Nuts and Bolts of Virtual Interviewing

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Agenda

- Background
- Setting up Virtual Interviews
- Preparing Applicants
- Preparing Interviewers
- Resources
- Question & Answer
Goals for interviews

- Valid, Job-related
- Fair
- Reliable
- Legally sound
- Standardized
- Humanizing
How do virtual interviews compare to in-person?

**Same**
- Two-way interaction
- Questions and scoring rubric
- Standardization in questions and evaluation
- Scheduling based on applicant and interviewer shared availability

**Different**
- Applicants and interviewers require a device with:
  - Internet access
  - Web camera
  - Microphone
  - Interview software or app
- Eliminates travel for in-person interviews
- Less positive applicant reactions
Setting Up Virtual Interviews
Modifying the interview process

Most interview questions will be equally effective, but some elements of the interview process may not be as conducive to the virtual format.

- Multi-hour interview day
- Panel Interviews
- Group activities
- Role-play activity
- MMI stations

- Manage interviewer time spent in consecutive interviews
- Asynchronous interviews or group video interview
- Questions about teamwork
- Questions about interpersonal skills or situational questions
- Interview platform breakout rooms or asynchronous interview
Scheduling and coordination considerations

Scheduling

• Account for different time zones across applicants
• Allow 15 mins of buffer time between back-to-back interviews

Coordinating

• Keep your virtual interview process simple. Applicants and interviewers have varying tech savviness
• Provide guidance to interviewers for selecting the interview location
• Decide which panel interviewers will ask each question and their order when asking follow up questions
Choosing a platform

- Cost
- Security and privacy
- Functionality and features
- Accessibility
- Technical support
- Customizability
- Integration capabilities
Optimizing use of your platform

There are many cool functions and features across platforms.

- Scheduling
- Waiting rooms
- Breakout rooms
- File-sharing
- Chat functionality
- Virtual backgrounds
- Recording capability

How does each functionality or feature help you achieve the goals of your interview?

- Reliability
- Validity
- Fairness
- Applicant reactions
Adapting supporting materials

### Information for Applicants
- Acknowledge unusual circumstances
- Detail the new process
- Set expectations
- Required forms

### Interviewer Script
- Acknowledge unusual circumstances
- Thank the applicant for their flexibility

### Interview Schedule
- Day/time
- Applicant name
- Applicant contact information (email, phone)
- Log-in & call-in information

### Interview Platform Instructions
- Detailed instructions for using the platform
- FAQs
- Technical support info

### Interview Materials
- Questions
- Scoring criteria
- Documentation instructions
How do you protect the virtual interview process from cheating?

Virtual interviews are less secure than in-person interviews.

- Establish and communicate ground rules
  - Complete your own interview
    - Another person cannot impersonate you for the interview
  - Complete the interview in private
    - Not in the presence of others
  - Present your own responses
    - You may not present another person’s responses as your own or receive assistance from others during the interview
  - Interview questions cannot be shared
    - You may not provide assistance to others during their interviews

- Manage your interview content
  - Be prepared to swap out questions you suspect are compromised
  - Create multiple forms of your interview, if possible
Learning from your Colleagues
Setting up the Interview

• Linda Berardi-Demo, Coordinating Virtual Interviews
• Lisa Ellenbogen, Planning for Virtual MMIs
• Kate Dayton, Selecting and Using an Interview Platform
Preparing Applicants
Set clear expectations

- Interview process
  - Scheduling
  - Length
  - Interview platform – instructions and requirements

- Interview preparation
  - What competencies or types of questions
  - How to prepare – school resources, AAMC resources
  - Opportunities to practice on the interview platform

- Confidentiality and security
  - What information can and cannot be shared
  - What behavior is and is not permitted
  - Consequences for breaching confidentiality

- Dress code

- Location

Acknowledged the unusual and challenging circumstances.
Consider challenging circumstances

We are all working under different circumstances.

