

How to Use Skype to Conduct Long-Distance Interviews

by Heather Huhman

Trying to interview a candidate who isn't in the same geographic location as your company can be difficult. Although, traditionally, companies may have flown out to the location of the job candidate (or flown the candidate in), that's simply not possible when students are studying abroad, and many organizations simply can't afford interview-related travel anymore. Luckily, today there are tools like Skype that you can use for face-to-face interviews with top talent from across the globe. Skype is easy to use and free to download, and all you need to get started is a webcam. Integrate Skype into your recruiting strategies by following these steps:

Before the Interview

- **Test your connection.** Although Skype itself is easy to use, technology malfunctions are bound to happen at some point. Figure out how to quickly fix any bugs that may occur before the interview takes place by using Skype with friends, family, or co-workers beforehand.
- **Create a guide for candidates.** The job candidates might not be familiar with Skype and may need to download the application before the interview. Make sure to give candidates the proper information in advance so they know what they need to participate in the interview. Remember that it's possible they might have a computer *without* a webcam, too.
- **Choose an appropriate background.** Think about how your webcam is set up and what the candidate will see. Are you interviewing them from your office, where colleagues will walk into the shot? Find a private, quiet place to conduct the interview.
- **Test your lighting.** In the area where you'll conduct the interview, test the look of the lighting on the screen. Will the candidate be able to make out your facial expressions? Are there harsh shadows casting on your face?

During the Interview

- **Smile.** Because you're staring at a computer screen, you might act a little different than if you were conducting an in-person interview. However, it's still important to smile and give the candidate nonverbal feedback throughout the interview as you would in-person.
- **Keep a script close by.** Avoid feeling frazzled by keeping a list of questions nearby and a pad of paper to jot down notes.

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careercenter@indianatech.edu