



The Ohio State University

Best Practices for Virtual Interviews



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

HUMAN RESOURCES

Integrated Talent Management

1590 N. High Street, Suite 410 | Columbus, OH 43201 | 614-292-2800

Simple best practices to help you interview candidates using CarmenZoom.

1. Prepare an effective interview environment

Find a quiet place where you can give candidates your undivided attention. Make the space look orderly and arrange your materials neatly. Is there anything in your desk or wall area that will distract you or the candidate or that will seem unprofessional?

Sounds and interruptions

If others will be nearby, let them know in advance you will need quiet and privacy for the duration of your interview. Make sure other noises or pets will not interrupt the call.

Close other computer programs before the interview so the video screen is the only window open. Silence all notifications, especially applications that make noise, such as social media and Gmail. Place your phone out of view and silence it.

Lighting

Use your webcam to check what the candidate will see. How is the lighting? Do you need to adjust a blind or curtain or add a lamp so you aren't hidden in shadows or glare? Placing a lamp at either side of your desk at the same height as your webcam or higher can provide good lighting. At the very least, make sure you don't have a light shining behind you.

Webcam placement

The best position for your webcam is at your eye-level, pointing slightly down. To achieve this, try setting your laptop on something sturdy.

2. Go for a practice run

Enlist a friend or family member — someone who will be honest with you — to run through a mock interview with you using CarmenZoom. Practice adjusting your audio, muting and unmuting, and sharing screens.

In addition to helping you test the technology, that person can tell you whether you are adequately seen and heard, how the lighting is, how you appear on camera, and whether you come off as professional, prepared, enthusiastic, and interested.

3. Prepare the candidate in advance for a virtual interview

Provide the candidate with the details of the interview including the following:

1. Who they will be interviewing with and their roles. This is especially important if there is more than one person on the call.
2. How the interview will flow, such as “I’ll start by asking you a few questions and then I will leave time at the end for you to ask questions as well.”
3. Once the interviewer (the CarmenZoom host) joins the call, the rest of the participants will be able to join.
4. CarmenZoom Instructions for Applicant [\(link\)](#). This describes how the candidate will access and use CarmenZoom.

4. Follow best practices during the interview

Follow normal best practices for conducting interviews, as well as these tips for a virtual setting.

Appearance and on-camera presence

Dress professionally, at least from the waist up, as if you were conducting the interview in person. To make natural eye contact with the candidate, focus on the camera instead of looking directly at your computer screen. Be mindful of your body language. A smile and good posture convey confidence and enthusiasm.

Greeting

Yours should be the first greeting, welcoming and respectful to the candidate. Build rapport and set the agenda for the interview. Start with easy, non-threatening questions to help the candidate establish their comfort level with the technology, the situation, and with you.

Recording

Interviews should NOT be recorded.

If a technical glitch occurs

Despite your preparation, technical glitches can still occur. Be direct and honest and don’t hesitate to disclose that to the candidate. For instance, if the video freezes or the audio cuts out and you’re unable to hear the person’s response, ask them to repeat it.

It’s far better to be upfront and get the information that you need—rather than politely nodding because you’re too embarrassed to admit that you missed something.

Have your cell phone charged and ready in case you lose audio and need to call in with your cell. Use the chat feature on CarmenZoom to connect with the candidate if you are having technical difficulty.

Related resources

- [Carmen Zoom Instructions for Scheduling Interviews \(link\)](#) describes how to get started with Carmen Zoom, schedule a meeting, and share the link with attendees.
- [CarmenZoom Instructions for Applicant \(link\)](#) describes how to access and use.