How to **Virtually** Interview and Hire

CheckWriters

Introduction

With more companies providing remote work flexibility in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ability to practice social distancing by interviewing and hiring new employees virtually is becoming increasingly important. Though some industries, like traveling, have put a halt on hiring, **Glassdoor** has found that the number of job postings in the government, health care, and nonprofit industries, to name a few, have **tripled in the U.S.** as a direct response to the virus outbreak. While not all positions have remote work flexibility, HR professionals can leverage **virtual recruiting tools** to safely source high-quality talent during this critical time.

Hiring the right employees is crucial to the success of your organization. How can virtual interviewing help you identify new employees who are not only highly qualified but who fit well with the team? Luckily, with an applicant tracking systems (ATS), there are many recruiting tools that will have you hiring remotely with ease *and* greater efficiency.

USING VIDEO

While phone interviews can provide basic details about candidates' experience or help you understand how they conduct themselves, video is vital to accurately understand their personalities. Video capabilities integrated with an ATS can be easily utilized, as well as outside teleconferencing options like **Zoom** or **Google Hangouts**. How else can video assist your interview process?

Efficiency: Video is efficient and convenient for both the interviewer and interviewee. Busy candidates who may already have a job can more easily schedule and attend video interviews during their day. Busy hiring managers can quickly set up and conduct interviews while maintaining compliance with mandated "stay-at-home" orders that various states have implemented in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Streamline assessment: To screen a large group of candidates with maximum efficiency, send out interview questions en masse and have candidates record their answers. Recorded or pre-recorded videos can be shared among teams, enhancing collaboration and eliminating scheduling delays during the hiring process. Stakeholders can review responses on their own time, which helps avoid scheduling nightmares. Pre-recorded video interviews level the playing field since candidates are consistently provided with the same questions and are given the same time period to respond.

CheckWriters

VIDEO INTERVIEW TIPS

To simplify the process for candidates, as well as to receive more consistent results, provide interviewees with a set of guidelines with their interview instructions. Make sure candidates have all the basics about how to technically complete the interview, including instructions for how to turn on video and audio. Screenshots or even a short video tutorial can help, too. Along with instructions, provide interview tips to ensure candidates do their best. Consider tips such as:

1

Set up your computer in a quiet, well-lit room.

2

Wear professional clothes that make you feel comfortable and confident.

3

Prepare responses to common interview questions.

4

Be personable! Smile, sound enthusiastic, and laugh.

PRO TIP:

Asking consistent interview questions is critical for **reducing** liability and interview bias.

CULTURE FIT INTERVIEW

If your company typically hires in person, you may not be accustomed to a **separate culture fit interview**. Companies that have to make adjustments and hire virtually should still consider holding these types of interviews in order to understand candidates' personalities, values, and work styles and how they might fit within the existing team.
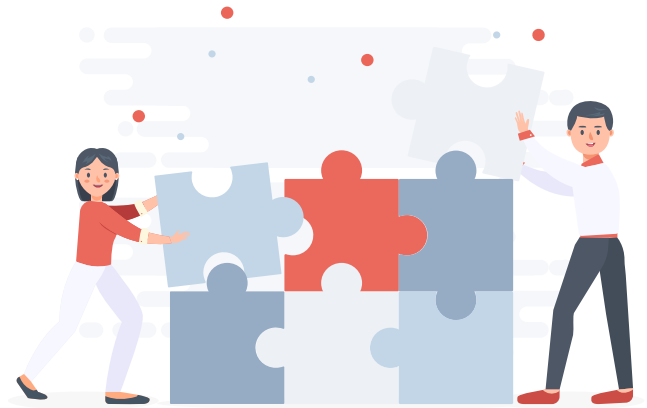
Most standard interviews contain at least some questions relevant to culture fit, such as, *"Do you prefer working alone or in a team, and why?"* or *"What does your ideal workday look like?"* But a stand-alone culture fit interview attempts to really understand how candidates might fit with your organizational culture and values.

Education, qualifications, and prior experience can be easily conveyed in interviews, and hiring managers know that new employees can learn many specific tasks on the job. However, it's not easy for hiring managers to spot or qualify candidates' ability to learn, get along with coworkers, and adapt to new situations. **To meet your hiring goals**, use the following strategies in your culture fit interviews:

Focus on your company's value: When evaluating candidates, tie in your company values to your questioning. Not only should you be clear about what your values are (for example, teamwork or efficiency), but you should ask candidates open-ended questions about those values. You might ask for an example of how a candidate has collaborated with coworkers in the past on a project or how they prioritize their work.

Use a comprehensive assessment: For a big-picture view of candidates, start as soon as they walk in the virtual door (or start recording!). Whether they smile, seem confident exchanging pleasantries, or maintain assertive eye contact, you can learn a lot about personality from the get-go. Next, assess how all their answers tie together. No single question should make or break a candidate; many considerations can help you decide. Other important pieces include asking what questions the candidate has for you (it shows preparedness and overall interest) and self-assessments, such as *"How would a former manager describe you?"*

Hire diversely: If you continuously hire the same type of people, they may all fit into your culture, but not necessarily add anything new to it. Welcoming new soft skills and attributes into your company will help your culture grow. Variety is important. Avoid asking canned questions and instead seek opinions or ask questions based on candidates' experiences.

CheckWriters

ASSESSMENTS AND CHECKS

Assessments, background checks, and reference checks are even more important in remote hiring. Utilize all of the options available through your ATS to ensure your candidates are well-vetted.

Assessments are a great way to weed out individuals who don't possess the necessary qualifications. If you require basic must-haves, such as minimum years of experience, experience managing a team, or knowledge of a particular software, include these qualifiers in your application. You can even mark those questions as required, forcing candidates to fill them out in order to submit the application. Once you receive the applications, you can quickly compare and rank candidates based on responses. Through automated assessments, your applicants' experience, skills, and abilities will be efficiently and uniformly screened, helping you minimize liability and maximize hiring efficiency.

Most hiring managers believe that **background checks** are an important way to uncover unbiased information while keeping the workplace safe. Data covering employment and education history, driving records, and criminal convictions is vital in not only predicting job performance but in maintaining workplace safety. Conducting background checks, especially for a large group of candidates, can be time-consuming if performed manually. Results may be delayed if the hiring manager submits incomplete forms or does not obtain necessary authorization signed by the applicant. An integrated background check product streamlines the process by quickly checking applicants while ensuring legal compliance.

Reference checks are another way to verify candidates' experience and skills, but they're often difficult to obtain. If every candidate must submit three to five references, you may have to spend a lot of time and energy getting those references. This challenge will only increase if you're hiring for multiple positions. In a busy world, an automated reference process is necessary to help you conveniently request and receive insight on applicants. Reference check solutions that are integrated with your ATS provide a selection of custom surveys or built-in options that you can easily send to references. Once you receive responses, you can use the information to rank candidates or even to confirm skills and history.

Are you faced with a hiring need during this challenging time of social distancing and remote work? You're not alone. Join the thousands of individuals currently leveraging modern recruitment, ensuring the safety of their workforces and organizations as they continue to grow their teams. **Contact a representative** today and get started on your own path to Hiring Happiness, even while you may be physically out of the office.

CheckWriters