

teaching note

Interviews on Demand: A case study of the implementation of asynchronous video interviews

Summary

After receiving her Bachelor of Sciences degree in Hospitality Management at a prominent university, Naomi Martinez pursued and was quickly offered a position with a reputable hospitality company in Orlando, Florida. Her initial position as a Recruitment Planning & Analysis Intern allowed her to see first-hand the issues that the business had in relation to forecasting human resources needs and issues. Just as importantly, it was a great first step from her college internship with a global lodging company in which she assisted in coordinating recruiting efforts for the Resort Operations division of the company. With the internships and nearly two years of hands on experience accompanying her degree, Naomi felt fully prepared to get her career in Hospitality Human Resources off to a strong start. Fortunately for her, a global lodging company had a support role in their Recruiting and Human Resources department that would build on her experience and education and become the springboard for Naomi's career.

Naomi quickly became adept at analyzing and understanding the company's needs and trends in candidate flow, turnover, and screening. With the economy on the rise and hiring activities multiplying, her company turned to automation to improve the screening processes. What used to take weeks to accomplish, could now be done in a matter of days; thanks to the asynchronous interviewing tools offered by HireView, Vidrecruiter, SparkHire, and Interview Rocket. Naomi was at the heart of it all – learning, growing and contributing. Things were good for Naomi, but she wasn't the only one that took notice. Upon returning from an international Human Resources conference, the Senior Vice President of Human Resources tasked Naomi to investigate and evaluate the asynchronous interviewing software platforms to determine if they would be appropriate for the company. Despite the efficiencies, there were negative effects as well: technology, legal issues, pre-determined assessments. This was it...her big break and Naomi was eager to take the opportunity and help her company automate and expedite their recruiting efforts.

Theoretical Background

The notion of using technology to aid in the recruitment and selection process is not new. Asynchronous video interviews are another tool in a series of "e-selection systems" such as software that facilitates the selection of resumes based on a key word search and online application submission. Stone et al. (2013) summarized some of the potential advantages of e-selection systems including that they: "a) provide organizations with large numbers of recruits; b) simplify the job analysis process, c) accelerate the development and assessment of selection procedures, d) reduce administrative burdens by automatically screen-

ing applications to ensure that applicants meet basic job requirements, e) allow organizations to interview applicants using web-based or videoconference methods, and f) facilitate the storage and use of application information, allowing for the assessment of selection system effectiveness" (p. 52). Since businesses often look for more efficient ways to accomplish a task, the Human Resources function has also been targeted. E-recruitment and selection systems help streamline some HR functions and reduce administrative cost for organizations. However, there are also drawbacks to many of these systems.

Asynchronous video interviews have become popular as companies try to reduce the cost of hiring an applicant, especially those from a long distance (Stevens-Huffman, 2011). This view of the primary motivators driving the use of asynchronous interviews was supported in a study of 506 companies, where 67% of participants represented cited travel reduction as the primary incentive for conducting asynchronous interviews (O'Neill, 2011). Additionally, 47% of companies participating claimed that asynchronous video interviews reduced hiring time, and 22% reported using the technology capabilities in a strategic manner to recruit candidates from other geographical regions (O'Neill, 2011). In today's fast-paced world, finding the right candidate in a short time frame might be a pressing need.

Technology Acceptance

An important consideration when deciding to utilize pre-recorded video interviews is the applicant's perception. Since the applicant has no personal contact with a recruiter, the way in which the electronic interview takes place might have a great impact on the perception and willingness to work in the organization. Initial research in this area demonstrated that job candidates are somewhat in favor of a video interviewing process (Toldi, 2011). In a 2010 survey of 73 job candidates who had undergone an asynchronous video interview, 62% felt video interviewing was innovative and forward-thinking, 66% of candidates felt that video interviewing saved time, 52% thought video interviewing was fair, and 70% liked the scheduling flexibility provided by asynchronous video interviewing, as it did not interfere with the candidates' work nor personal life schedules (Toldi, 2011).

