TIPS FOR CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS AT A DISTANCE

Sometimes, it’s simpler to conduct interviews over the phone, Skype™ or via video conference, to save travel expenses and time.

We offer our students some tips on making the most of these “at-a-distance’ interviews. As an employer, here are some tips you may find useful.

A few handy tips:

• If using Skype or a similar video conferencing software, use a professional or organizational username and make sure you’ve provided the correct username to the interviewee

• Test out the technology, including software, microphones and cameras BEFORE the interview to work out any bugs and trouble-shoot possible issues (make sure you have a strong interview connection)

• Smile (if it’s a phone interview, smiling will give your voice a friendlier quality)

• Be aware of the camera position and what the camera can see, and if possible, make direct eye contact by looking right at the camera.

• For video interviews, wear a solid colour if possible (patterns and black and white can look distracting on screen)

• For phone interviews, tell the interviewee how many people are on the panel, and introduce yourselves at the beginning of the interview

• Make sure that all the interviewers, and the questions, can be heard clearly by the interviewee

• Take a look at what appears behind you on your webcam – are you backlit? Is there a lamp or plant in the way?

• Stick to a script and be consistent – ask the same questions that you pose during in-person interviews, and give interviewees the same amount of time to answer

• Keep a notebook handy to jot down responses and follow-up questions

• Remember – this may be the first time the interviewee has done an interview at a distance and you may run into a glitch or two