

Tips for conducting interviews at a distance

Information for employers (more at uvic.ca/employers)



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 troubleshoot 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.