

TIPS FOR A VIRTUAL INTERVIEW

A virtual interview takes place while the interviewee is off-site, using telephone, video, instant messaging, web-conferencing, or another form of virtual technology. Virtual interviews are becoming more popular across companies and organizations of all sizes, and some graduate schools are also using virtual interviews as part of the application process.

1 Reasons Organizations Use Virtual Interviews

- To expand their applicant pool. Using virtual software allows candidates to interview from anywhere in the world, which greatly increases the scope of who can apply/interview.
- To eliminate the need for schedule coordination. Virtual interviews allow candidates to complete the interview on their own time and employers to watch/listen when they're available.
- To foster collaboration around hiring decisions. Multiple interviewers in different locations can work together to make hiring decisions by participating in the interviews remotely or recording interviews to watch/listen to at a later date.
- To save money and time, as investing in virtual interviewing software will ultimately be more profitable than paying for candidates' travel expenses, as well as eliminates the need for recruiters to travel.

2 Types of Virtual Interviews

- Phone Interviews
 - *Live Interview*: telephone conversation between the interviewee and one or more interviewers during which the interaction is voice-only
 - *Pre-Recorded Interview*: interviewee provides answers to pre-selected questions as if leaving a voicemail message; all candidates are asked the same questions and there are no follow-ups.
 - Some platforms that offer this feature are timed, so the interviewee has a limited amount of time to answer each question.
 - Occasionally, the interviewee is given the opportunity to re-record an answer if unhappy with it the first time.
 - Be sure to read/listen to interview instructions to carefully to determine whether re-recording is an option for you.
- Video Interviews
 - *Live Interview*: face-to-face video conversation between the interviewer(s) and the interviewee; can be conducted via Skype, FaceTime, or other web conferencing platforms.
 - *Pre-Recorded Interview*: interviewee provides answers to pre-selected questions; all candidates are asked the same questions and there are no follow-ups.
 - Occasionally, the interviewee has the opportunity to re-record an answer if they are not satisfied with their initial response.
 - Be sure to read/listen to interview instructions carefully to determine whether the re-record option is available.
- Online Interviews
 - Some recruiters use online interviews that do not involve video or voice.
 - These can be formatted like online exams, involving multiple choice, short-answer, or long-answer questions.
 - They can also be conducted using text-based messaging apps that allow for real-time conversation, without the visual or voice component.

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Virtual Interviewing Tips: Technology

- Make sure you know how to operate the platform that you will be using for your interview ahead of time. Take advantage of any trial-run opportunities available to you.
 - On the day of the interview, sign-in to the platform early if possible (10-15 minutes) to ensure your internet is connected and troubleshoot any connection issues that may arise.
- Practice! Ask a friend or family member who has audio and/or video capabilities to test your image quality, sound, outfit choice, etc. before your interview.
- Be prepared for technical difficulties and other interruptions, such as fire alarms or outside noises.
- Have a plan for getting disconnected. Obtain the interviewer's contact information ahead of time or at the beginning of the interview. Inquire what they would like you to do if the interview gets disconnected or interrupted.

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Virtual Interviewing Tips: Environment & Appearance

DO

- Establish a quiet environment*
- Have your notes organized and in front of you
- Align the camera level with your face
- Look at the camera so it appears as though you are making eye-contact with the interviewer
- Dress as you would for an in-person interview from head to toe (even if you think part of you is off-camera)

AVOID

- Bringing cell phones, food, and other distractions into the room
- Posters, pictures, or distracting items/colors behind you
- Shadows or over-exposed light that may impact the interviewer's ability to see you
- Using oversized or loose headphones

* If you are interested in reserving a space in the Center for Career Development to conduct your virtual interview, please call (860) 486-6165 or email recruiting@uconn.edu with the date and total time you would like to reserve (accounting for set-up). Reservations are considered on a case-by-case basis, based on availability.

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Virtual Interviewing Tips: Interview Practices

- Making a good first impression is key. Practice the introduction that you will use during your virtual interview. Typically, this is a 30-second pitch during which you mention why you are interested in the specific company/program or position for which you are interviewing and a statement of enthusiasm about meeting the interviewer and getting started with the interview.
- Watch your time; whether you're participating in a live or pre-recorded interview it's important to keep the interviewer engaged. Keeping your responses clear and concise will help prevent their attention from drifting.
- Make an extra effort to speak clearly. It is acceptable to occasionally check in with the interviewer(s) to make sure they can still hear and/or see you well.
- Keep in mind that there may not be follow-up questions, especially with a pre-recorded interview. Be sure you give them all the information you think they will need or want in your initial responses.
- Take advantage of the re-record option if it's available to you. It provides you with the opportunity to refine your initial answer, if you feel you can improve upon your response.
- Send each interviewer a unique thank-you note via email within 24 hours of the interview.
 - With a pre-recorded interview, you won't have the chance to ask the interviewer any questions on the spot, so your thank-you note is a good place to include them.

Check out our *Interview Preparation Guidebook* for more tips on sending thank-you notes and what to do after an interview.

