

## *Video Interview Guide: The Interviewer's Perspective*

### **Introduction**

Video interviews can be a great way to get to know someone without anyone having to travel and can be an acceptable substitute when an in-person interview is not practical or possible. However, they're not ideal for building rapport and getting to know someone the way you can in person. While online interviews have a lot of similarities to in-person interviews, there are several key differences, and we hope this guide will help you navigate the world of online interviewing with a little more ease. Just like during an in-person interview, the goal is to get to know your candidate, describe the position and your program, and evaluate "fit" while ensuring that the candidate ends the day feeling excited about the position and very positive about moving forward.

### **Preparation**

As with an in-person interview, preparing for the video interview is key. The better you can get to know the candidate and what is important to them before your video interview, the better you can focus on the candidate's priorities during the video call. The video call will enable you to go deeper and make sure you highlight the aspects of your program that will appeal to the candidate and help them rank your program high on their list. Just as you would have a preliminary phone call prior to an in-person site visit, it's important to have a preliminary phone call before the video interview. In that initial call, you will learn about the candidate and what they're looking for in a practice and a community. That will help you tailor the video interview to their particular interests and make sure you have the right people to take part in the interview to address any questions they may have.

Just like you would with an in-person interview, it's always good to have an agenda prepared for your video interview so that the candidate knows who they will be meeting. This gives them the opportunity to be as prepared as possible. We've attached a sample itinerary at the end of this document.

Part of the preparation includes making sure the technical aspects of the video call are in order so there are no surprises before the actual interview (no one likes having everyone ready to go but not having enough bandwidth to support a particular platform!). If you need help navigating the technical specifications of a video call, please see our guide here. It's always a good idea to do a tech run, exchange cell phone numbers in case of a disconnect, and share any collateral materials with your candidate prior to the interview.

### **The beginning – Making a connection**

There are several things you can do to help the interview get off to the best start possible.

**Small talk/Break the Ice:** Interviews are naturally a stress-inducing situation, and this can be true for both interviewer and interviewee. For in-house recruiters, this may not be a problem, but for some of the less extroverted interviewers on your team may like these ideas to help make a virtual interview more comfortable.

- Ask about their hobbies or interests: This is an easy way to build rapport as well as try to learn a little bit more about your candidate and their interests. It's possible that you may have the same or similar hobbies or interests, which could provide you with additional talking points. This small talk before an interview can also tell you about whether or not your candidate may be a positive culture fit for your organization.
- Simply ask about their day: Sometimes we get nervous and overthink. To engage your candidate before the interview formally begins, simply ask them about their day. Asking follow-up questions about the weather or national events could also open up the channels for further communication (although we definitely recommend staying away from politics or anything else that could be controversial!).
- Ask about their job search: If your candidate is coming out of training, it should be no surprise that they are also interviewing at other practices. If you casually ask about your candidate's job search without pushing or prying for information, you can show them that you are interested in the experience they are going through as well as possibly give you additional information about what competitors are doing. You can ask "I hope your interviews are going well! How are you finding the interview process?" Statements like "We are sure a candidate like you has many options and we would love to know whether there are any things you liked or didn't like about other places you are visiting so we can see what we might need to do to be a good fit for you" can give valuable information. If a candidate had a particularly negative experience, this may help you avoid repeating the mistakes of the other practice, while on the other hand, if your candidate had a particularly positive experience, it may help you to know how to best accommodate them.

**Give your candidate an overview of the interview:** Before you dive in and start asking your candidate questions, you should give them an idea about how the interview is going to go. Is the interview informal and conversational? Is there time allotted at the end for questions? Has everyone in the virtual room/video call been introduced? You should let your candidate know the answers to these questions in advance to help them to focus on the interview and not worry about interrupting a question or conversation at the wrong time.

**Give background information about your practice:** If this is a first-round interview, this doesn't need to be every piece of information your candidate should know about your practice, but you should give a thorough overview to help your candidate get to know your practice better than they would have been able to through a deep dive on your website. This can help them to better understand your practice and may help them if they have additional questions later in the interview.

