# HOW TO VIRTUALLY INTERVIEW & HIRE 2021

**HiringThing™**

# Introduction

The way we work and hire has changed forever thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic. Remote and flexible work situations are now the norm. "About 7 in 10 U.S. workers say the pandemic will permanently change the nature of work in their own career.[1]" Many organizations, both big and small, are making permanent changes to workspace situations.

2020 changed how we work; 2021 will change how we recruit. Thirty five percent of business professionals say "implementing new technologies" and 31% say "establishing new work practices, policies, and incentives" are critical to transforming work.[2]

HR professionals in small to medium businesses can leverage virtual recruiting tools to safely and effectively source high-quality candidates that complement the team. As a bonus, Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) guidance issued in January by the SBA and Treasury expands the eligibility of business expenses to include applicant tracking systems (ATS). Now is the time to pivot and modernize your organization's recruiting practice.

One rule of business that has not changed is hiring the right talent is crucial to the success of your business. Luckily, with an applicant tracking system, you have the recruiting tools at your fingertips that will have you hiring remotely with ease and greater efficiency.

## USING VIDEO

While phone interviews can provide basic details about candidates' experience or help you understand how they conduct themselves, video is vital to accurately understand their personalities. Video capabilities integrated with an ATS can be easily utilized, as well as outside teleconferencing options like **Zoom** or **Google Hangouts**. How else can video assist your interview process?

**Efficiency:** Video is efficient and convenient for both the interviewer and interviewee. Busy candidates who may already have a job can more easily schedule and attend video interviews during their day. Busy hiring managers can quickly set up and conduct interviews while maintaining the safety standards outlined by the CDC in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Streamline assessment:** To screen a large group of candidates with maximum efficiency, send out interview questions en masse and have candidates record their answers. Collecting recorded or pre-recorded videos with a service like **Wedge** can be shared among teams, enhancing collaboration and eliminating scheduling delays during the hiring process. Stakeholders can review responses on their own time, which helps avoid scheduling nightmares. Pre-recorded video interviews level the playing field since candidates are consistently provided with the same questions and are given the same time period to respond.

# VIDEO INTERVIEW TIPS

To simplify the process for candidates, as well as to receive more consistent results, provide interviewees with a set of guidelines with their interview instructions. Make sure candidates have all the basics about how to technically complete the interview, including instructions for how to turn on video and audio. Screenshots or even a short video tutorial can help, too. Along with instructions, provide interview tips to ensure candidates do their best. Consider tips such as:

**1**

Set up your computer in a quiet, well-lit room.

**2**

Wear professional clothes that make you feel comfortable and confident.

**3**

Prepare responses to common interview questions.

**4**

Be personable! Smile, sound enthusiastic, and laugh.

**PRO TIP:**

Asking consistent interview questions is critical for **reducing** liability and interview bias.

# CULTURE EXPLORATION INTERVIEW

If your company typically hires in person, you may not be accustomed to a **separate culture exploration interview**. Companies that have to make adjustments and hire virtually should still consider holding these types of interviews in order to understand candidates' personalities, values, and work styles and how they might complement the existing team.
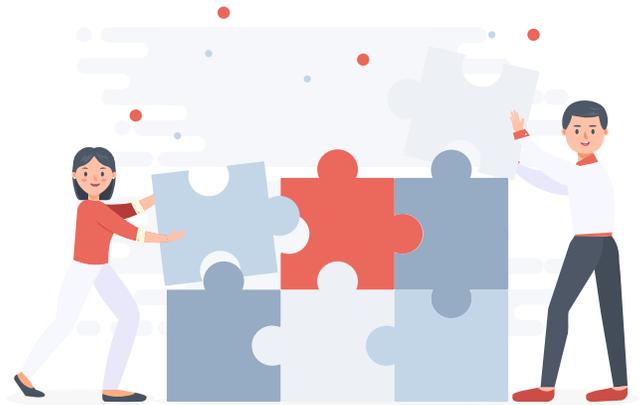
Most standard interviews contain at least some questions relevant to culture exploration, such as, "Do you prefer working alone or in a team, and why?" or "What does your ideal workday look like?" But a stand-alone culture exploration interview attempts to really understand how candidates might add to your organizational culture and values.

Education, qualifications, and prior experience can be easily conveyed in interviews, and hiring managers know that new employees can learn many specific tasks on the job. However, it's not easy for hiring managers to spot or qualify candidates' ability to learn, get along with coworkers, and adapt to new situations. **To meet your hiring goals**, use the following strategies in your culture exploration interviews:

**Focus on your company's value:** When evaluating candidates, tie in your company values to your questioning. Not only should you be clear about what your values are (for example, teamwork or efficiency), but you should ask candidates open-ended questions about those values. You might ask for an example of how a candidate has collaborated with coworkers in the past on a project or how they prioritize their work.

**Use a comprehensive assessment:** For a big-picture view of candidates, start as soon as they walk in the virtual door (or start recording!). Whether they smile, seem confident exchanging pleasantries, or maintain assertive eye contact, you can learn a lot about personality from the get-go. Next, assess how all their answers tie together. No single question should make or break a candidate; many considerations can help you decide. Other important pieces include asking what questions the candidate has for you (it shows preparedness and overall interest) and self-assessments, such as "How would a former manager describe you?"

**Hire diversely:** If you continuously hire the same type of people, they may all complement your culture, but not necessarily add anything new to it. Welcoming new soft skills and attributes into your company will help your culture grow. Variety is important. Avoid asking canned questions and instead seek opinions or ask questions based on candidates' experiences.

# ASSESSMENTS AND CHECKS

Assessments, background checks, and reference checks are even more important in remote hiring. Utilize all of the tools available in your ATS to ensure your candidates are well-vetted.

**Assessments** are a great way to weed out individuals who don't possess the necessary qualifications. If you require basic must-haves, such as minimum years of experience, include these qualifiers in your application. You can even mark those questions as required, forcing candidates to fill them out in order to submit the application. Once you receive the applications, you can quickly compare and rank candidates based on responses. Through automated assessments, your applicants' experience, skills, and abilities will be efficiently and uniformly screened, helping you minimize liability and maximize hiring efficiency.

Most hiring managers believe that **background checks** are an important way to uncover unbiased information while keeping the business safe. Data covering employment and education history, driving records, and criminal convictions is vital in not only predicting job performance but in maintaining workplace safety. Conducting background checks, especially for a large group of candidates, can be time-consuming if performed manually. Results may be delayed if the hiring manager submits incomplete forms or does not obtain necessary authorization signed by the applicant. An integrated background check product streamlines the process by quickly checking applicants while ensuring legal compliance.

**Reference checks** are another way to verify candidates' experience and skills, but they're often difficult to obtain. If every candidate must submit three to five references, you may have to spend a lot of time and energy getting those references. This challenge will only increase if you're hiring for multiple positions. In a busy world, an automated reference process is necessary to help you conveniently request and receive insight on applicants. Reference check solutions that are integrated with your ATS provide a selection of custom surveys or built-in options that you can easily send to references. Once you receive responses, you can use the information to rank candidates or even to confirm skills and history.

The year 2020 created a lot of shifts in the way we work and recruit. If you are faced with sourcing and hiring online during this challenging time of social distancing and remote work, you're not alone. Join the thousands of individuals currently leveraging modern recruitment, ensuring the safety of their workforces and organizations as they continue to grow their teams. **Schedule a demo** today and get started on your own path to Hiring Happiness™, even while you are physically out of the office.

1. See Fortune, 69% of Americans think the way they work has changed forever
2. See Deloitte, 2021 Global Human Capital Trends