

# Virtual / Video Interview Preparation Guide

- What is a Virtual / Video Interview?
- Understand Virtual / Video Interview Format
- Prepare Your Environment
- Practice interview questions using [Big Interview](#)
- Follow-up

*NOTE: Please review the [UBP Interview Prep Guide](#) and other [Intranet Career Resources](#) to prepare your interview content.*

## WHAT IS A VIRTUAL INTERVIEW?

A growing number of companies are using virtual / video interview software and applications to screen the field of contenders without spending loads of time and money on travel. Virtual interviews come in many different formats. Sometimes, a virtual interview allows employers and candidates to "meet" and interact using video, instant messaging programs, and web-conferencing services. Other times, candidate's record answers to pre-loaded questions for employers to later review. A market research firm recently found that 42% of companies used video interviews to recruit senior executives, management, and entry-level job functions, compared to just 10% of companies in 2010 (The Muse, Feb 2012).

Whether you're participating in an in-person or virtual interview your goal is the same -- to make a positive, lasting impression that advances you a step closer to an offer. Yet virtual interviews present unique challenges, including use of technology, the thoughtful management / selection of your setting, and the ability to effectively show enthusiasm and interest, sell your qualifications, and send the right "vibe" in the absence of in-person interaction.

## UNDERSTAND PRE-RECORDED VIRTUAL / VIDEO INTERVIEW FORMAT

### What is the login-in information?

Make sure that you get all log-in directions from the employer. Have that loaded up and ready to click when you decide to start the virtual interview.

### How much time do you have for each question?

Make sure to find out how much time you will have to answer each of the interview questions. This will let you know how long your answers should be. Don't get caught rushing to finish your answer as time is about to run out. Use your phone to monitor time if it is not presented within the virtual interview platform.

### How many questions will be asked?

Find out the number of questions you'll be answering so that you can plan your time accordingly.

### How many attempts do you get?

In some virtual interviews, you are allowed a second or even third re-take. If a mistake is made during your first attempt, you may be able to re-record your answer or start a new video altogether.

### Do you have a strong internet browser & Wi-Fi connection?

The last thing you want is your internet to drop out in the middle of a virtual interview. If you can, plug your computer into a wired internet connection for better stability. Please close any bandwidth-eating programs like HD video or online games for a better connection.

### Does the technology (i.e.: camera, audio, picture, internet connection) work?

Be sure the technology being used for the virtual interview is installed and working prior to your session. Test the Internet connectivity, as well as the microphone and camera to ensure you'll be able to proceed without a hitch. Technology glitches on the day of the interview send the wrong impression, casting doubts on your interest in the job, your technological savvy, and your ability to problem solve. If a tech support number or link is provided in the invitation, make a note of it.

## PREPARE YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Before laughing at how obvious these may seem, just realize many students have missed these important tips!

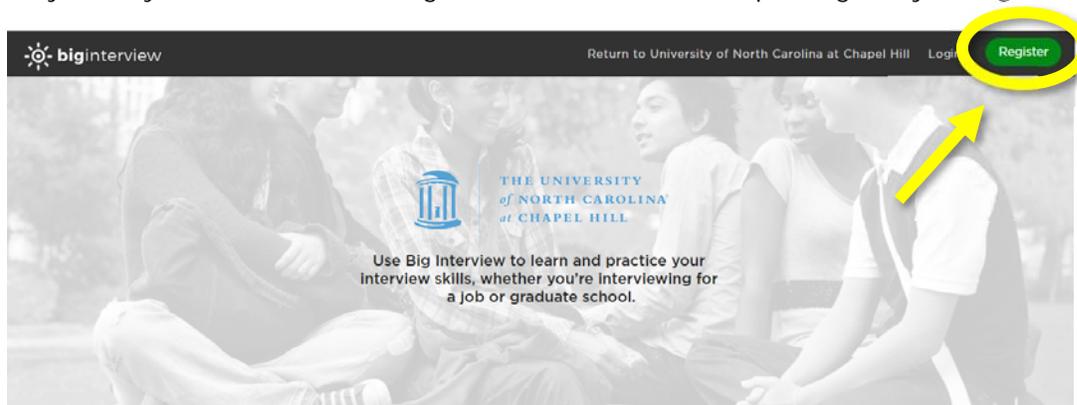
- Use the Device You're Most Comfortable Using:** Typically, you can use your computer, a tablet, or your smart phone. Test your equipment well in advance of the interview. On the day of the interview, make sure the battery is at full power and the camera lens is clean.
- Choose an Appropriate Background:** If possible, position your computer and webcam so there's a blank wall in back of you. If that's not possible, manipulate the background so it appears you are in a professional setting. Think bookshelves in the background, rather than your unmade bed or inappropriate posters.
- Eliminate Background Noise:** Turn off the television, radio, or other noise before beginning, and make sure pets are situated so they don't make unannounced -- and unappreciated -- guest appearances. If you live with other people, be sure you inform them of your interview time so they know not to disturb you.
- Dress for Success:** Dress for a virtual interview the same way you would for an in-person interview – in your *complete* interview outfit. If you're unsure what attire the situation calls for, ask the human resources professional what is appropriate. Avoid wearing bright or distracting colors, or jewelry that is remarkable.
- Find Your Correct Position:** Because you won't have the benefit of a face-to-face connection, your body language becomes even more obvious -- and important to manage -- in a virtual interview. Sit up straight, maintain the illusion of eye contact by looking at the webcam and not at the image on your computer screen, and don't slouch, yawn, or fidget. Put your mini-Skype-window below the webcam on your computer screen, too. That way, when you're checking how you look, you still appear to be making eye contact with the employer. Putting a person's picture next to webcam is helpful as a reminder to smile and look at the camera rather than the screen.
- Lighting:** Do you look washed out? Is your face shrouded in shadows? Be sure you test your lighting scheme before starting your interview.
- Notes:** You may want to have notes nearby that you can reference during your interview. A best practice is to place your notes on post-its and stick them to the edges of your screen, so you only have to glance away briefly to consult them.
- Complete a Test Interview:** Ask a friend to help you practice your interview using the technology you've just set up. Fix any problems (sound, lighting, camera placement) now. If you can, record the interview so that you can review it and improve your performance.

