

The One Where OCI Went Virtual
Tips and Best Practices
2021 NALP Virtual Annual Education Conference

Employers

- Develop subject-matter experts on your team who can “demo” the different video interviewing platform to your lawyers to help ensure that they’re well-equipped for virtual OCI.
- Remind students that we’re all in this together and that we’re not here to judge them on the quality of their internet connection! Have a backup plan (e.g., calling the phone number listed on the student’s resume) in place in case of tech glitches, and make sure you communicate it to all lawyers and candidates.
- Give students a break! Consider incorporating breaks into your callback interview schedules and encouraging students to shut off their video and audio during that time and use the break to refresh and restore.
- Build in breaks for your interviewers too, especially on OCI days, and split the schedules if possible (i.e., one lawyer takes the morning half; the other takes the afternoon half).
- Don’t try to replicate the live interview experience exactly: this is an opportunity to rewrite the script and get creative. Instead, ask the junior members of your team and/or your summer/junior associates for ideas and suggestions since they are often closest to the student demographic.
- Use this situation to your advantage: for example, has your firm wanted to test the waters at a new law school that is outside your geographic area? Virtual interviews are a great way to do that without having to send a team “on” campus.
- Offer a menu of options to your offeree candidates when possible and ask if they would prefer for follow up outreach to take place on the phone, via email, by video, or in person (if circumstances allow).
- Remember to be nimble, flexible and let some things roll off your back. Take time to laugh with your team about snafus, and then together make a plan to make sure they don’t happen in the future.

Law Schools

- Train your students on how to prepare for virtual interviews. Their “virtual presence” is important and should include training on video backdrops, lighting, sound, and physical appearance.
- Help students familiarize themselves with the various virtual meeting platforms they may be asked to use during a virtual OCI season (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams, FloRecruit, etc.). Downloading the appropriate software and understanding the “ins and outs” of various virtual meeting platforms is essential to success when conducting virtual interviews.
- Make sure students have a backup device (e.g., phone/tablet) in case their internet malfunctions or something occurs where they are disconnected from the virtual interview.
- Make sure students know whom to contact (e.g., their school, the employer) if something goes wrong before or during the interview, such as loss of internet connection.
- Just as employers should be nimble, flexible, and let some things roll off their backs, students should take the same approach. Understand that employers may be conducting interviews in environments that are not the most ideal for them. We are all in this together, and employers aren’t judging you on the basis of the strength of your internet connection.
- Establish a virtual check-in procedure for your students on the day of their interviews so that you can offer quick feedback that may be helpful to them during the interview process (e.g., feedback on lighting, camera angle, background, attire).