

Virtual Interview Tips

Virtual residency interviews are upon us. Below you will find guidelines for virtual interviews including how to set up your technology, best practices on how to present your best self, what you should wear and helpful tips on non-verbal languages. It is my hope the following tips I have gathered from multitude of sources will help you to overcome the unique challenges of virtual residency interviews this year.

Check your Technology

- Test your setup ahead of time using the same platform
- Have a friend video chat with you to make sure the volume is working
- Practice mute and unmuting yourself
- Learn how to share screen
- Make sure your webcam is at eye level, angled so your head and shoulders fit the frame
- Consider using earbuds or utilize a headset with microphone for better audio system
- Turn off other technological devices to minimize distractions (phones, smart watches, ipads etc)
- Turn off all programs on your computer that could draw down your battery or slow your Internet connection
- Change your username to your full name
- Prepare for glitches: have a back up plan, get the phone number handy to call in case you are experiencing technical difficulties
- Pick a blank wall or a room without a lot of distracting clutter or decorations
- Make sure your light source is behind your computer or phone, not behind you
- Make sure your computer's camera lens is clean and dust free so everyone can see you clearly
- Make sure your laptop is plugged in even if fully charged

Before the Interview

- Research the institution, preparing your answers to common interview questions and come up with questions to ask your interviewers
- Write down important facts about your experience and talking points for your interview
- Set up mock video interview with a friend/mentor and record yourself to help you correct the following: eye contact, hand gesture, your posture as well as take note of how fast you speak, how you pause, and the tone and pitch of your voice
- Keep copies of your personal statement, CV and your ERAS application close to you
- Set out a glass or bottle of water for yourself

What to Wear

- Dress as professionally as you would for an in-person interview including the dress shoes
- Avoid wearing bright white tops or shiny jewelry like watches and earrings that could cause glaring
- Don't wear a top that blends in or clashes with your backdrop
- Avoid sparkly, flashy, or jingling jewelry
- Avoid wearing clothing with loud patterns or designs
- Check to see if your outfit looks good on camera

During your Interview

- Log in a few minutes early and do your breathing exercise to help you relax and join the meeting
- Ask the interviewer for a phone number where you can reach them if you experience technical difficulties
- If there's a high chance of you being interrupted by something outside of your control, mentioning it at the start can prepare your interviewer and show them you're proactive
- When you answer the interview questions, remember to look at the camera not your screen
- When listening, nod and smile to show you are engaged
- Let the other person finish speaking before you respond. Jumping in with your response too soon can mute the other person's mic and cut them off entirely
- Make sure you sound excited when discussing topics you're passionate about
- Make sure to communicate when you are pausing to write down a few notes, share your screen, or even just formulate your answer to a question
- Refrain from checking your smartphone notifications, texts, emails, and call lists during your virtual interview

After your Interview

- Send a follow-up thank you email
- Write down names, including the coordinator and support staff, and send them a thank you email
- Take note about your interview experience and ask yourself the following questions
 - Can I be happy working in this program and with these people?
 - Am I confident in the program and the sponsoring institution?
 - Are there factors that make this place (city/town/rural area) an attractive place for me to live during my residency?

Good Luck!
Woubejig Shiferaw