In spite of the potential advantages of asynchronous video interviews, such selection tools can have drawbacks. For instance, not all candidates have adequate access to a computer or to the Internet. In a recent qualitative study investigating 151 hospitality job candidates' impressions of their experiences with asynchronous video interviewing, applicants reported frustration with technical glitches due to connectivity problems (Guchait et al., 2014). Furthermore, other negative perceptions of video interviewing included an impersonal feeling

due to not interacting with a live interviewer, a lack of real-time feedback, and a feeling of not being able to portray oneself in a realistic manner (Guchait et al., 2014).

Aside from generalized perceptions of asynchronous video interviewing practices, the Technology Acceptance Model (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000) provides a more focused view of an individual user's behavioral intention to adopt and use a new technology. In this case, an interviewee would have to find the asynchronous video software both easy to use and useful in order to engage in the video interview. Nascent studies in this area have reported conflicting results as to the usefulness of the technology (Guchait et al., 2014; Toldi, 2011), but none have approached the ease of use with which asynchronous video interviews are conducted. It is a potentially harmful assumption to believe that the ubiquitous nature of new technology adoption can be marginalized, as the 'ease of use' component in TAM is a critical factor driving a user's behavioral intention to utilize the technology. Third party asynchronous video interviewing software developers and companies interested in the adoption of this software both need to be cognizant of the ease of use component and the modalities for delivering the video interview (i.e. laptop, desktop, Smart device) in order to drive user acceptance.

Aesthetics and Impression Management

Yet another unanswered question concerning asynchronous interviews is the legal implications of this tool. Some law experts caution the potential for litigation, particularly due to video's transparency of a candidate's class, race, nationality, and potential disability (O'Neill, 2011). Recommended strategies to ensure objectivity include using the paper or electronic resume as a first level of consideration (O'Neill, 2011), as well as using the asynchronous interview as a tool to complement the entire interview process, rather than supplant the initial stages (Daram, Wu, & Tang, 2014).

The services industries often entail direct face-to-face interaction with the customer. Therefore, it has been proposed that employers seek candidates whose physical attributes closely match those of the organization's desired 'style' (Warhurst, et al., 2000; Williams & Connell, 2000). Warhurst et al. (2000) argued, "increasingly retailers are looking to control both appearance and behavior in the name of customer care" (p. 4). It has been argued that an applicant's appearance might be deemed more critical in selecting service workers, rather than technical skill. In light of this, Warhurst et al. (2000) suggested that the use of visual and aural stimuli through the mobilization of employees' capacities is a real phenomenon taking place in the services industries, and thus coined the term "aesthetic labor" (Warhurst et al., 2000). Aesthetics can play a key role in the recruitment and selection of employees in the hospitality and services industries, as businesses seek to establish their brand image. Quinn (2007) conducted qualitative research with managers of 3, 4, and 5 star hotels. The researcher obtained open ad-

mission that employers hire physically attractive staff (Quinn, 2007). With the advent of video interviewing, it is possible for interviewers to discard applicants who don't meet their aesthetic requirements.

In addition to interviewer bias, researchers have contemplated the possibility of interviewees actively managing their image during the selection process, a phenomenon known as impression management. Leary and Kowalski (1990) defined impression management as "the process by which individuals attempt to control the impressions others form of them" (pp. 34). Wayne and Liden (1995) define impression management as "behaviors individuals employ to protect their self-images, influence the way they are perceived by significant others, or both" (pp. 232). Individuals might be more likely to engage in impression management tactics when they are under intense scrutiny, for example during an employment interview (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Weiss and Feldman (2006) discovered through an experiment that 81% of all applicants told at least one lie during an interview, with the average amount of lies being 2.19. In yet another study, Kacmar and Carlson (1999) proposed that individuals who engaged in impression management were more likely to be liked by recruiters. Therefore, it might be prudent to ask whether asynchronous video interviews increase the likelihood that a candidate engages in tactics to enhance their image.

Target Audience

This case study targets both undergraduate and graduate student levels. Lesson plans and assessments (below) will specify teaching strategies for each audience. To supplement the case, undergraduate students should read the articles provided in the "Supplemental Readings Assigned" section at the end of the case itself. Graduate students should be assigned various articles in the "References" section, located at the end of the teaching note, particularly the articles by Guchait et al. (2014) and Toldi (2010 and 2011).

