Virtual Interview Tips

Technology
- Ensure that your internet connectivity is strong
- Ensure your computer is plugged in during the interview
- Ensure that the app (Zoom, Skype, Google Meet, etc.) works properly on your computer a couple of days before your interview-
  - Test the app again the day of the interview so there are no unexpected problems
- If your video is grainy or the audio has an echo, you should consider getting a mini-webcam
- Problem solve all these technical issues beforehand so that you do not come across as unprofessional or unable to problem solve-
- When the interview is scheduled, make sure you get the interviewer's contact information so that you can contact them in the event that you become disconnected on video
- Remember: Technical savvy is a skill employers are looking for, so you do not want to come off as unskilled with video technology
  - So, if this is your first time in a virtual interview, act as though you have done this before!

Background
- Ensure that you are set up in a professional area
  - For example, sit in front of a solid colored wall or bookshelf, but do NOT sit on your unmade bed or in front of your pile of dirty laundry
- For optimal lighting with the interview, it may be helpful to sit in front of a window
- Make sure all distractions are dealt with
  - Silence your phone, and turn of the TV
  - Let your family members or roommates know you are going into an interview, and need the space cleared and quiet while it is going on

Body Language
- VERY IMPORTANT: Do not look at the screen while speaking with the interviewer, although it appears you are looking at the person. Look at the camera, which is really making proper eye contact with the interviewer
  - It might be helpful to print a small picture of the person interviewing you and place it next to the camera to maintain eye level
- Position your computer so that your head and shoulders are visible within the camera frame

- Place your computer on an elevated platform so you are at a more comfortable eye level with the computer camera
- The interviewer may record the meeting and will be able to go back and notice any slouches or yawns, so be especially aware of your body language in this setting
- Since virtual interviews can be less personable, make sure you connect with the interviewer most especially at the beginning and the end

Attire
- Dress professionally just like you would for an in-person interview
- Do not wear something deliberately flashy, such as big jewelry, because there could be a reflection that distracts the interviewer
- Do not leave your lower half ready for bed: that means no pajama pants, sweatpants, or jeans
  - It may seem ridiculous, but you do not know if you will have to get up to go to the bathroom, or if the interviewer will ask you to get up for any reason
- You should also dress professionally because it makes you more confident mentally for the interview

Practice
- Ask a friend or family to do a mock online interview with you using the service you will use for your real interview
  - This will allow you to:
    - Practice how you will respond clearly and concisely to questions to demonstrate strong verbal communication skills
    - See how the lighting makes you look, how you sound, and how you are presenting yourself
    - Get rid of those pesky "uhs" and umms"
    - Find out if your answers are too mechanical, or if you are not being authentic

Professionalism
- Research the company ahead of time so you are not clicking into other tabs during the interview
- Print out your resume and have it next to you so you can easily reference it during the interview
  - If you do not have access to a printer during this time, you can pull it up on your phone
- If you have something important that you wanted to address, write it down on a Post-It note and stick it to your computer screen (but make sure it does not obstruct the camera)

- Take notes during the interview, and especially be sure to get the interviewer's name
- If the Skype account you have is from high school and has a silly nickname, consider creating a new account with a variation of your first, middle, and last name
  - Avoid 1s and 0s because of their resemblance to letters
- Have a scheduled time if the employer would like to conduct a phone interview; you do not want them calling you when you are busy with something else and are caught off guard
- If asked to type an answer through the chat portion of the video call service, make sure your grammar is correct before hitting send
- Do not be afraid to ask the interviewer periodically if they can still see and hear you

Setting Yourself Apart
- Make sure you have researched the company and express your excitement for the position through your inflection and smiling face
  - The interviewer will be able to detect your "vibe" even through an online interview
- Try to come up with something to connect with the interviewer over, like a shared hobby, so that you stand out and give him/her something to remember
  - Plus, you will be giving them a break from the many interview questions they go through each day
- Since there will be no handshake, practice your "virtual handshake": an expression of gratitude towards the interview for meeting with you, and of excitement to conduct the interview
- Send a thank you email to each person you interviewed or met with, and personalize them by addressing any questions you have or connections you made with them
- Most Importantly: Be Yourself! Do not be the person you think will get the position, be authentic and honest

Sources

https://www.salary.com/articles/8-tips-for-acing-virtual-interviews/

https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/virtual-interview-tips

https://career.ufl.edu/six-tips-for-nailing-a-virtual-interview/

https://www.northeastern.edu/graduate/blog/virtual-interview-tips/

https://career.uconn.edu/resources/virtual-interview-tips/ /
https://cdn.uconnectlabs.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2017/09/Virtual-Interview-Tips-1.pdf

https://career.sites.clemson.edu/michelin_career_center/career_development_recruiting/documents/handouts/interviewing/Skype_Interviews_with_Competencies.pdf

Career Guide (pg. 50)