- Varied control over interview location
  - Limited privacy
  - Different settings and backgrounds
- Varied internet access
  - Unstable or unreliable internet
- Varied access to technology
  - No webcam
  - No computer
- Varied savviness with technology
- Varied degree of adversity faced
Learning from your Colleagues Preparing Applicants

• Valerie Parkas, Ensuring Equity across Applicants
• Lisa Ellenbogen, Preparing for a Virtual MMI
Preparing Interviewers
Preparing interviewers

- Schedule
- Technology and Platform Support
- Interview Protocol
- Introductory Script
- Interview Questions
- Evaluation Criteria
- Applicant Information
Technology and platform support

Prepare

- Provide a tutorial or customized training
- Encourage practice with the platform prior to interview day
- Perform a dry run with interviewers
- Share FAQs and tech support contact info

Setup

- Identify a suitable location
- Consider the setup and position of technology
- Recommend testing the technology just before the interview
- Provide log-in information and navigation instructions

Then, plan for the unexpected (disruptions, tech malfunctions, etc.)
Planning for the unexpected

Possible disruptions

• Call drops
• Computer malfunctions
• Internet fails (outage, thunderstorm)
• Laptop battery dies
• Interruptions (children, dogs, roommates)
• Incoming calls, emails, messages

Proactive planning

• Acknowledge that unexpected interruptions may occur on either side due to circumstances
• Establish a back-up plan if a technical issue cannot be resolved quickly
• Provide applicant contact info for reconnecting via phone
• Keep your computer plugged in or an outlet nearby
• Mute your microphone when you’re not speaking
• Turn off email or other message notifications
• Silence your personal phone, if possible
Preparing to conduct the interview

Recommend interviewers review all interview materials in advance.

- Interview protocol
- Introductory script
- Interview questions
- Application materials typically provided
- Scoring rubric or evaluation criteria
- Documentation instructions

Remind interviewers of questions that inappropriate and off-limits

Require interviewers to complete unconscious bias training
**Unconscious bias training**

**Unconscious Bias Resources for Health Professionals**

At academic medical centers, unconscious biases can compromise diversity and inclusion efforts in admissions, curriculum development, counseling, and faculty advising, among other functions.

The AAMC provides resources and trainings to assist these institutions to meet their goals around addressing unconscious biases.


**Webinar:**

*Mitigating Unconscious Bias in Virtual Medical School Interviews*

Coming in July!
Creating a comfortable atmosphere

Discuss with interviewers how to humanize the interview experience while ensuring a fair interview process for all applicants.

• Welcome the applicant
• Acknowledge unusual circumstances
• Set clear expectations
• Be mindful, stay focused
• Follow the interview protocol
• Do not ask inappropriate questions prohibited by law
Evaluating applicants

- Apply scoring rubric or criteria consistently to evaluate applicants’ interviews
- Do not consider factors outside of the applicant’s control
  - Audio/video quality
  - Technology issues that may occur
  - Setting/background of location
  - Unexpected or uncontrolled interruptions
- Take steps to mitigate unconscious bias from influencing your evaluation of applicant interviews
  - AAMC webinar: Mitigating Unconscious Bias in Virtual Medical School Interviews
Interviewer checklist

Ready…
• Identify a suitable environment
• Practice using the technology
• Review the interview protocol and materials (questions, scoring)
• Complete unconscious bias training

Set…
• Scan your room
• Setup your interview space
• Minimize technology-driven distractions or interruptions

Go!
• Create a comfortable atmosphere
• Follow the interview protocol to ensure a fair process for all applicants
• Document your evaluations
Learning from your Colleagues
Preparing Interviewers

• Kate Dayton, Humanizing the Virtual Interview
• Linda Berardi-Demo, Preparing Interviewers for the Virtual Platform
• Valerie Parkas, Evaluating Applicants Fairly
Key Takeaways

• Validity, reliability, fairness, and applicant reactions are critical to successful interviews.

• Virtual interviews demand thoughtful planning to humanize the interview experience.

• Setting clear expectations and creating a comfortable atmosphere can improve applicant reactions.

• Guidance and support related to technology, location, and the interview process will help interviewers conduct smooth and successful interviews.
AAMC Virtual Interview Resources
AAMC Virtual Interview Guidance

Online resources available for conducting virtual interviews, including webinars:

- Creating a Positive Virtual Interview Experience
  - Admissions interviewers
- Mitigating Unconscious Bias in Virtual Medical School Interviews
  - Admissions interviewers and officers
- Prep for Success in your Virtual Interview
  - Applicants, Pre-health advisors
Peer-Reviewed Articles Published in Medical Journals About Virtual Interviewing


Q&A