# GLOBAL EMPLOYABILITY

Video (Skype) Interview Skills

The video interview is now a common part of the international recruitment process; a market research firm, the Aberdeen Group, found that 42% of companies used video interviews to recruit in 2011, compared to 10% of companies in 2010.

Golden rules of Skype (video) interviews
- **Make sure you give a Skype interview the same attention you give any other face-to-face interview with the appropriate preparation and research time.**
- **Follow the usual tips for a successful job interview.**
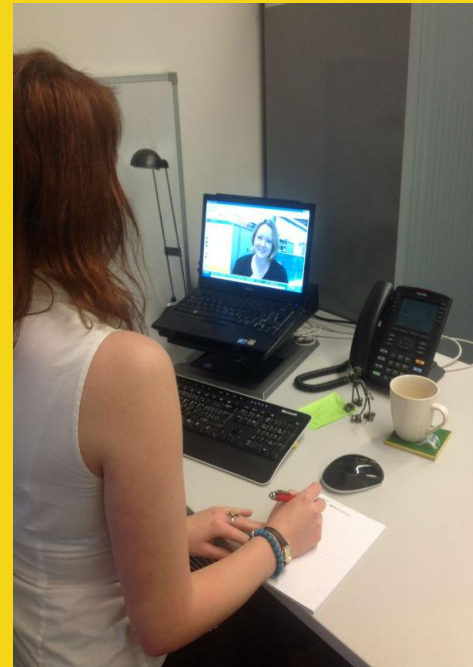
Technical matters

- Technical issues you need to be aware of:
- Do a thorough technical check before you interview, starting with your Internet connection; if your connection is flaky, find somewhere more stable.
- Don't rely on the built in microphone; get a dedicated microphone.
- Have your electronic CV and link to your portfolio ready, just in case your interviewer needs you to send it during the interview.
- Try to Skype a friend beforehand and get them to give you some feedback. If not possible: try recording yourself before the interview to make sure everything is working and practice answering some imaginary questions.
- On a computer, your employer's first impression of you is your Skype username and profile picture so make sure they are appropriate.

Preparation

- Remember that **appearance and preparation** are key to ensuring a smooth and successful interview:
- The cardinal rules of any interview apply here too: dress professionally and make sure your appearance is appropriately groomed. Don't neglect your bottom half as you may need to stand up (e.g. to get a document or check a detail required by the interviewer), and pin-striped jacket, white shirt and tie don't go well over Simpsons PJ bottoms!
- Dressing as if for a face-to-face interview also helps you get into the right frame of mind.
- Make sure you will not become distracted during the interview and that you're in a quiet, secure undisturbed place.
- Consider your background and the lighting and make sure your room is clean and uncluttered.
- If you need it, have a glass of water to hand and turn off any notifications or pop ups on your computer and mobile phone to avoid distractions.
- Make sure you have **thoroughly** researched the company and understand them and the job you've applied for. This means more than a quick look at Wikipedia!
- Have a copy of your CV, application letter, and any key notes about the employer or job to hand, but refer to them as little as possible and as discretely as possible.
- Have a notepad and pen to hand, to jot down notes/ questions you are asked or want to ask.

Skype etiquette

• As there are some physical constraints to conducting an interview over video make sure you pay **extra attention** to the following

• Right at the start of the call make sure you make eye contact (by looking at the camera lens and not the screen) and smile - first impressions are very important. This is the Skype equivalent of a firm handshake.

•Try to relax! A few massive forced Chesire-cat smiles before you start the connection will help your facial muscles and hopefully you relax a little.

• Listen carefully to the words and tone used by the interviewer as body language will be harder to read.

• Remember that the interviewer has the same constraints, so speak clearly and confidently. Show your personality by what you say and how you act and remember to smile!

• Although in normal conversation we sometimes speak simultaneously, it's nearly impossible to communicate this way using Skype. So if the other person is speaking wait until they have finished before you say anything, otherwise both voices become muffled and unclear.

• Act both naturally and professionally. This would include such things as maintaining appropriate eye contact (by looking predominantly at the camera lens and not the screen!), sitting up properly, not fidgeting.

• If you cannot hear the interviewer due to interference or connection problems, there is no shame in asking them to repeat the question.

• If there are technical issues e.g. your connection is lost during the call, don't let it throw you into confusion. Simply call them back or wait for them to return the call, and explain what happened.

• Don't follow up on Skype chat, it's best to stick to an old school thank-you **email**.

Links to other resources

•   General interview advice: http://www.exeter.ac.uk/careers/jobapplications/interviews

•Telephone interview advice:
http://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/careersandemployability/pdfs/resources/guide_to_telephone_interviews.pdf

• Skype download and support: http://www.skype.com/