Skype Interview Best Practices

UCAN: UChicago Communications & Networking

UChicagoGRAD
What makes a Skype Interview different from an in-person interview?
Is a Skype interview more like an in-person or a phone interview?
Why Prep for “VI”?

- 10% in 2010
- 42% in 2012
- 60% in 2013

Sources: WSJ (2010/2012); Forbes (2013)
Agenda:
- Infrastructure
- Prep
- Interview Tips
I: Infrastructure
Profile Upkeep

48 Hours Before: Confirm Skype Handle
“Can you hear me now?”
“Can you hear me now?”

- Use a hardwired connection if possible
- Rent a microphone (or make sure that your space has great acoustics)
- Find the right volume on your speakers (headphones are not ideal)
- Make sure you’ve used the equipment
- Always have a second device
What Kind of Space?

HOW WAS YOUR INTERVIEW? I LOVE YOU SWEETIE???
Background...
Background...

- Everyone always says “find a bookcase”
- Keep things **simple** but **not bland**
  - Don’t distract the viewer
  - e.g. Table with a flower vase off to the side
  - Bookshelf: varied patterns/empty space
  - Art posters on a blank wall
- What to **avoid**
  - Busy, Blank, Bright (or reflective)
Accessorize Appropriately

- Post-it notes above the screen (with bullets about job)
- Copies of Resume/CV
- Notebook/pen
- Water
- Avoid clutter and too many notes.
Look the (Whole) Part

WOMEN
- Navy/Dark Gray Suit
- Solid (light) color blouse
- Easy on the Jewels

MEN
- Navy/Dark Gray Suit
- Very clean facial hair
- Comfortable shoes
- Strong, simple tie

EVERYONE
- FIT, NOT $$$. 
- Haircut
- Wear it on Skype
- Ask for honesty
Questions so far?
II: The Interview
Prep

- **In the Week(s) before:**
  - Do homework
  - Record yourself
  - ...in front of a mirror
  - Use Skype
  - Develop questions
  - Know:
    - Strengths
    - Weaknesses
    - Elevator Pitch
    - Why us?
  - Reserve/See Space

- **24 hours before:**
  - Confirm space
  - Get sleep
  - Suit up
  - Review notes
  - Read something else the morning of...

- **60 mins before:**
  - Confirm via email
  - Log in 5 mins early
Jobs Get in at the Eyes
Jobs Get in at the...camera

“Eyes up” Regardless of the number of interviewers

Orient Yourself Check to make sure you’re smiling
Skype Etiquette

- **DO** close all programs
- **DO** use your hands
- **DO** sit with feet flat
- **DO** pause

- **DON’T** cross arms
- **DON’T** hunch over
- **DON’T** shout
Answer Formulation

- Elements of strong answers:
  - **Brevity**—two sentences instead of three
  - Articulating personal **stakes** of the question
  - Remain **positive and focused on strengths**
  - Narrative examples that produce **results**
  - **Slow Down. Slow Way Down.**

- Indicators of confidence:
  - Rephrasing a question to **clarify**
  - Tying answers to **previous** questions or comments
  - Taking a moment to **think** about an answer
Oh &&@(*# I can’t hear a thing and the image is garbled.
Relax. It will probably happen.
Nip it in the bud.
Have that second device and contact information.
Practice Makes Perfect
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Game Time Situations
- Use the room/tech setup
- Wear the outfit that you plan to wear
- Use materials that you’ll have in front of you
- Start with basic questions
- Practice technical difficulties
Follow-Up
Questions?
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