While the case is based in the lodging segment of the hospitality industry, the context of the subject matter is applicable to all segments of the hospitality industry, including food and beverage, event management, tourism, etc. Outside of the hospitality industry, this case is also generalizable to other service industries such as retail, banking, medical, and any other sectors utilizing asynchronous video interviews as either a primary or secondary means of recruitment and/or selection.

Lesson Plan

Undergraduate Students

Due to the overarching nature of the case, covering issues at both the organizational (company) and individual level (applicant), this case can be taught over two face-to-face class periods, or as an entire module in an online format. Prior to the lesson, undergraduate students should 1) watch the videos, 2) read the case, and 3) read the supplemental articles provided within the case. At the instructor's discretion, other

articles or videos can be added, as well as other reading materials from the course textbook particularly germane to the topics of recruitment and selection. The instructor may choose to use either (or both) of the perspectives below, based on their assessment of their students' capabilities and preparedness, course content, or term of instruction.

Students should be prepared to answer the discussion questions provided at the end of the case either independently as a homework submission (face-to-face or online), or in small groups utilizing in-class time (face-to-face) or discussion boards (mixed-mode or online). Answering these questions in a group environment will allow the student to gain various perspectives among his or her peers in order to facilitate the following activity, which might optimally be assigned as small-group work outside class.

Organizational perspective: Students will investigate the advantages and disadvantages of each platform and best practices for adopting a new asynchronous video interviewing system for their particular industry segment.

- Using the information provided in the case, students will be asked to construct a table that lists each of the organizational issues or concerns identified, then using this table as a guide, access the websites of HireView, Vidrecruiter, SparkHire, and Interview Rocket to complete the table with the features or services provided by the asynchronous interview platforms to address these issues. The rows of the table should include the issues, while the columns should include the platforms.
- Using Oneill (2011), provide a brief explanation of the issues that an organization may need to be aware of if this type of technology is adopted. Does it differ for any of the providers' platforms listed above?
- Write a memo from Naomi Martinez to Jai Chen including the recommendations for (or against) adopting an asynchronous video interviewing system for a particular industry segment
- Discuss the pros and cons of adopting and utilizing a new asynchronous video interviewing system to improve efficiency of the interviewing process from the organizational perspective (Stone, et al 2013).

Applicant perspective: Students will investigate the potential issues and concerns related to asynchronous interviewing and apply it to various roles or positions within a chosen industry segment.

- Using the information provided in the case, particularly the information in the supplemental readings (Salpeter, 2011 and Skillings, 2014), construct an outline of the issues and pitfalls that applicants need to be aware of when participating in asynchronous video interviews.
- Considering the various technologies that are available and potential issues with Technology Acceptance, what instructions or directions should employees provide for applicants? Do

these instructions vary by position, role, and level within the organization? Why or why not?

- What are the cultural implications that must be considered, honored, or intentionally ignored?

Graduate Students

Similar to the undergraduate perspective, the overarching nature of the case covering issues at both the organizational (company) and individual level (applicant), this case should be utilized over multiple face-to-face class periods, or as a term project. Prior to the lesson, graduate students should 1) watch the videos, 2) read the case, and 3) read the supplemental articles provided within the case, and 4) familiarize themselves with academic research in this area, specifically as it relates to Technology Acceptance Models and aesthetics and impression management.

The graduate assignment mirrors the case study primary character's assignment. Given the information provided in favor of asynchronous interviewing, as well as the cautions and concerns, graduate students will write a business proposal (See Appendix A for suggested format), based on academic and practical foundations, providing a recommendation to the Senior Vice President of Human Resources to address the opportunity of asynchronous interviewing and the selection of available platforms. The instructor may choose to use a current advertisement, hospitality search firm, or a specific hiring executive to provide a specific scenario to which all students will respond. If a specific firm or hiring executive is utilized, a representative from this company can be invited in to the classroom to discuss the students' preliminary findings and draft submissions prior to the final submission being completed.

The project can be broken down in to the following components with each being developed sequentially with intermittent review and approval by the instructor and/or industry representative. Instructors may choose to have students work in groups or individually to complete the project.

