

# How to Conduct Better Virtual Interviews

Virtual interviews conducted by video conferencing have become more common — and not just for initial screening. From saving money on travel or accommodating asynchronous schedules to protecting the health of employees and communities during peak flu season, conducting highly effective virtual interviews can be a boon for both employers and candidates. The key is getting the process right.

## Here are some best practices you can employ to make the most of your video-conference virtual interviews:

**1 Be prepared.** To ensure that a virtual interview has all the formality — even gravity — of an in-person interview, it's important to avoid the temptation to let a virtual interview be as casual as a phone screen might be. Here are some ways to ensure the meeting goes off without a hitch:

- ✓ Re-read the job description and candidate's resume and write down questions to ask the candidate.
- ✓ Double check internal room availability and technical support, and make sure the candidate is comfortable and up-to-date with the virtual platform of choice.
- ✓ Make sure everyone in the interview loop has the correct interview time on their calendar, properly adjusting for different time zones.
- ✓ Ensure that everyone has accurate information about who the candidate will report to, plus what the main job responsibilities will be.
- ✓ Check Glassdoor for any recent reviews of your company, particularly for reviews in the department or role the candidate is interviewing for.
- ✓ Make sure everyone in the interview loop has a clear understanding of how they'll be expected to submit feedback after the interview.
- ✓ Make sure the candidate knows the people he or she will be interviewing with in advance so they can come prepared with answers of their own.

**2 Reinforce employer brand.** Make sure each interviewer in the loop tells a consistent story about your company and are well-informed about both the candidate and position. Check that all interviewers are aligned on the following key facts about the organization and position:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ✓ Mission and function of department or team                 | ✓ Potential start date of position              |
| ✓ Title and responsibilities (including the job description) | ✓ Salary range (if appropriate for interviewer) |
| ✓ Reporting structure  | ✓ Glassdoor Glassdoor rating                    |
| ✓ Identify cross-functional team members                     | ✓ CEO approval rating                           |
| ✓ Future initiatives of department or team                   | ✓ Red or green flags about Glassdoor reviews    |
| ✓ Career growth opportunities                                |   |

## 3

**Have a strategy.**

Think deeply in advance about the skills, attributes and competencies you're looking for in a candidate, and design specific questions to ask that dig into each one. If there are multiple people interviewing the same candidate, make sure that you have questions prepared ahead of time to get a deeper understanding of specific competencies related to how that person would ultimately interface with the candidate if they were offered the job and accepted.

- ✓ Assign specific competencies for each interviewer to dig deeper on.
- ✓ Identify soft skills that would be ideal for the role and design questions for each interviewer accordingly.
- ✓ Consider having each interviewer start or end with a lighthearted question to put the candidate at ease.
- ✓ Gather feedback promptly after the interview by soliciting feedback or hosting a post-interview debrief.

## 4

**Communicate openly.**

Especially with a virtual interview experience where a candidate hasn't had a warm, in-person reception, it's important to keep your candidate informed. When candidates know what's coming next, they feel respected and valued. When they receive prompt and personalized rejection notifications, they're more likely to keep a positive impression of your company despite the rejection. Make sure candidates know:

- ✓ General timeline for hiring process
- ✓ Names and roles of interviewers prior to each round
- ✓ Useful information such as expectations for a particular meeting, personal quirks or objectives of specific interviewers
- ✓ Expected response time after each step
- ✓ Reach out as soon as a candidate is rejected:
  - Mention if you would like them to apply for another role at the company in the future.
  - Ask candidates to write an interview review on Glassdoor.
  - Call candidates who spent a significant amount of time interviewing.

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