

For some departments, video interviews are familiar and their interviewers have established videoconferencing capabilities. For others, video interviewing is new and you are adjusting your traditional ways of hiring.

It is important to prepare for the challenges a digital interview process can present. A haphazard, unpracticed process can come across as unprofessional and even negatively impact your recruiting efforts; however, putting in the work beforehand - planning and testing procedures - will go a long way in creating a positive interviewing experience.

The following tips will help you and your hiring team create a seamless video interview process:

1. MAKE A PLAN WITH THE INTERVIEWING TEAM

Interviewers should prepare for video interviews as they would for in-person meetings, while taking some additional factors into consideration.

Put together a formal plan with your entire hiring team. How will the interview process change now that it is being conducted remotely?

- Include information and details in your plan with the interviewing team such as:
 - Identifying a host/facilitator
 - Assigning someone to take notes and keep time
 - How and when you will interview?
 - What interview questions will be asked and by whom?
 - How and when you will follow-up after the interview?
- Consider scheduling more time on your calendar for a video interview than you typically would for an in-person interview. Take the following into account:
 - Technical difficulties that may arise
 - Time to meet with the interviewing team before and deliberations after the interview is complete
 - Time for the candidate to ask questions
- Keep the candidate's phone number on hand in case you need to contact them in the event of technical issues.

2. CHOOSE, INSTALL AND TEST YOUR EQUIPMENT

Regardless of which interview software you select, it is important to understand and have experience with the equipment before conducting an interview.

- Provide instructions and login information to candidates well before the interview so they can test out the software on their end.
- Additionally, you may want to hold a few test interviews with your interviewing team to ensure everyone understands how to:
 - Set up video and audio functions
 - Utilize the different view options between Gallery View and Speaker View
 - Mute their microphones when not presenting or sharing
 - Share their screen and chat during the interview

3. NOTIFY CANDIDATES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

Video interviews, when done correctly, can be just as effective as in-person interviews.

- Provide candidates with clear directions on the equipment they'll need to join the interview — internet access, software or video conferencing applications, a quiet space, lighting, etc.
- Provide them with the information needed as soon as possible, so they have ample time to review and obtain necessary equipment as well as prepare for the interview itself.
- If conducting back to back interviews:
 - Ask that candidates join the meeting right at the scheduled start time and not early; or
 - Set up separate meeting rooms for each candidate. You could encounter a potentially awkward situation if one candidate decides to login to the interview early while you're still interviewing another candidate

4. SET UP AN OPTIMAL INTERVIEWING SPACE

Even though you may not be in a traditional office setting, it is important to set an appropriate, professional scene for the video interview. This means that the space should appear clean and free from background distraction.

- Instruct your interviewing team to identify a quiet, well-lit space for conducting interviews. Make sure the environment behind you is professional. Make sure you have appropriate pictures, photos, awards, etc., behind you. If you would not put it in a corporate office, move it outside the camera view while interviewing.
- With regards to lighting, if you are facing an outside window, this should cast enough light on your face that you can be seen clearly; however, if there is direct sunlight, close the shades so you are not squinting. In addition, do not put the window to your back as this will cause you to show up very dark on the screen.

5. PRESENT YOURSELF POSITIVELY

The way you present yourself is extremely important, even in a video interview.

- Dressing as you would in the office gives the candidate a sense of your culture and makes a video interview feel more in line with an on-site interview. Interviewers may think they're only visible from the waist up during video interviews, but you should always dress appropriately from head to toe in case an unforeseen issue arises and you need to get up during the interview.
- Make eye contact, sit up straight and nod to show you're following along with what the candidate is saying. Don't forget to smile!
- Close any unnecessary browser tabs. Turn off or silence phones and any notifications that may interrupt the meeting, and turn off any other devices that may diminish your bandwidth.
- There can be a slight lag in the audio, so one person should speak at a time. Wait until the other person has stopped talking before speaking.

5. PROVIDE RESPONSE TIME AND NEXT STEPS

Whether your interview is in person or over video, it is best practice to follow-up with candidates afterward.

- As you close the interview, be very clear on how and when you will follow-up with the candidate to notify them of next steps or a job offer.
- Even if you can't give an exact date, try to give an estimated range for when you plan to make a choice and when they should expect to hear from you.

6. SOFTWARE FOR VIDEO INTERVIEWING

Free Zoom Pro accounts are available for active UGA faculty and staff.

- To set up your own Zoom account, go to UGA's Video Conferencing site at uga.zoom.us
- Support for Zoom can be found on the [EITS Zoom help page](#), via [Zoom support](#), and/or by contacting your [unit-level Zoom administrator](#)
- For assistance with additional video interviewing software platforms, please contact your identified IT colleague