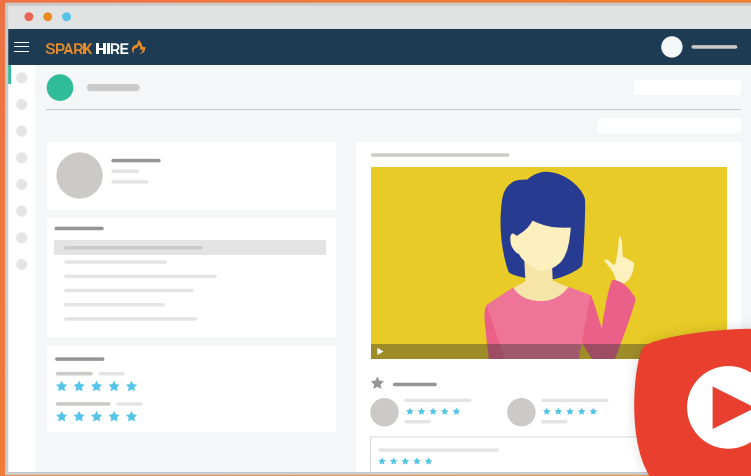


How to Transition Your Staffing Team

to Virtual Interviews



Presented by

SPARK HIRE 

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Congratulations! You've made the important decision to use virtual interviews at your staffing firm. This platform will empower your staffing team to better serve your clients while saving time and money.

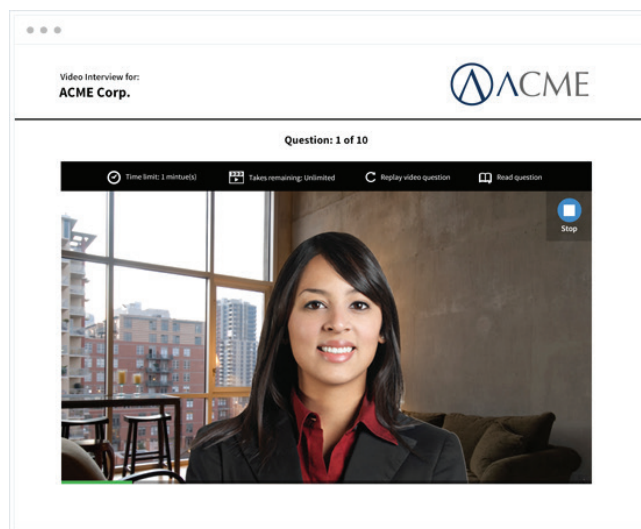
In fact, our recent report, [Making the Most of Your Hiring Budget: The Problems that Are Leading to Waste](#), revealed hiring professionals receive a large return on their investment when using virtual interviews. In fact, the tool was ranked second best ROI of any hiring tool. Only skills assessment tests ranked better.

However, you can't just introduce virtual interviews and expect your team to immediately use the tool to its fullest potential. You need to account for a transition period while your staffing team learns the ins-and-outs of virtual interviews and all they have to offer.

Here are the best approaches for transitioning your [staffing firm](#) to virtual interviews:

Explain the advantages of different virtual interview features

While making a decision about [which virtual interview platform to use](#), you undoubtedly tested different features. Walking through a test month or demo revealed how the tool positively impacts every part of the staffing process. Keep in mind, the rest of your team is starting from scratch. They need a detailed breakdown. So, point out the pros of each feature, as well as the best way to use them.



One-way Virtual Interview Pros

- Quick and easy for candidates to record
- Provides a clear picture of who the candidate is
- Tremendous time savings

One-way virtual interviews - Candidates are presented with a list of questions (five to seven works best). They have a designated amount of time to record each response. These interviews hold a dual purpose: improving your initial screening process and your presentation of candidates to clients. Candidates should record in a quiet space at home or the firm (more on this later), depending on your firm's use case. For one-way virtual interviews with a marketing purpose, your team should then review responses with each candidate to ensure they're presenting their best self for clients to make the most informed decisions.

