

Candidate Interviewing Protocols During COVID-19

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we suggest the following protocols and recommendations.

Interviewing Candidates

Interviews assist in screening candidates for an available position. We recommend following best practices for conducting virtual interviews in lieu of face-to-face interviews due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Information Technology offers many technologies that can benefit search committees throughout the hiring process. These technologies can help facilitate interviews. If you have questions about any of the technologies, please contact the Technology Service Desk at (336) 278-5200.

Be Prepared

- Virtual interviews must be treated with the same seriousness as on-campus interviews.
- Know the job description and the candidates resume
- Have pre-determined interview questions
- Make sure everyone has the correct interview date and time
- Share with the candidate and interviewers the technology you plan on using in advance
- Choose a quiet, well-lit room for interviews and recommend that interviewers do the same

Set Expectations

- Give candidates advanced notice that interviews will be conducted virtually.
- Explain to the candidate why you are conducting virtual interviews rather than on-campus interviews
- Set the stage for what to expect in the interview, including start time, expected length, and provide a list of the interviewers and job titles
- Allow candidates to ask questions in advance of the interview to alleviate any concerns that they have as this may be new to them as well
- With web conferencing technology and a few best practices, you can continue to hold face-to-face interviews when in-person meetings aren't possible.

Examine Your Technology

- Test the technology you'll be using and ask the candidate to do the same.
- Communicate with and explain how they will access the platform
- Ensure that they have access to a device that is compatible with your platform
- Provide them an opportunity to test it out before the interview

- Offer the same suggestions that you shared with your interviewers to find a quiet, well-lit room that should illuminate the participants face
- Camera lens should be eye level, clean, and capture only the face and shoulders
- Avoid a distracting background which could interfere with candidate focus
- Information Technology's Hiring Technology Resource Guide can be found at <https://www.elon.edu/u/bft/technology/>

Conducting SAFE On-site Interviews Amid COVID-19

When candidates have been vetted to only those that are the most qualified, we recognize that it still may be necessary to invite candidates to an on-campus interview. Please make sure to follow the following protocol.

- Follow established protocols regarding mask wearing and gathering/meeting spaces
- Send the candidate(s) the [Health Screening App](#) and request that they complete prior to arrival on campus or any event associated with the interview
- Consider outdoor venues, where feasible
- Explore the possibility of a hybrid approach when participants of the interview process may join in person or virtually
- Maintain Physical Distancing. Adhere to all social and physical distancing guidelines as outlined by the [Ready & Resilient website](#), CDC and state and local government
- Although this likely breaks with normal protocol, do not shake hands. Explain that in order to maintain physical distancing, everyone will avoid shaking hands
- Avoid close contact. Ensure that you have an interview space where you can maintain at least 6 feet of separation between each person involved
- Wash your hands properly and have hand sanitizer available
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, desks, phones, keyboards, etc.
- Provide breaks in the schedule, preferably in the same room where the interviews are held, to allow the candidate time to take care of any personal business.
- Make meals an option portion of the interview; provide the option to the candidate if they prefer eating alone or in a physically distanced environment with participants of the interview process (ensure the candidate that the decision is completely their choice with no repercussions either way)

Postpone When Sick

Ensure that the candidate and interviewers know who to call if they are not feeling well. Hopefully, it goes without saying that you will need to postpone the interview if the candidate or any essential interviewers are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19.

Given the severity of this pandemic, this is not a moment to take any unnecessary risks. Updated information can be found on the Ready & Resilient website at <https://www.elon.edu/u/ready-and-resilient/>.

We are here to help

We recognize that it is very challenging to conduct efficient and effective interviews for those in-demand essential positions that are needed to continue during this crisis. Hopefully, these tips and best practices will help you to successfully identify and hire the best candidates to meet your hiring needs. Please contact Human Resources by calling 336-278-5560 with any questions or concerns.