



Media Interviews on Zoom: Best Practices

Even the highest profile media outlets have taken to holding interviews using online video services like Skype and Zoom. The quality isn't the best, yet when we are isolated from one another it's a reasonable option. It's a new ballgame for news sources asked to participate in this type of remote exchange. Bear these points in mind when you're on the receiving end of a remote news interview:

- 1. Practice — a lot.** The relative newness of this format on the news interview scene means that even long-time media sources have little experience here. This mandates a few more simulated interviews before you engage in the real thing.
- 2. Look into the camera of your PC or mobile device.** Some interviewees tend to look at their monitor instead of the camera. Wrong. Know where your camera lens is, and keep your eye contact locked there. This is one of the very few times you should look directly into the camera.
- 3. Place your camera at eye level.** Use a stack of books or a box to elevate your device if necessary. No one wants a view of your ceiling or, worse, up your nose.
- 4. Assume you are always on camera.** You will likely have no way of knowing what is being broadcast at the moment, so avoid any embarrassing acts (yawning, scratching, rolling your eyes, cleaning your teeth, etc.).
- 5. Stage your backdrop.** Decide on a proper background. Something with your company logo or product or your book is fine, for example.
- 6. Dress professionally,** as if you were going to an interview in the studio. Although you may be at home, image still matters.
- 7. Heed your lighting.** Be sure you are adequately lit from a source in front of you. This allows you to be seen on TV and avoids plaguing your viewers with background glare.
- 8. Your audio quality matters.** Viewers are more likely to tune you out if your sound quality is poor. Invest in a decent microphone.
- 9. Keep the background noise down.** Mute all devices and land line phones, and try to keep kids and dogs at bay.
- 10. Prepare for conversational delays.** Connections are not always rock solid, so realize that you may have to wait a beat or two before you hear the next question.

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