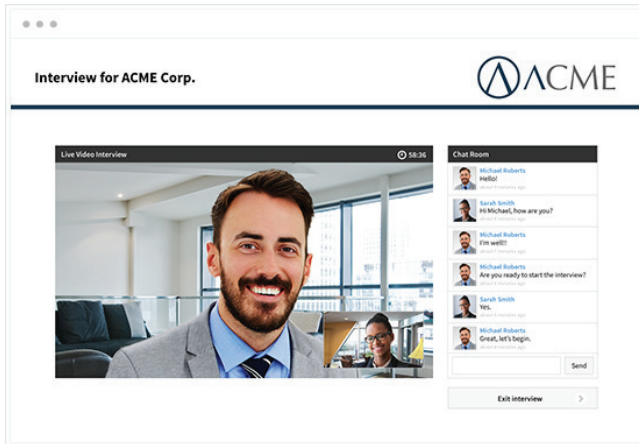
Most people think conducting a virtual interview means you must log into a video chat platform, like [Skype](#), and actively engage in a conversation with candidates. Keep in mind, one-way virtual interviews will be a new experience for a number of your staffing professionals. Prepare to answer questions such as, "Why are candidates allowed to re-record their responses?"

Explain, by allowing a rerecording, one-way virtual interviews eliminate rambling answers that lack helpful insights. As an initial screen, the purpose of a one-way virtual interview isn't to determine how a candidate reacts under pressure. You are trying to quickly and accurately vet candidates.

You also want to show clients who your top selections are so they can easily determine whether they fit well with the company's needs. So, the candidate videos your staffing professionals provide to clients should be the best and most concise representation of each candidate, something clients appreciate.

**BONUS TIP**

One-way virtual interviews are a huge time-saver. With a traditional early screen, like a phone interview, staffing professionals spend a great deal of time scheduling calls and talking with candidates. Likewise, virtual interviews save your staffing team countless hours interviewing candidates in-person. Recording a one-way virtual interview is not only quick and easy for your candidates to complete on their own time or in your office, but also your team and its clients can review the candidates' responses in as little as 15 minutes.



Live Virtual Interview Pros

- Automatic recording and easy to rewatch
- Ability to customize the platform to match your brand
- A chance to ask more in-depth questions specific to the candidate
- Concierge service to avoid technical issues

Live virtual interviews - Staffing professionals and candidates converse in real-time via the virtual interview platform. The interviews are automatically recorded and can be rewatched later by various decision-makers, from peers in the staffing firm to hiring professionals on the client's staff.

On the surface, live virtual interviews may seem the same as using generic video chat software. Due to this misconception, your team could easily overlook the value of specific features that optimize the candidate experience. For example, your staffing professionals are able to use your company logos and other branding material to customize the look of the platform window. This attention to employer branding stands out to candidates.

Often, staffing professionals prefer to use standardized questions when interviewing different candidates. This makes it easier for you and your clients to evaluate all candidates equally. While this is a great way to streamline the initial one-way screen assessment, live virtual interviews are your team's chance to dig deeper into candidates' interests and professional past.

Encourage your team to craft customized questions before each live virtual interview. They can use the information revealed earlier in the talent sourcing process to match the candidate and their interests with your clients' open positions. The idea is to create an environment that facilitates a natural conversation where the individual can shine.



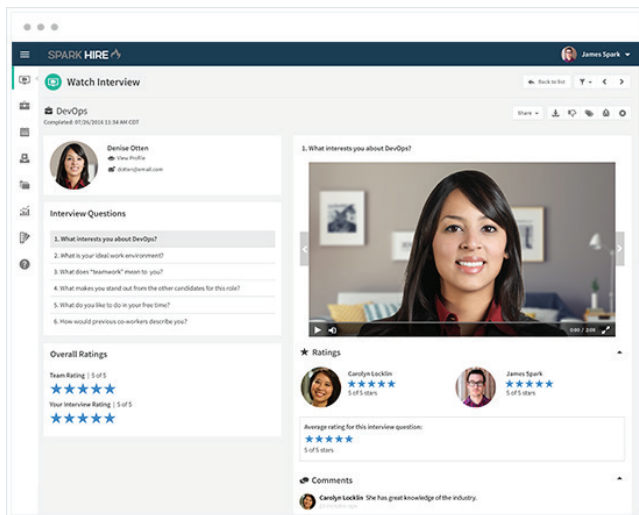
BONUS TIP

By far, one of the most valuable features of a virtual interview platform is access to concierge support. Traditionally, video chat interviews are notorious for technical issues. There are a number of factors that contribute to the first few minutes of interviews being lost while the interviewer and candidate troubleshoot tech issues. This is particularly embarrassing if your client is participating in the interview.

