gestures are huge and appear to be robotic," she explains.

8 STUDY UP

Just because you've got access to Wikipedia doesn't mean you shouldn't be well prepped for a few challenging interview questions. "Don't think that because there's a screen between the two of you that you don't need to do your homework," Winfield says. "Spend 10 minutes prior to the Skype interview re-reading the job description, the company's website and the resumé that landed you the interview."

9 EYES ON THE PRIZE

As gorgeous as you are, don't get too mesmerised by your face in the corner of your screen – keep a steady gaze on the camera lens. "Eyes darting all over the place or off to one side are disconcerting and can send signals of disinterest or insincerity," Winfield says.

10 POST-IT NOTES CAN BE YOUR FRIENDS

While you don't want to cover your entire monitor in Post-it note reminders, a mantra or image can help keep you focused. "Draw a smiley face on a Post-it note and stick it near the lens, so you remember to keep smiling throughout the video call," Winfield suggests. "A smile while answering any questions conveys confidence and a likeable personality." 📌