

Preparing for remote interviews at VMIA



The Why

Your health and wellbeing is important

- VMIA are taking steps to help mitigate the spread of the coronavirus, using guidance from global health experts and with the health and safety of our employees, customers, and partners as our top priority.
- We will be limiting any face-to-face meeting for the foreseeable future, including interviews and that as an alternative we will be conducting these virtually using the technology on offer through phone, Microsoft Teams, Skype or alternatively rescheduling these until a later date. We will work with you to find the best solution.
- For any of the face-to-face meetings that must be conducted, please be advised that we will be politely declining any handshaking as a strategy to reduce any chances of spread. We would also ask that anyone conducting a face-to-face meeting will be asked to notify us of any travel to and from overseas in the last month or if they have been in contact with a person with suspected of coronavirus, be it themselves, immediate family or household member/s before we can confirm the meeting or interview.
- We thank you again for your understanding and support during this time of uncertainty. In the meantime, please stay informed of the latest health, self-isolation and travel restrictions advice at the Department of Health and Human Services, Australian Department of Health and Smart Traveller websites.



Setting up your technology for a remote interview

Be prepared and test your technology early

- Download the software at least a few days in advance of the interview. While there are many remote platforms that cost money, it is generally free to video chat with other Skype users or using Microsoft Teams.
- Create a professional username. With remote applications, people can search for you by your first and last name. Make sure you don't use any unprofessional nicknames in your user name.
- Do a test call or two with your friends or family. Make sure you can easily make and answer a call. Check to see that your microphone and camera work. Practice getting comfortable looking at the camera for long periods of time.
- Adjust the lighting. Be sure you have enough lighting to avoid any heavy shadows. However, make sure the lighting is not too bright either, because that can wash you out or even blind the interviewer. You can figure out lighting issues during your practice interview.
- Check the background. While you are the focus of the video, remember that the interviewer will also see whatever is behind you. Before the interview, select your backdrop. Pick a bare wall to ensure there are no distractions or colour clashes with your attire. If you need to be in a public space, find the quietest area and be sure to wear a headset to help block out background noises. If you live with other people (or pets) and are doing the interview in your home, tell everyone you live with not to interrupt you during the interview.
- Test everything again an hour or two before the interview. Make sure the microphone and camera work to ensure everything is in order.



Preparing yourself

Putting your best self forward

- Prepare for your interview in the traditional sense as well. Do the kind of preparation you would do for any interview. Review your resume and cover letter, practice answering common interview questions ahead of time, and research the company.
- Know who is contacting whom. Make sure that, before the interview, you know whether you are supposed to reach out to the interviewer or vice versa. If you are supposed to reach out, ask for their user name ahead of time.
- Before the interview, find the interviewers on the application and add them to your list of contacts. This will make it easier to contact them if you are asked to.
- Dress to impress. Just because you are interviewing in a casual setting does not mean your attire should match your surroundings. Wear what you would wear to any in-person interview. This will help you feel more confident as well. Dress in a way that reflects both your personality and the position for which you are interviewing.
- Put your best face forward. Again, treat the remote interview as any in-person interview when it comes to your appearance.



A successful remote interview

Tips for a great interview!

- Smile and focus. In many ways, a remote interview is just like any other interview. Remember to smile! Smiling can also help you remain calm.
- Focus your eyes on the camera – not on the person's face – to make it look like you're making direct eye contact. The interviewer deserves your full attention, so stay focused and friendly.
- Another way to focus is to exit out of any other applications on your computer. You don't want any pop-up windows distracting you during the interview.
- Bring notes, paper, and a pen to jot down anything you'd like to comment on later in the conversation. It is useful to have a few brief bullet points in front of you about what you want to highlight during the interview. Sometimes, conversations can go in unexpected directions, and it can be easy to forget your talking points. This way, you can scan your notes without losing direct contact with the interviewer. However, make sure to practice answering interview questions in advance, so that you don't stare down at your paper.
- You might also keep a glass of water handy in case your throat gets dry. However, don't keep it too close to your computer – you don't want to spill and have a technical malfunction!
- Don't panic if technology fails. With any technology, there is the chance for a glitch. When you start the interview, you might want to make sure the person can see and hear you. If anything goes wrong during the interview, don't panic. Remain calm and friendly. You might suggest hanging up and trying the video call again. Make sure you have the person's email address or phone number, so you can contact them in case you completely lose each other.