With live virtual interview concierge, both sides can work with an expert on the platform to ensure everything is running effectively before the live virtual interview. And any bumps along the way will be worked out in real time. This will save your staffing team a lot of time and frustration, so be sure to walk them through the process of connecting with technical support.



BONUS TIP



Collaborative Evaluation Pros

- A clear candidate rating system
- Immediate feedback from clients about their thoughts on candidates
- Easy access to a pool of pre-vetted talent

Collaborative evaluation - Whenever you provide someone (colleagues and clients alike) access to a virtual interview, they can leave comments with their feedback. Candidates can also be rated on a scale of 1-5 to make it easy to compare individuals.

Staffing professionals regularly share their evaluation of candidates with co-workers to gain fresh perspectives. And receiving feedback from clients enables your team to better refine your staffing process. But collaboration isn't always easy with traditional screening techniques like phone interviews or in-person interviews.

Email chains become too difficult to follow. Scribbled notes have to be interpreted, typed-up, and distributed for discussion – not to mention coordinating time to deliberate.

With a virtual interview platform, collaboration is built-in with the staffing process in mind. Each member of your team can objectively rate a candidate. You can also easily compare notes or share thoughts through the platform to reach a consensus.

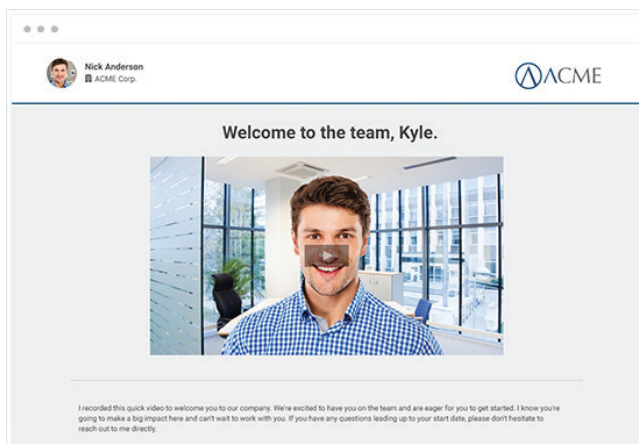
Get your team together to agree upon a rubric to determine candidate ratings. Once you set criteria, have team members create faux candidate personas depicting individuals who would receive each rating.

During your transition period, base these personas on general requirements of common roles your staffing firm fills. They don't need to be based on the needs of a specific client (that will come later), the point is to get practice establishing objective ways to compare and assess candidates.



BONUS TIP

The virtual interview platform saves all comments and ratings about candidates. Even after a position is filled, your staffing team can go back and review rejected candidates. Over time, your firm can build a library of candidates. While they may not have been right for the original role or client, they could be perfect for a future opportunity. This saves time on talent sourcing so you get the best candidates in front of clients quickly.



Video Messaging Pros

- Useful for every stage of the hiring process, from sourcing to onboarding
- Customizable to match your brand
- Easy-to-share videos about the company and its culture

Video messaging - With video messaging, your team can easily record videos to send to candidates. Pre-recorded videos can also be embedded to give candidates a deeper picture of the organization.

Unfortunately, for many years, staffing pros have relied only on emails to communicate with candidates. Instead of improving the candidate experience, these messages lack a personal touch leaving candidates feeling like they're no more than another resume on someone's desk.

You need to get your team out of this habit and encourage them to start using video messaging to build relationships with candidates. Some good uses of video messaging are:

- Introduction videos that allow candidates to put a face to the name of the staffing professional they're working with
- Employer branding videos from your clients
- Day-in-the-life videos that give candidates a look at what their job would be
- Employee testimonials that speak to what the work environment is like

**BONUS TIP**

By using the mobile app on the virtual interview platform, your staffing team can record videos on the go. This makes it easy to record virtual tours of a client's office. These videos provide unique insights candidates rarely get during the staffing process.

Set-up the evaluation process

By this point, we should all be familiar with how to communicate via video. But conducting a virtual interview is not the same as calling a friend with FaceTime, nor is the interview process the same as meeting in-person. Your team needs to be aware of how virtual interviews differ from traditional interviews to effectively assess candidates using the tool.

Develop questions

With an in-person interview, there's room to improvise. If the interviewer is unsure what a candidate's response means, they can ask follow-up questions to clarify. Also, there are less rigid time constraints. If a candidate wants to spend several minutes on one topic, they can.

