

Virtual, Digital and Phone Interviews

Many companies have increased their use of virtual interviews, whether it is through phone, video conference or video recording in order to save time and also reduce travel costs.

Formats

Companies will usually inform you of the format and technology platform used for the interview. If they do not provide this information, be sure to ask the person scheduling the interview. Virtual interviews can be used for first-round interviews, second-round interviews, or both.

- **Interactive** (Two-way communication with visual)
Similar to FaceTime or Google Hangout and features two people communicating like a video phone call. Common technology platforms include Google Hangout, Skype, GoToMeeting, Zoom and WebEx.
- **Telephone** (Two-way communication without visual)
Effective interview answers remain so when delivered by phone or in person, but by telephone the interviewer(s) cannot see you, so it is important to make sure you are being heard and understood.
- **Prerecorded** (One-way communication)
Uses recording platforms like HireVue and/or Interview Stream and is more like YouTube. It features you alone answering questions that pop up on computer screen, often with a countdown timer of about 2 minutes for you to record your answer. Sometimes you get another chance for a “do over” on your recorded answer.
- **Selfie** (One-way communication)
Yes, one firm actually did “selfie” interviews this semester. It is somewhat unusual, but you should be ready for anything. These are just another form of prerecorded interview, as in HireVue, so the same advice applies, but make sure you speak loud enough into your cell phone.

Tips for Success

- Prepare like you would for a normal interview. Effective interview answers remain so when delivered by phone, video or in person.
- Speak clearly and articulate your words. If you normally speak very fast you may need to slow down.
- Do not shout or mumble.
- Use professional tone and language in all interview situations.
- Make sure the interviewer is finished talking before you answer their question. You may want to pause before answering because there could be a slight time delay. It can be easy to talk over the interviewer when communicating virtually.
- Make sure to get the employer’s contact information at the end of the interview if you do not have it already. Use that information to send a thank you email after the interview.

Tips for Phone Interviews

- Specifically with telephone interviews, the interviewer(s) cannot see you, so it is important to make sure you are being heard and understood.
- Practice via phone with a friend or family member to gain confirmation on the volume, reception and pacing of your communication.
- Confirm whether you will be calling the interviewer or vice versa.
- Choose a quiet area for the call and be ready to start in a positive manner by thanking them for the interview opportunity.
- You can use notes to reinforce/guide your prepared answers by topic, but do not rely on them verbatim.

Tips for Video Interviews

- Dress professionally from head to toe. They may ask you to stand up and walk out from behind a desk or table.
- Smile, especially when introducing yourself, and convey enthusiasm.
- Avoid excessive sharp or quickly recurring hand or body movements, which may be distracting during video communication.
- Use notes in preparation, but do not bring them into the interviews.

Setting Up Technology

- Choose a suitable environment for the interview, with decent lighting. Be sure it is not too public with distractions, and not too private like your bedroom.
- Position yourself close enough to the camera so that the interviewer can see your facial expressions, but far enough away so that some of your torso fits in the screen.
- Make sure that the light (including a window) is facing you and not behind the camera so that the interviewer can see your face and not just a silhouette.
- Look into the camera to replicate eye contact that you would want during an in-person interview. If you look at the interviewer's face, it will appear as though you are not making eye contact. It can help to post a picture of a person's head right near the camera...so you can look at it.
- Practice recording yourself before the interview to see how you come across on camera.

Practice

To help prepare for interviews or practice interviewing in-person with the Career Resource Center, schedule an appointment with your career advisor through [BizLink](#).

To practice video or prerecorded interviews, use UB's [Big Interview platform](#).

Good Luck!