

VIRTUAL JOB HUNT

Covid-19 physical distancing measures require companies that are hiring to conduct job interviews online, a new reality that jobseekers should prepare for. Here are a few expert tips.

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ONE day in June, Kirubashini Rasalingam was informed that she had to prepare for an online job interview. She remembered putting on a blouse and long pants just to look more formal. Then, she also had to remind her mum not to make any noise at home.

"I remember feeling anxious about my Internet connection at the time because I was worried the interviewer wouldn't be able to see or hear me clearly," she said during an interview with *LifestyleTech*.

Nurul Alya Norzalizan, who underwent an online interview process to apply for an internship position at a company based in Putrajaya, also had the same concerns.

"At the time, I was anxious and hoped that our Internet connection would not affect my interview," she said.

Kirubashini and Nurul Alya are among the many job seekers in Malaysia going online to meet their potential employers for the first time through video conferencing during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Managing consultant at MY HRC services Deepa George

shared that both interviewee and interviewer have to learn how to use virtual tools for interviewing purposes as part of adapting to the new normal.

"I believe since the recovery movement control order (RMCO) began, some companies are also open to a face-to-face meeting during the final phase of the interview process. So there's a bit of mix and match going on at the moment," she said.

George, who has conducted a number of online interviews through video conferencing platforms for her clients, said that most interview sessions

are typically kept to one hour.

Gan Hua Choon, a senior manager at recruitment agency Robert Walters, said companies were initially hesitant about hiring through video conferencing platforms.

"Due to initial travel restrictions, they had no choice but to start embracing technology," Gan said.

Learning curve

To avoid fumbling around during an online job interview, the experts advised job seekers to familiarise themselves with the video conferencing applica-

tion they would be using.

"Most apps are free, and you're not expected to install the premium version with extra features. So there's no reason why you can't practice with a friend or family member before the actual interview," George said.

This sentiment was echoed by Wendy Lee, the founder of Chapter One Asia, a BrandImage consultancy firm, who added: "It's a whole new learning process for some and they just need to take the time to be familiar with the controls."

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