

# A guide to video interviewing

---

Key considerations when preparing for video interviews



# | Video interviewing

Even prior to the current obstacles, we have been seeing more and more employers utilising virtual tools to conduct candidate assessments for the first round of the formal interview process.

With the ongoing Covid-19 epidemic, remote working is – for the time being at least – a necessity for all professionals. But the need for business-critical talent hasn't stopped and organisations across all sectors are adapting to the changing landscape and adopting video interviewing to maintain hiring momentum.

## **Live vs. pre-recorded**

Most commonly, candidates and employers conduct the remote video session in real time. The format of these video interviews is essentially exactly the same as an in-person interview.

During these uncertain times we are supporting businesses and professionals with the aim of maximising the opportunities resulting from virtual interview.

While the questions and conversations will remain the same, video interviewing presents a different challenge and format. In this guide we outline the key considerations when preparing for a video interview and offer some helpful tips.

With on-demand or one-way video interviews candidates are presented with a number of questions and record and submit their responses through the video platforms. In many cases questions will be shared ahead of time for candidates to prepare in advance. Candidates may also get the opportunity to review their responses before submission, with the opportunity to amend or re-record their answers.



# | Before the interview



## Prepare & check your surroundings

---

Just because it's a video interview doesn't mean you shouldn't be as prepared as you would be for a face-to-face meeting. The more you do beforehand, the less you'll be thinking on your feet. It is important for you to think about why you have been invited to interview and the objective of the interviewer. Consider common behavioural competency-based questions, make sure to read over your CV and do your research and prepare some questions to ask them. In short, treat it exactly as you would a regular interview.

Find a quiet space where you won't be interrupted. Take the time to position yourself correctly and pay attention to your surroundings. Make sure there is nothing in the background that could be distracting to the interviewer. And make sure you disable any notifications that may be sent from your phone or computer. If your eyes are periodically drawn to random corners of the screen then it will seem as if you aren't giving the interview your full attention.

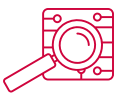


## Dress appropriately

---

Dress as though this were an in-office interview with professional attire. And make sure you're dressed professionally from the waist down too, just in case you need to stand up to get something!

Avoid bright colours as these can blur on screen. The best way to check? Run a test on your computer to see how it shows up.



## Test your tech

---

Make sure you have the necessary virtual meeting tools downloaded in advance (e.g. Microsoft Teams, Google Hangouts, Zoom). Minimise the risk of technical glitches by testing all the necessary programs and checking your connection and internet speed.

Make sure to test the quality of your camera and audio. If something does go wrong, ensure you have a back-up telephone number and email to contact if the equipment fails.



# | During the interview



## A 'digital handshake'

---

First impressions count. In-person interviews begin with a handshake. Where you can't physically greet the interviewer think about how to create a suitable opener.

A wave is too informal, but alternatives might be a professional nod, smile, or saying something like, 'Thank you for inviting me to interview'.



## Maintain eye contact

---

Try not to stare at the screen as it will appear as if you're looking downward. To create the appearance of eye contact with the interviewer look directly into the camera. Maintaining eye contact with the interviewer not only shows that you are interested in what is being said but is considered to be a sign of strength of character and confidence.

It is important to smile and look as if you are enjoying the experience; this will help you come across as relaxed and personable. If your interviewer enjoys talking to you then they are more likely to want to meet you again.



## Check your body language

---

In-person interview rules apply when video interviewing so pay attention to non-verbal communication. Your body language is a clear indicator to how you are feeling. In situations where there is a tendency to feel nervous, your body language can have a detrimental impact on your performance at interview.

**Sit upright** – Look keen and interested but not too wooden. Whilst it is important to feel relaxed, you do not want to come across as too casual as it will make you seem disinterested.

**Hands** – Comfortable stillness exudes confidence and hands can be a major disruptor of this. They can also be a huge indication of nervousness. It sometimes helps to clasp hands lightly together in order to come across as composed and in control. Be careful when folding arms as this can give the impression of being defensive or evasive. Try not to touch your face, play with your hair or otherwise fiddle with something as these can be construed as signs of nervousness or weakness.



# Competency-based questions

Although it is important not to sound scripted, it is worth familiarising yourself with the common types of behavioural/competency-based questions in order to be as prepared as possible. Remember that these questions are not about your answer, but the actions you took to reach it.