Session 1	Present Case Study Scenario & Exec Summary Format to Students
Session 2	Students submit written replies to Case Study questions and discuss organizational issues collectively
Session 3	Students identify a particular company to which they will customize their business proposal Customization includes position description(s), level(s) – title or scope, geographical area(s), etc.
Session 4	Students submit Objective & Background components of Executive Summary Initial Recommendations submitted in draft from demonstrating academic and practical foundations
Session 5	Students refine recommendations according to instructor/executive feedback

Session 6	Students submit Objective, Background, Description, Recommendations components of Executive Summary. Initial Risks are identified in draft form.
Session 7	Students refine recommendations according to instructor/executive feedback.
Session 8	Students submit final project with optional verbal presentations depending on class size.

Note: Session 3 is completed by the instructor if an open position, company, or hiring executive is identified.

Assessment

Undergraduate Level

After investigating the various asynchronous video interview platforms available for adoption by an organization, students will be assigned to create a mock 2-hour seminar in which they will “teach” college students and new professionals the best strategies for conducting a successful asynchronous video interview. Students should assume they are an HR professional whose job it is to travel around the country recruiting individuals to his or her hospitality organization. Depending on the company and industry segment students will choose to represent, the mock seminar should reflect the company culture, mission, values, and recruiting and selection practices, as they all pertain to a successful asynchronous video interview.

Deliverables for this assessment can take on a variety of formats within the designated 2-hour mock seminar. Students should first identify the core beliefs of the company and align the presentation to be consistent with the company culture. Second, students should create a lesson plan for the seminar, which might include active learning activities such as partner work, mock videos with smart phones or tablet technologies, etc. Third, students can also include a brief video of their own as part of the instructional session to demonstrate best and worst case scenarios of how to conduct oneself in an asynchronous video interview. Finally, students must build in a question and answer session in order to demonstrate proficiency of the task, or develop a mini-assessment to determine if the mock participants comprehended the messages of the seminar.

Assuming this assessment was disseminated among groups, in order to accurately determine the individual student’s command of the material, a reflection activity should be assigned with the following questions:

- How did your group convey the vision, mission, and cultural values of the company during the mock seminar?
- How did your group include elements of the Technology Acceptance Model into the mock seminar?
- How did your group address the importance of aesthetics and impression management to the mock participants?
- How did your group assess the mock participants? Do you

think your group was successful in delivering the content of the mock seminar?

In addition to the reflection activity, best practices for group learning call for an inter-rater peer review, where all group members assess the quantity and quality of each member within the group (Kablan, 2014). Peer assessments distributed at the same time as the group activity has been shown provide a better learning environment than without the assessment tool, in addition to assisting students to participate in the group activity more equally (Kablan, 2014). A sample inter-rater peer assessment tool has been provided in Appendix B.

Graduate Level

Based on the case, as well as the assigned/recommended/identified readings, graduate level students may work individually or in groups of 2-3 students. The choice of individual or group work is dependent upon class size, as well as the instructor’s desire or ability to incorporate an actual employment advertisement, hiring company, or specific hiring executive as the target of the written recommendation. Students should also prepare a 10-minute presentation that will occur after the project submission with a focus on their unique recommendations and risks. Explanations of how individual research helped guide the recommendations for the particular company should be included. During the presentations, instructors and classmates could try to find opportunities to incorporate probing questions that address technology acceptance and aesthetics and impression management.

A rubric is proposed to grade the students’ submissions. The rubric is included as Appendix C.

Analysis of Discussion Topics and Questions

The following aims to assist the instructor and addresses the questions included in the case study:

1. *How should Naomi approach the task of investigating a variety of asynchronous video interviewing software platforms for her organization? Provide a basic step-by-step plan of action in an outline format.*

The students are provided with the names of various companies that provide asynchronous interviewing software platforms. In addition, the case identifies core areas of opportunity and concern. Using this information, as well as the websites of the software providers, the students could develop a pros and cons format for investigating, analyzing and evaluating. Instructors can also refer to Daram, S. R., Wu, R., & Tang, S.-J. (2014).