One-way virtual interviews are more concise and should achieve balance between insights and efficiency. To get the most out of this screening tool, staffing professionals need to adapt their questions accordingly. The idea is obtaining the most valuable information for your clients as possible with just a few questions.

The key to developing virtual interview questions is being specific while leaving room for the candidate's personality to shine through. For instance, during an in-person interview, the interviewer might simply ask the candidate to tell them about themselves. From there, the candidate can divulge whatever information they want. While this can be revealing, it could take time before the candidate starts talking about anything of value to your evaluation.

With a [virtual interview question](#), staffing professionals need to lead a candidate more. Narrowly focused questions like 'what's your favorite book and why?' or 'if you could travel anywhere, where would you go?' get right to the point while allowing candidates to open up.



BONUS TIP

Don't be afraid to test out virtual interview questions. Have your team set up mock interviews with their co-workers to see what type of responses they receive. Since they already know these individuals, everyone can evaluate whether or not the questions lead to answers that are a true representation of who the ideal candidates are.

Designing the details

During an interview, clients evaluate more than the candidate's words. They pay attention to the visual presentation of a candidate. How a candidate sits, the tone of their voice, even the background environment influences your client's overall impression. Staffing professionals want to control these details as much as possible when helping candidates record their one-way and live virtual interviews.

While your team will appreciate the convenience of reviewing candidates' self-recorded videos, you should designate a dedicated place in the office to help record virtual interviews for clients to review your top selections. This ensures consistency between the videos you present to clients. It allows them to focus only on the candidate's skills and fit for the position. Ideally, the walls of the room should be white or light in color with no distracting decorations. There should also be a level surface for the recording device at a height that allows the candidate to look the camera 'in the eye.'

Also, be sure to set your candidates up for success. Provide them with resources about how they can make the best impression. Don't make any assumptions about candidates' level of knowledge of best interview practices. Cover topics like:

- *Dressing professionally* - Candidates should wear clean and pressed clothing. Their hair should be out of their face. While it's acceptable to show their personality through their wardrobe, provide examples of what would be inappropriate.
- *Speaking clearly* - Provide candidates with tips on how they can minimize filler words (um, like, uh, etc.). Also have them practice common interview questions so they can coherently put together an answer.
- *Having good posture* - Explain the importance of good posture and the message it sends to employers. Encourage candidates to sit in front of a mirror so they are aware of how they hold themselves and where they put their hands.



Practice makes perfect

As with any new skill or tool, staffing professionals need time to get used to a virtual interview platform. This ensures all the kinks are worked out before they use the tool with candidates and clients.

Play the “What-if” game

As your team gets used to using a virtual interview platform, they’ll get a clearer picture of how the tool impacts the staffing process. Questions will come to mind and new ideas will form. Having a group brainstorming session helps everyone work through unforeseen issues together.

Ask team members to create a list of possible complications. For example, what do we do if two candidates seem identically qualified? What if we suspect a candidate is lying? What if candidates don’t seem to understand a specific question?

Discussing these situations enables your team to develop solutions ahead of any problems. It will also reveal ways to refine your staffing process in order to make the most of the virtual interview platform.

Build in a feedback loop

One great feature of a virtual interview platform is the potential for it to evolve with your staffing process. As you track data, you are able to refine how you use the tool so it’s more effective. But this only happens if you’re focused on gathering [feedback](#).

Your two main sources of feedback are candidates and clients. Knowing how these people feel about virtual interviews gives you valuable insights into your staffing process, but you need to prepare for a way to collect their opinions from the beginning.

For example, after a candidate has completed their virtual interview, send them a video message requesting their feedback. This communication can link to a survey or a simple call to action like ‘tell us what you think.’

When it comes to your clients, pay attention to more than their thoughts on the presented candidates. Also take the time to ask them how hired candidates are doing after one, three, and



six months on the job. This will help you identify trends about what types of responses correlate with great talent.

Deciding to use virtual interviews is a big step for a staffing firm. The platform positively impacts every part of your staffing process, but only if you take the time to properly transition your team. Before you ask candidates to complete virtual interviews, make sure your team:

- Participates in a training session with your virtual interview platform's dedicated account manager
- Understands the purpose and benefits of each feature
- Adapts their questions and evaluation process to gain all the insights your clients need
- Has time to hone their skills by using the platform
- Creates a way to continually improve the process in the future



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