**What questions should I ask my candidate?**

When you are thinking about what questions to ask your candidate, the majority of your questions should be selected in advance. If you have a panel of interviewees, it may be helpful to coordinate who will be asking which questions. Additional questions may arise throughout the interview and can and should be asked as time allows, but deciding ahead of time is key to helping you look organized, focused, and professional. As a guideline, you should ask questions that:

- Are open-ended: Avoid asking questions that can be answered with “yes” or “no.” Open-ended questions allow your candidate to talk more and give their thoughts and opinions, which will be a better gauge of their fit with your opportunity.
- Invite a story: Giving your candidate the ability to “tell you about a time when…” allows them to share their experience and allows you to better see how your candidate organizes their thoughts. Additionally, past experiences are one of the best predictors of future actions.
- Seek clarification: If the candidate has not answered a question to your satisfaction, ask a follow-up question or ask for clarity. It’s possible that you or the candidate misunderstood one another, and you should not feel bad to ask for clarity. If you didn’t understand something that was said, you can’t best assess the candidate and their abilities.

In addition to asking these types of questions, there are also categories of questions that you can ask that can help you as a hiring manager to learn more about the candidate’s qualifications, clinical skills, and soft skills. According to LinkedIn, the six most valued soft skills are adaptability, culture add, collaboration, leadership, growth potential, and prioritization. Below are some questions that can help you to learn more about the candidate and each of these individual soft skills.

## **Adaptability**

- Give an illustration of a time when you had to change course in your treatment of a case due to complications. What did you learn from that case? What would you have done differently?
- Describe a situation in which you embraced a new protocol or technology that was a departure from the old way of doing things.
- (For the new graduate) What kind of feedback about your performance have you received from your faculty/attendings during your training? What are some areas of your clinical practice that you are working on?
- (For in-practice candidates) What kind of feedback about your performance have you received from your employer or physician colleagues? How have you used that feedback to enhance your practice and engagement with patients, staff, and colleagues?
- What has been the biggest professional change you have had to deal with? How did you adapt to the change?
- How have you responded and/or adapted your practice style to any patient complaints pertaining to yourself?

## **Culture Add**

- What are the three most important things to you when you are selecting your next position?
- Tell me when you are most satisfied, energized, or productive at work. What are you doing when you are at your best?
- What's the most interesting thing about you that we wouldn't find on your CV?
- What about our practice or hospital made you choose to apply and interview over others?
- What are the biggest misconceptions your colleagues have about you, and why do they think that?

## **Growth Potential**

- Recall a time when a colleague was unavailable when a problem arose. How did you handle the situation and who did you consult with afterward?
- What do you hope to accomplish in your next medical position? What are your long-term goals (management, research, expanded training, additional procedural skills)?
- What kind of colleagues is it necessary for you to have in terms of backup and professional support?
- When was the last time you asked for feedback from a supervisor? Why?
- What's the biggest career goal you have achieved to date? What additional goals do you have?
- What do you consider to be your strengths as a physician?
- What do you consider to be your weaknesses as a physician or areas in which you would like to make improvements?

## **Collaboration**

- Tell me about a time when you had a difference of opinion with a colleague when treating a patient. How did you communicate the difference of opinion? What was the outcome of that communication? How was the patient involved in that process?
- Tell me about a time you were communicating with a colleague and there was a misunderstanding. How did you follow up to resolve the misunderstanding?
- Tell me about your favorite experience working with a team and what contributions you made.
- Describe the actions of the best partner or supervisor you have ever worked with. What part of their practice style appealed to you?
- Can you share a time when the treatment of a patient had to dramatically shift at the last minute? What did you do?
- What process do you use to build relationships with your colleagues, referring providers, staff, and patients?
- How do you communicate a task to a member of the nursing or ancillary staff? If the task is not accomplished or not completed in the way you desired, how do you address the issue?