2. *What steps should Naomi take to assess how user-friendly the asynchronous video software will be to prospective job candidates?*

The case discusses Naomi’s conversation with one

employer who is using the software. It also provides video resources for students to prepare for these types of interviews. Students can utilize these resources, as well as the Technology Acceptance Model to address how user-friendly the software will be. Instructors may refer to Stevens-Huffman, L. (2011).

3. *How should Naomi determine if the adoption of the asynchronous video interviewing software will meet the needs of the organization?*

The case includes many details of Naomi's background and supplemental reading (Peterson, 2015) that can assist the students in determining what the needs may be. In addition, the web pages of the software companies included in the case study have pertinent information as well.

4. *What information or benefits, beyond cost and efficiency, might the asynchronous video platforms provide that will assist the company's recruiting and selection processes?*

The tracking ability of the process of selection with video interviews in terms of accuracy, ability to predict productivity, and organizational culture alignment, will assist companies to recruit and retain a more skillful and competitive workforce.

5. *Are there any components that can be identified, utilized or tracked that can assist in reducing employee turnover or increasing job satisfaction – components that Naomi has found critical in forecasting companies' hiring needs.*

From an organizational perspective, assessments from recruiters and hiring managers or others who utilize the videos can be tracked to document those managers who hire successful employees. For those managers who highly rate new hires who end up non-productive or who quit, those managers can participate in training sessions to more accurately and fairly rate prospective employees (see O'Neill, 2011).

6. *How can Naomi ensure that the recruiting and hiring managers will use the interviewees' videos properly, ethically, and legally?*

Instructors should guide student discussion here to identify proper, ethical and legal use of video interviews, as well as contingency arrangements that may be necessary should issues arise.

Analysis of the Learning Objectives

After completing the readings, watching the assigned videos, and working through the discussion questions, assignments, and assessments of this case study, students should be able to:

1. *Dissect a complex human resources initiative and organize a strategy to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages for the adoption of asynchronous video interviews within a*

hospitality company.

Students are able to identify and provide support for prominent issues in order to distinguish from those that may be consequential or insignificant. They are able to identify, explain, and apply the advantages (efficiency, consistency, current, technologically sound), as well as the disadvantages (legal, ethical, cultural, corporate) of asynchronous interviews, and can sort through the various components to deliver a summative plan.

2. *From an applicant's point of view, develop strategies for interviewees to adopt in order to deliver a successful asynchronous video interview.*

Students demonstrate that they know and understand the technology requirements, interviewing techniques, visual cues, and potential negative tendencies of video interviews, as well as the asynchronous nature of those assessing the interview.

3. *From an organization's point of view, develop best practices for adoption and execution of an asynchronous video platform within a particular hospitality industry segment.*

Students are able to synthesize and apply the information provided in the case study, including the videos and readings, to identify when (or when not) execution of an asynchronous video platform may or may not be feasible. Students demonstrate how the platform may be modified for a particular hospitality industry segment, i.e. customer-facing individuals, individual contributors, managers, etc.

References

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Executive Summary Format – Graduate Students

Memorandum

TO:

FROM:

DATE:

SUBJECT:

Executive Overview:

Include a brief summary of the problem, proposed solution, and expected outcome in four to five concise sentences. This section should be written last, as a summary, after the rest of the document is complete.

Objective:

Describe the purpose of the project, i.e., to propose a solution to a specific problem which you explain here. This section is typically approximately two or three sentences long.

Background:

Provide a descriptive background of the problem to set the stage for the rest of the document. This section provides the reader with the context to which this document relates. This section may be several paragraphs long, but may also be condensed in order to achieve the required submission guidelines.

Description:

In this section, you provide the “boundaries” for the problem/opportunity you have identified by stating very clearly what your project (and this document) cover, as well as what it does not address/cover. For example, you may choose to provide a proposed solution to an identified business problem, but do not have ample information or knowledge to address the legal ramifications of your solution. In this section, you describe what it is that you have done, as well as what you have intentionally excluded so the reader is clear about what is contained in this document, as well as what is excluded.

Recommendations:

Here is where you list and describe the key components of your solution. By providing them in a numerical listing, you draw the reader’s attention to the key components of your proposal. This is the bulk of your document and should include a minimum of 2-3 recommendations, but likely no more than 5-6.

