



AAMC

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Virtual Interviews: Tips for Medical School Interviewers

Association of
American Medical Colleges

Contents

Preparing for a Virtual Interview	1
Identify a Suitable Environment	1
Practice Using Technology Before Conducting Interviews.....	1
Familiarize Yourself With Interview Materials	1
Immediately Before Interview Begins	2
Presentation.....	2
Environment.....	2
Technology	2
Conducting the Interview	2
Create a Comfortable Atmosphere.....	2
Follow Typical Interview Protocol	3
Close the Interview	3

Preparing for a Virtual Interview

□ Identify a Suitable Environment

- Identify a private, quiet, well-lit space where you can complete the interview by yourself. The space should be free of potential distractions and where you can speak freely. To the extent possible, make sure you have control over the background noise.
- Make sure enough light is available (window, lamp, etc.) so the applicant can see you clearly. If you're doing the interview at night, make sure there's a lamp available that can light up your face.
- Consider the backdrop you will use during your interview, and try to keep it neat and free of distractions.
- Have an outlet nearby in case you need to plug in your device.

□ Practice Using Technology Before Conducting Interviews

- Check your microphone and camera to make sure they're working well and that both the picture and sound are good quality.
- Check your internet speed. You can do this at [SpeedTest.net](https://www.speedtest.net). Sometimes switching from Wi-Fi to a wired ethernet connection improves your internet speed. If your home's internet connection is too slow, consider using a space at your school where you can do the interview in a private room with stable Wi-Fi.
- Note how the camera and microphone are positioned so you can recreate a setup that works when you log in to the system to complete your actual interview.
- Make a trial call to someone you know to practice using the software program you will use for the interview and collect feedback on your audio and video.

□ Familiarize Yourself With Interview Materials

- Review any documents relevant to how you will run the interview, including an interview script, possible or required interview questions, any competency definitions, or descriptions of rating scales.
- Participate in the [AAMC's online training](#) about minimizing unconscious bias in selection and recruitment.
- Be sure the following materials are available to you:
 - Interview schedule.
 - Login information (if applicable).

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- Welcome script.
- Interview questions.
- Contact information for your school's technology support.
- Applicant's contact information (as a backup option if you are disconnected).

Immediately Before Interview Begins

Presentation

- Dress as you would for an in-person interview.
- Have all relevant interview materials (e.g., specific interview questions, paper for notes) in front of you for easy reference.

Environment

- Briefly scan your interview space to ensure:
 - It will be quiet and free of distractions.
 - There are no sources of bright light directly behind you.
 - Your backdrop is still neat and free of distractions.
 - An outlet is nearby in case you need to plug in your device.

Technology

- Double-check all technology to confirm:
 - Microphone and camera are working properly.
 - Camera is positioned so you are looking directly at the video camera.
 - All other programs on your device are shut down so no alerts, notifications, or other disruptions on your device interrupt the interview or distract you.
 - Your device is fully charged, and you have a charger nearby.
- Have a backup plan in case the technology fails — this may be as simple as making sure you have the applicant's phone number.

Conducting the Interview

Create a Comfortable Atmosphere

- Welcome the person in a friendly manner.
- Confirm the applicant can both see and hear you.
- Introduce yourself, giving your name and title.

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- Acknowledge the unusual circumstance, and thank the applicant for being flexible. This may be the applicant's first virtual interview, and this simple acknowledgement may help them feel more comfortable.
- Remind the applicant how long the interview will take.
- If you plan to take notes during the interview, tell the applicant before you begin the interview. Explain that taking notes helps to ensure you remember responses accurately. You might also note that taking notes may limit your eye contact, but they should not interpret this as a lack of interest in their response.
- If you know you might be interrupted during the interview by a call or urgent matter, tell the applicant about that possibility before you begin the interview.

□ Follow Typical Interview Protocol

- Ask any required questions and/or optional questions if permitted and applicable.
- Avoid inappropriate questions that may be prohibited by law. These are questions about protected groups, like any demographic information, family history, disabilities, military or criminal history, etc.
- Take notes, as necessary.
- If appropriate, allot time for the applicant to ask questions.

□ Close the Interview

- Thank the applicant for their time, and tell them about next steps, if appropriate.