Acing the Video Interview
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ASPIRE Postdoctoral Café
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Video Interviews—Headed Your Way!

- According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) 2016 Recruiting Trends report, there has been a 50% increase in the use of video interviewing in the past year.

- Multiple surveys indicate that 60%+ companies are using video interviews at some stage in the hiring process.

- Why?
  - Cost savings (travel and lost productivity)
  - Can screen more candidates
  - Allows for better standardization of process
What’s the Big Deal?

• Some people are camera phobic and appear too nervous/awkward.
• Others may be too comfortable and appear unprofessional.
• Most of us haven’t done much video interviewing, so very little practice.
• Conditions are different-- lack of body language, technological issues may crop up.
• You are inviting interviewers into your space.
All Video Interviews Are Not Equal

• **Live Video**
  - e.g. Skype, FaceTime, Join.Me, Snapchat, Google Hangout, Zoom, Blue Jeans
  - One person or a panel
  - Usually with the Hiring Manager or team

• **Asynchronous (Video Assessment)**
  - SparkHire, HireVue, TakeTheInterview, Interview Stream (VUMC HR)
  - One-way video - talking to the screen
  - Usually used by HR to prescreen (in lieu of phone interview) and also serves as tracking system
  - Recorded answers to preselected questions, time limited
  - Can often re-record a set number of times
How Can You Prepare?

- **Skype Profile**
  - Set up a professional profile (photo and name)

- **Environment**
  - Set the stage: camera placement, lighting, equipment, no distractions

- **Appearance**
  - Dress, eye contact, smiling, posture, minimize fidgeting

- **Performance**
  - Practice with camera
  - Prepare as you would for an in-person interview
How to Look Good in Skype Interviews

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQwanxQmFnc&feature=youtu.be
Environment

- Adjust your backdrop- “decorate” if needed to make it look clean, decluttered, and professional.
- Check for sound quality– is room too empty?
- Bring in extra light as needed to look natural.
- Elevate computer and camera to head height.
- Turn off phones, emails, other distractions.
Minimize Distractions:

BBC News interview with Professor Robert Kelly

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mh4f9AYRCZY
Appearance

• Eye contact is critical- practice!
• Posture - practice holding this position for a long time.
• Smile a lot, but not too much. Got it?
• Dress as you would for an in-person interview. Be sure to be comfortable and to keep it clean and simple. Confirm color on screen (avoid patterns).
• Wear some make-up as appropriate; glasses may help mask deviations from eye contact.
Example of a confident answer that incorporates a bit of smiling and good eye contact:

What are your weaknesses? - Sample interview question:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YX5sSdnT5p0
Performance

• Take a second before answering in case there is a delay
• Be relaxed and natural
• Minimize arm and hand movements
• Don’t fidget or rock back and forth
• Keep a bottle of water nearby
Prepare for Glitches

• Test all equipment prior to the interview and be familiar with how software works
  • Test connection, camera, lighting, sound, video program
• Have a back-up plan; e.g. exchange phone numbers with your interviewer, Facetime account available?
• How to handle a problem?
  • Acknowledge the issue, apologize, and move on
  • Don’t be afraid to ask interviewer to repeat question
  • Know how to mute your mic if needed
Bottom Line:
Who wants to try?
Resources:

- **How to Look Good in a Skype Interview** via YouTube NTD Training Videos
- **How to Prepare for a Video Assessment** from The Muse
- **How to Ace your Online Video Job Interview** from Quintessential Careers
- **Video Interview Tutorials** (Specifically See Ch 6) from SparkHire
- **Are you Ready for Video Interviews?** NIH Office of Intramural Training & Education (OITE)
- **Ace Your Video Interview by Dave Jensen**, Science, July 22, 2015
- **How to Knock Your Virtual Job Interview Out of the Park**, Mel Larsen, Help Scout, March 16, 2016