- **Individual competencies** – your personal attributes: flexibility, decisiveness, tenacity, independence, risk taking, personal integrity
- **Leadership competencies** – taking charge of other people: empowerment, strategic planning, corporate sensitivity, project management, management control
- **Analytical competencies** – the elements of decision making: innovation, analytical skills, numerical problem solving, problem solving, practical learning, detail consciousness
- **Interpersonal competencies** – dealing with other people: communication, impact, persuasiveness, personal awareness, teamwork, openness
- **Motivational competencies** – the things that drive you: resilience, energy, motivation, achievement orientation, initiative, quality focus

The STAR model will provide a structure to your answers:

- **Situation** – describe a situation or problem that you have encountered.
- **Task** – describe the task that the situation required or your ideas for resolving the problem.
- **Action** – describe the action you took, obstacles that you had to overcome.
- **Results** – highlight outcomes achieved.

Questions about:

## Influencing or Persuading Others

- Tell me about a time when you were able to change someone's viewpoint significantly.
- Tell me about a time when you were asked to do something that you disagreed with.

## Interpersonal and Team Skills

- What experience have you had working on a team?
- What skills and personal qualities have you contributed to the teams you have been part of?
- Tell me about a time when you used tact and diplomacy.
- Tell me about the last time you had a disagreement with someone.
- Tell me about the most difficult person you have worked with.
- What have you disliked in your past jobs?
- What kinds of people do you enjoy working with?
- What kinds of people frustrate you?
- What qualities do you admire most in others?

## Communication Skills

- Tell me about a time when you were successful in getting crucial information from another person.
- Tell me about a time when someone misunderstood what you were attempting to communicate.

## Personal Adaptability, Energy and Resilience

- Tell me about a time when your work or an idea was criticised.
- Tell me about a time when you felt under pressure.
- Tell me about a time when you felt frustrated by your work.



### **Self-management, Self-motivation and Self-knowledge**

- Tell me about a time when you acted over and above the expectations of your role.
- What have you done that shows initiative and willingness to work?
- What are your three major accomplishments?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
- What are your interests outside work?
- Tell me about a major problem you have encountered and how you dealt with it?

### **Problem Solving and Decision Making**

- Tell me about a difficult decision that you have made.
- Tell me about an unpopular decision you have made.
- What significant problems have you faced in the last year?
- How do you work under pressure?
- What impact do you think...will have on our business?
- How would you motivate an employee who was performing poorly?

### **Conflict Management and Ethics**

- How do you resolve conflict in the groups or teams that you are a member of?
- How would you resolve a dispute?
- Tell me about a time when you bent the rules. When is it okay to do so?

### **Personal and Career Objectives**

- What are your short and long-term goals?
- What are the most important things you are seeking in a career?
- What person do you admire most and why?
- Why do you want this position?

### **Knowledge of the Organisation and Role**

- Why did you apply for this position?
- What skills and personal qualities are essential for success in this role?
- What do you believe you can contribute to this organisation?
- What do you know about our organisation?
- Why are you interested in working for our organisation?
- In what kind of a work environment are you most comfortable?
- What qualities should a successful manager possess?
- Describe the relationship that should exist between a supervisor and those reporting to him/her
- What problems do you feel you will have fitting into the job?

### **Work Experience**

- Tell me about the best job you've ever had.
- What did you enjoy most or least about your last job?
- What extra-curricular activities are you involved in?

### **Academic Experience**

- If you were hiring a graduate for this position, what qualities would you look for?

### **Ability, Competence and Achievement**

- What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? Why?
- What do you feel qualifies you for this position?

### **Stress Questions**

- How do you react to criticism?
- Can you accept criticism for poor work?
- What causes you to lose your temper?
- Aren't you overqualified for this role?
- How long would you expect to remain with this organisation?
- What salary are you expecting?



# | Case interview tips

Case studies are a great way for potential employers to assess your technical knowledge and ability. Whilst you will most likely be forewarned about a case study, the chances are you will be unsure of the exact question. However, there are ways in which to prepare in order to perform well.



## **Listen to the interviewer and ask questions**

Your interviewer will explain a client's situation. Listen carefully and take time to align your thinking. Ask clarifying questions and communicate how you're approaching the opportunity or challenge. Your interviewer may also provide you with additional data and hints along the way, so be prepared to take notes.