## PRACTICE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS USING BIG INTERVIEW

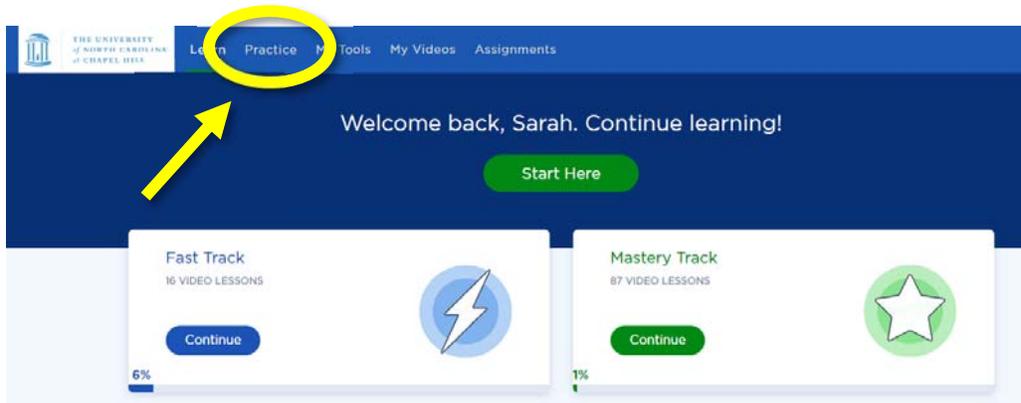
A great way to prepare yourself for a virtual interview is to practice as much as you can. University Career Services offers Big Interview which can be accessed through the UCS website. Big Interview is an online system that combines training AND practice to help improve your interview technique and build your confidence.

In order to access Big Interview, please follow the directions below:

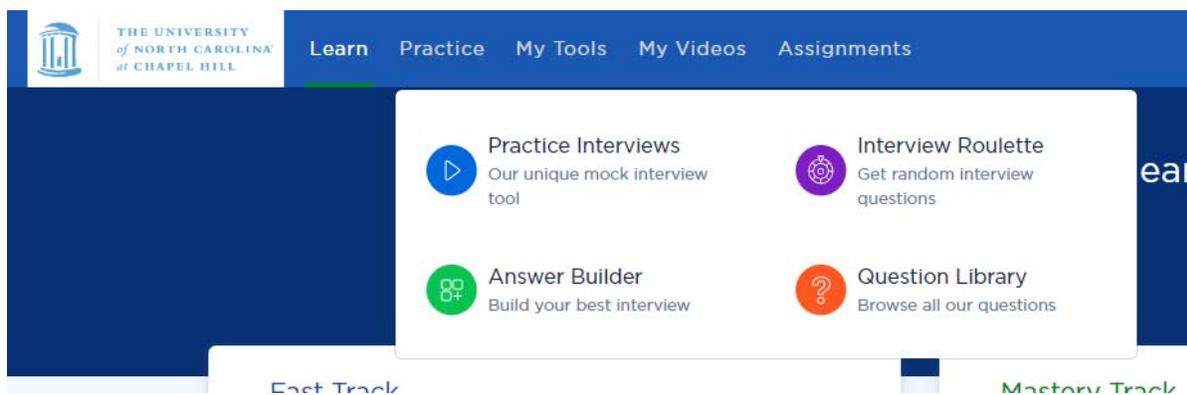
- Click on: <https://careers.unc.edu/students/resources/big-interview>
- Use your Onyen and Password to log-in and then follow the step to register your Big Interview account



- Once you are logged-in, choose “Practice” button.



- You can choose between four options:
  - **Practice Interviews:** Unique mock interview tool.
  - **Interview Roulette:** Get random interview questions.
  - **Answer Builder:** Build your best interview
  - **Question Library:** Browse all questions



## FOLLOW-UP

### Thank You Notes:

Send a thank you note to any administrators and/or recruiters who helped arrange your virtual interviewing experience within 12-36 hours of your interview ending. These messages should be professionally-formatted & thoroughly proofread emails. You do not have to send a handwritten note.

### Check-In:

If you were given a timeframe for next steps and that date has since passed, check in with your primary recruiter/interview coordinator to politely inquire on the status of your candidacy. If you weren't given a timeline, two weeks without a response is a reasonable time to wait before following-up. Always reiterate appreciation and your interest in the role in follow-up messaging. *Companies make offers to people who have sincere interest and are believed to be a fit!*