

Conducting Remote Interviews

Overview and Benefits

Search committees in many industries including higher education are conducting remote interviews as opposed to traditional “airport” or on-site interviews for a number of reasons: cost efficiency, streamlined logistics, global connectivity, and more. Whether working with a team of remote search committee members, minimizing travel costs, or managing space limitations, conducting remote interviews provides a number of options leaders are encouraged to consider the benefits of remote interviewing options.

Remote Tech Options at Ohio University

Ohio University’s Office of Information Technology (OIT) provides free university-wide access to a number of technology services that can assist in the use of remote interviewing including both video and audio conferencing. In addition to help desk support, OIT offers websites for each service that explain the platform, review recommended uses, and provide tips for success:

- [Microsoft Teams Audio Conferencing](#)
- [Microsoft Teams Video Conferencing](#)
- [Adobe Connect Video Conferencing](#)
- [Skype for Business](#)

Some departments may have licenses for additional platforms such as Zoom. In those cases, committee chairs are encouraged to visit the company’s online help section for additional information.

Designing Remote Interviews

As is shared in OHIO Search Committee Training, interviewing does not have to always be the traditional phone or face-to-face option. Even when only considering remote connectivity, there are a number of possibilities. Some examples may include:

- **Writing Prompts:** The committee designs a writing prompt designed to highlight specific skills and/or knowledge. The prompt is emailed to participants with instructions, deadline, and a contact for accessibility or other questions (preferably, a non-evaluative member of the committee).
- **E-Questionnaire:** The committee emails interview-style questions to candidates, along with instructions, deadline, and a contact for accessibility or other questions (preferably, a non-evaluative member of the committee). Ideally, the questions will be behavioral-style in that they ask the candidates to elaborate on their relevant experience and past situations.
- **Portfolio Review:** Candidates may be asked to submit a portfolio (written work, websites developed, design work, etc.) that the committee may review remotely. Be as specific as possible when requesting portfolios so candidates may know exactly what type of work (e.g. “news articles,” or “logos”) will be reviewed. The same number of submissions should be requested for all candidates for consistency.

- **Traditional Phone Interview:** The candidate is invited to speak with one or more committee members over the phone to address general interview questions.
- **Traditional Video Interview:** The candidate is invited to speak with one or more committee members through video conferencing, either for a “forum-style” open interview or for a more traditional, scripted interview.
- **Remote Presentation:** The candidate uses a video conferencing link (or recording) to present on a given topic. The candidates should be given the presentation prompt, standard information regarding inquiries and accommodations, as well as detailed information about the target audience and platform (e.g. will this be a live session with five faculty? A recorded session geared towards students? Which platform will be used?).
- **Mock Demonstration:** The committee presents a scenario in which the candidate is able to demonstrate a given skillset. This might include preparing customer communications, a mock advising session, or any number of other scenarios. *Committees should work with their HR Liaison to design mock sessions to ensure compliance, accessibility, and consistency.
- **Validated Testing:** Many positions may require industry-specific or software-specific knowledge that is better demonstrated than talked about. In these cases, validated testing for knowledge of programs such as Microsoft Office or QuickBooks or knowledge of general principles of industry standards such as accounting or editing, may be available through the University-approved temporary staffing vendor. For more information, contact your HR Liaison.

Guidelines and Best Practices

Please keep in mind that all of the best practices, policies, and guidelines discussed in OHIO Search Committee Training (proactively planning for accessibility, designing detailed rubrics for evaluation with the committee, redacting/avoiding protected information as much as possible, creating consistency, etc.) still apply for all remote interviewing options. For more information, please review the [Search Committee Training and Tools website](#).

Tips for Success

- **Know Your Tech Platform:** Just as candidates are expected to prepare for an interview, search committees should also do their prep work by testing tech platforms. It’s often helpful to take some time to familiarize yourself with new platforms, either by going to the company’s site for demos, or by inviting a colleague to a mock meeting to test the software.
- **Keep Accessibility in Mind:** While tech-based screening addresses some accessibility concerns: travel, cost, navigating certain spaces, etc., it presents some drawbacks as well. Give candidates as much information as possible so that they can request any necessary accommodations. Sharing questions in advance, providing ample time for response, and ensuring call quality can all assist with accessibility. Due to infrastructure barriers, committees are encouraged to build in flexibility. For example, anything requiring a candidate response should have at least a 48-72 hour window including both weekday and weekend times if possible.
- **Check Your Environment:** Before joining any remote screening session, check your surroundings: Is there adequate lighting? Is there visual or audio “clutter” that could distract or disrupt? Is your microphone volume sufficient? Do you have everything you’ll need to reference (resume, evaluation rubric, etc.) handy?