## **Don't rush into the analysis without developing an understanding of the problem**

During the discussion, the interviewer will work with you to organize your thoughts and steer you toward a solution. Don't be afraid to ask questions that check your understanding.



## **Structure the problem and develop a framework**

Take a moment to think about the case and carefully define the problem being posed. Establish a relevant framework and identify the kinds of analysis you may want to perform to reach a solution.



## **Focus on high-impact issues**

Concentrate on the issues that will create value for your client, but make sure you explain the reasons behind your choices.



## **Think before speaking**

Take some time to organize your ideas; don't jump to conclusions too quickly.



## **Generate a hypothesis and explore options creatively**

Make suggestions on how to solve the key issues you have identified. The interviewer will look for the same things a BCG client would expect when working with us—game-changing innovation that can create significant and lasting value.



## **Don't stick to an artificial framework**

Standard frameworks you have learned at school or in preparing for your interview may appear relevant, but they may not hold up after closer consideration.



### **Demonstrate business judgment**

Given that there is limited information available, the interviewer will ask you probing questions about your comments, hypotheses, or conclusions to test your capability to apply your business judgment.



### **Make quick and accurate calculations**

At some point, the interviewer will ask you to make some simple calculations. Rather than testing your computational skills, this is meant to see if you can use numbers to swiftly form opinions and guide decisions.

Your calculations should be accurate and integrated into what you have discovered so far.



### **Synthesize your thoughts and draw conclusions from your analysis**

At the end of the interview, you should summarize the key hypotheses and options you have developed. Then, conclude with your recommended solution to the client's problem.



### **Don't panic if the answer is not apparent**

Often, there are no specific right or wrong answers in our interviews, and you are not expected to know everything about business. The objective of the interview is for us to learn about your approach to solving business problems, so remember to discuss your line of thought with the interviewer.



### **Don't defend your solution at all costs**

It's important to stand up for what you believe, but if your interviewer challenges you, consider his or her perspective carefully before responding or becoming defensive.



### **Be transparent about your thought process**

The interview should be a dialogue between you and the interviewer, so make sure you communicate your logic and underlying assumptions.



### **Don't circulate cases or use advanced knowledge**

We integrate fresh cases—and new data—frequently, so don't assume that a case that sounds familiar, perhaps one discussed by a past candidate, would be best solved by the same approach. Think independently and draw your own conclusions.



### **Engage with your interviewer and be yourself**

If you find the conversation lively and stimulating, you'll likely enjoy the environment and culture of the firm.





# Things to look out for

- Never get too personal or too casual with the interviewer. Always sound professional and other than basic things like your family & where you live, keep your private life to yourself.
- Video interviews are much more difficult when it comes to building rapport. Listen more intently and answer the questions without rambling and talking too much.
- It is vital that you give the impression that you want the job you are being interviewed for. It shows a positive attitude and makes the client more open-minded to suggestions that you may make – i.e. salary increases, promotional opportunities, etc. Also, the more offers you have the more in demand you will be and the more confident you will get.
- Don't oversell yourself; you may end up sounding arrogant. Be realistic and sound like you will benefit from the job.
- Do not negotiate your own salary. Candidates seem to under-negotiate their own salary resulting in a reduced salary level, if you get this far simply say 'I will need to discuss this with 'The Barton Partnership'. We are far more experienced at negotiating your salary, ensuring you are paid fairly.
- Listen and pay attention to your interviewer, nod at positive things they may say about the company – 'yes I can see that' comments.
- Avoid any negative comments regarding your past jobs – don't spend the time moaning. Always suggest the reason why you want to progress in your career.

Good luck!

# Contact Us

## LONDON

16 High Holborn  
London  
WC1V 6BX

+44 (0) 207 138 3691

[contact@thebartonpartnership.com](mailto:contact@thebartonpartnership.com)

## NEW YORK

11th Floor, 12 E 49th St  
New York  
NY 10017

+1 (347) 400 5567

[nyc@thebartonpartnership.com](mailto:nyc@thebartonpartnership.com)

## PARIS

226 Boulevard Voltaire  
75011  
Paris

+33 18 71 69 669

[paris@thebartonpartnership.com](mailto:paris@thebartonpartnership.com)

## SINGAPORE

Suntec Tower 5  
5 Temasek Blvd  
038985  
Singapore  
+65 9897 6565

[asia@thebartonpartnership.com](mailto:asia@thebartonpartnership.com)