1. Name of 1st item/category

Describe in detail the recommendation that you are making specific to this particular item, i.e., On-site Activities, or category, i.e., Revenue Generation. This section should be multiple paragraphs that explains the issue, solution, and anticipated outcomes. Utilize tables or graphics included in the appendix to support the explanation.

2. Name of 2nd item/category

Describe in detail the recommendation that you are making specific to this particular item, i.e., Delinquencies, or category, i.e., Cash Flow. This section should be multiple paragraphs that explains the issue, solution, and anticipated outcomes. Utilize tables or graphics included in the appendix to support the explanation.

Executive Summary Format – Graduate Students

3. Name of 3rd item/category

Describe in detail the recommendation that you are making specific to this particular item, i.e., Facilities, or category, i.e., Asset Disposition/Renovation/Refurbishment. This section should be multiple paragraphs that explains the issue, solution, and anticipated outcomes. Utilize tables or graphics included in the appendix to support the explanation.

Risks:

In this section your list and briefly describe any known risks inherent in your proposed solution. There may be several risks or there may be none. Regardless, it is important that the reader know that you are aware of potential risks that may be involved. Keep in mind that most solutions involve some form of risk even if it is nominal. Identifying and categorizing these risks (low, moderate, high) strengthens your proposal.

Next Steps:

In this section, you briefly describe what comes next as it relates directly to your proposed solution. Think of the steps that it would take to put your solution in place and describe them here.

Timeline:

This section is a bulleted list that ties directly back to the next steps. Take each one of the steps listed above and attach a timeline to it. Your timeline may be compiled in the form of time intervals, i.e., weeks, months, years, or specific dates, i.e., March, 2013, depending on your proposal.

This section may be deleted if you have reached the limits of the required submission in terms of page or word count.

Appendices:

Use the appendices to provide detailed or graphical support to your proposal, i.e., Cash Flow, Graphical Depictions of Proposed Solution, Flow Charts, Authors' Bios/Credentials, etc.

Appendix B

Peer Review of Undergraduate Group Presentation

Internal Group Assessment Rubric		PROJECT & PRESENTATION (20 pts possible)	
		Assign group members a value according to:	
Group Member Name (include self)	What did person contribute?	Quality Level of Work lowest level of quality=1 average level of quality= 5 highest level of quality=10	Time Contribution lowest amt of time=1 average amt of time=5 highest amt of time=10
1		Number: Explain:	Number: Explain:
2		Number: Explain:	Number: Explain:
3		Number: Explain:	Number: Explain:
4		Number: Explain:	Number: Explain:
5		Number: Explain:	Number: Explain:

20 points of your grade contribution to THE PROJECT will be determined by the average allocation of your fellow group members, including your self-assessment.

Appendix C

Executive Summary* Scoring Rubric – Graduate Students

Criteria	Ratings				Points
All 8 Components of the Executive Summary* are incorporated	and student’s write up demonstrates an enhanced understanding of the issues and proposed solutions through incorporation of relevant materials that go beyond those provided in the course. 5 pts	and student’s write up demonstrates an understanding of the issues and proposed solutions through incorporation of relevant materials provided in the course. 3 pts	and student’s write up is complete but does not reflect an understanding of the issues or solutions using the course materials as a basis. 1 pts	Items are missing OR the case study is incomplete 0 pts	5 pts
Problem Identification & Recommendations	A minimum of five issues are identified and addressed in the write up including definitive recommendations, statement of impact, and financial estimations of cost and revenue. 7 pts	Four or more issues are identified and addressed, but the write up is lacking a definitive recommendation, statement of impact or financial estimate of cost and revenue. 3 pts	Three or fewer issues are identified and addressed in the write up including definitive recommendations, statement of impact, and financial estimations of cost and revenue. 1 pts	No issues are identified OR the case study is incomplete. 0 pts	7 pts
Spelling & Grammar	No spelling or grammatical errors. 1.5 pts	One spelling or grammatical error. 0.5 pts	Two or more errors OR incomplete. 0 pts		1.5 pts
Formatting & Presentation	No formatting errors 1.5 pts	One formatting error. 0.5 pts	Two or more formatting errors OR incomplete 0 pts		1.5 pts
Total Points:					15

*See Appendix A