

Interviews with Robots

With more companies than ever turning to robots to simplify and improve their hiring processes, the odds are great that at some point during your job hunt you'll have a robot interviewer. This requires the same level of preparation, just a different focus. Whether you're talking to a human or a robot, the goal is always to emphasize the stellar skills and experiences that got you the interview in the first place.

You might face a pre-recorded person, a blank screen, a video screen of your own image mirrored back to you, or the digital representation of a human being.



Such interviews might include three to five questions with 30 seconds to prepare a response and up to two minutes to answer. The program might stop recording as soon as those two minutes are up. You may have an opportunity to practice the video format in a tutorial prior to starting the interview. If so, practice!

Here are some strategies to help you stand out in any video interview:

- Practice preparing and recording videos prior to your interview.
- Pay attention to lighting and background. Don't record the video in your bedroom with an unmade bed. Use a well-lit, quiet, professional office setting.
- Sit up straight and pay attention to your posture.
- Be concise, yet specific. The rule of three works well in short video interviews where a company will give you two minutes for each answer. The human mind is only capable of recalling three to five main points in short term (working) memory. Give them three reasons to hire you, or three ways your skills will help the company make money, or three highlights from your resume, or a combination - but stick to a total of three.
- Smile and act natural.
- Make eye contact into the camera, but don't be afraid to look away from time to time as you would in a natural conversation.
- Dress better than the other people at the company.

Don't worry about small talk but do work on body language

In many robot interviews, the candidate gives responses to a set of standardized questions while being recorded. That recording is then analyzed for content, and also for visual cues. So while you don't need to worry about building a rapport with the interview bot, you do need to make sure your body language and speaking skills are on point. That means good posture, confident tone and eye contact. It also means keeping a close hold on your expressions — cameras can see up to 250 micro-expressions and movements that a regular human interviewer might miss (not having megapixel eyes and all), so poise becomes especially important.

Don't phone it in

When interviewing with some form of robot, don't treat the experience as less important than speaking with an actual human. It can be tempting to put less effort into a dehumanized interview process, but remember that if you do this step well, a human will be reviewing your interview. If they think you're not taking the robot interview seriously, you're unlikely to get called back for a real, in-person meeting.