



Tips for Skype interviews

If you're unfamiliar with Skype, practice using it prior to your scheduled interview

- Know your Skype address and get the interviewer's Skype address

Consider doing a practice Skype interview with a Career Services advisor or with a friend

You want to be sure

- that you have good eye contact
- that your computer is at the right angle
- your appearance and delivery are polished

You can also use **InterviewStream**, practice-interview software that allows you to conduct and watch your own interview using a webcam. You can access InterviewStream by logging into **PennLink** on the career Services website.

When using Skype

- Even if it feels non-intuitive, look at your computer's camera, NOT at the person(s) with whom you are Skyping; otherwise the other person(s) will see you looking down the whole time.
- If you look at your computer screen it looks like you are looking away and it will be distracting to the interviewer(s) if you do not look like you are looking at them.

Before the interview

- Turn the camera on and adjust the height/angle of the camera and position of the video window so that it will appear that you have good eye contact without having to look directly at the camera.
- Check out what the room behind you looks like. Get rid of piles of paper, coffee cups and anything else that contributes to a messy look.
- Make sure that you will not be interrupted by spouse/partner, children, pets, ringing phones, timers.
- Decide what to wear. Avoid white and light colors as they reflect light and can wash out the features of your face.
- If you have a microphone attachment or lavalier microphone, use it. The search committee will likely hear you better.
- Turn your email pop-up and other "alerts" off.

Lighting

- Facing a window in the room diagonally may provide good light on your face and no reflection on your glasses.
- Lighting can be damaging when it comes from behind your head because it can put your face in shadow. Test light levels at the time of day the interview will be to see if you can tell where the light is most beneficial for illuminating you during the conversation.

During the interview:

- Smile

- You can have the materials you sent the search committee in front of you but don't spend a lot of time looking down at them.
- The Skype interview may feel like an odd experience. You will see an image of yourself in the corner of the screen which you may think makes your face look distorted. Depending on where the screen and camera are located for the interviewers they may be looking up instead of at you. It is also possible that multiple interviewers won't all fit in the screen so it may be difficult to see them. It is not yet perfect as a tool for interviewing but will likely improve in the next few years. If travel budgets continue to decline Skype interviews may become the preferred method of interviewing.

If there's a problem

- If you lose your connection, just call them back. (You could ask at the beginning or, in an email prior to the Skype interview, if they would prefer you to call back or have them call you, should you be disconnected.)
- One interviewee reported: "The interviewers were in a good sized conference room, with the camera on the far wall, so there was not enough resolution to see facial expressions. I had to rely on tone of voice. The sound was spotty at times, and the video went out once. I stayed calm and rolled with it - which was partly because the same thing happened with the practice interview, so it was not a surprise. I just said, 'the sound was going in and out there, but I think I caught enough of what you said to answer: just one clarifying question...' and then asked the key thing I needed to know to answer the question (which I may have missed, or they may not have actually said)."
- It may help your candidacy to be shown handling a problem well.

Additional points

- Don't schedule back-to-back Skype interviews as things can go off schedule.
- Most people who have had phone and Skype interviews prefer Skype interviews. A Skype interview feels warmer and you can see how the interviewers react to you and what you say.

To set up a mock interview – either by Skype or in our office for an in-person interview – with a Career Services advisor, call 215 898-7530. Whoever answers can set it up.