## **Leadership**

- This position relies greatly on the ability to work collaboratively with patients, families, colleagues, management, staff, etc. Describe a case/project/position you have taken where there wasn't a lot of initial support, but you completed it successfully. What elements contributed to the outcome? How did you persuade, influence, or serve as a change agent?
- Tell me about the last time a project or procedure didn't go according to plan. What was your role and what was the outcome?
- Describe a situation where you needed to persuade someone to see your point of view. What steps did you take and what were the results?
- As a physician, you are seen as a leader on the teams you work with. How do you go about building trust and building an engaging and safe environment on those teams?
- Tell me about a time when you needed to lead by example. What did you do and how did others respond?
- Tell me about the toughest decision you had to make in the last year.

## **Prioritization**

- What techniques do you use to manage your time in your current practice?
- How do you balance your clinical/surgical time with administrative time?
- Tell me about the busiest time you have ever experienced in a clinical work environment. How did you respond?
- Tell me about a project you personally planned. How did you organize and schedule the tasks?
- Describe a time when you felt stressed or overwhelmed. How did you handle it?

In an interview setting, it would not make sense to ask all of these questions as each category of questions asks very similar things, however, using these questions as a guide to formulating your own questions based on your practice's needs and goals will help you to ask great questions that can tell you about multiple facets of your candidate's work abilities.

What information should I share with the candidate?

In addition to you getting to know the candidate, you want the candidate to walk away with a good sense of your practice and your community. This is recruiting—you always want to be the one deciding if you want to move to the next step. If you fail to impress the candidate, they may decide they have better options. If you don't have access to all of this information during the interview, or time does not allow, providing it to your candidate after the interview would be extremely helpful to them so that they can do their own due diligence in evaluating whether or not they would be able to succeed at your practice. Not all of this information may apply to your practice, but knowing the answers will help you to recruit better candidates that are as interested in joining you as you are in them.

## **Position Details:**

- Percentage of time working that will be inpatient or outpatient coverage
- Call schedule

- Any leadership roles that are available and what additional responsibilities of a leader would be
- How much subspecialty volume is available
- Research opportunities
- Teaching opportunities
- Program development opportunities
- Publishing expectations
- Current stroke volume
- Average number of calls per night (and the nature of the calls)
- Average number of patients during inpatient rounding
- Average number of outpatient appointments per day

## **Geography Details**

- Nearby cities and neighborhoods where physicians commonly live
- Quality of schools (private and public K-12, higher education, etc.)
- Cultural landmarks such as religious centers or ethnic community centers
- Dining and attractions
- Any additional details that can help bring the area alive to someone who may not have ever visited. Often, local Chambers of Commerce have commercial or tourism videos that are available that you might be able to share.

## **Practice Details:**

- Current physicians (demographics of the group, age range, subspecialty training, medical training)
- Work schedule (Monday-Friday vs. 7-on / 7-off, etc.), weekend expectations, holiday coverage
- APP or admin support if available (and what kind of relationship exists between physicians and APPs)
- Current events – If your practice has had recent publicity, good or bad, you should be able to address it.
- Affiliated Hospitals
  - Number of Beds
  - Trauma Center Level
  - Stroke Capability/Certification
  - Number of dedicated Neuro-ICU beds
  - Number of EMU beds
  - Current stroke volume
  - Equipment available
  - Departmental reporting structures
  - Partnerships available
  - Practice culture

## **Compensation/Benefits:**

- Expected pay range
- Payment model – Salary, wRVU-driven, a combination, etc.
- Partnership/shareholder track, for private practices
- Opportunities for bonuses
- Any additional benefits, including sign-on bonus, student loan forgiveness, quality bonus, relocation expenses, training stipend, CME allowances, etc.

As a reminder, you don't need to have all of these answers all at once and it's likely there won't be time to address all of these questions during your allotted time, but it's possible your candidate may have specific questions related to this list as there are some of the topics we receive questions on daily. When it comes to specific schools, religious, and/or cultural landmarks, you should never assume or ask your candidate if they have needs as these are protected classes. If your candidate chooses to disclose, it is at that point that you are able to provide them with helpful answers.

## **Conclusion**

Interviewing candidates is a lot more than just scheduling an interview and showing up. Your candidate has lots of options and you need to roll out the red carpet to make them feel special without ever meeting them in person. The more you can do to help them visualize your program and community, the more excited they will be to continue the conversation. Happy interviewing!