



Digital Media Virtual Learning

HS/Advanced & Digital Media

April 30 2020



Lesson: [Reporting From Home Lesson 4 (4/30/20)]

Objective/Learning Target:

Recognize the differences and similarities between interviewing remotely and in person. Conduct interviews remotely to help create a news story.

Bell Ringer

1. What do you think is the biggest difference between interviewing someone in person and interviewing them online or through text?






Interviewing

How interviewing virtually is different



The Set-Up

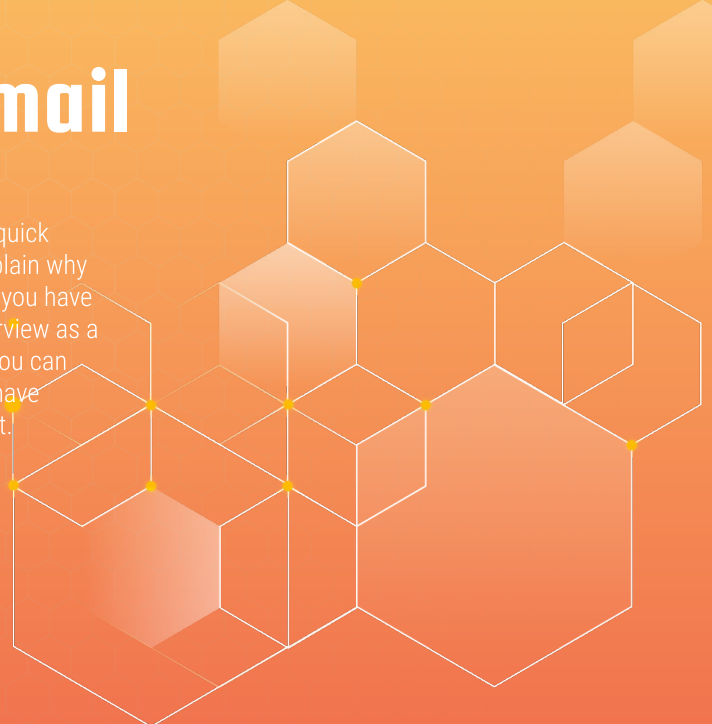
Unlike many interviews that we perform during a normal school day remote interviews require a bit more work during the set-up phase.





Introduction Email

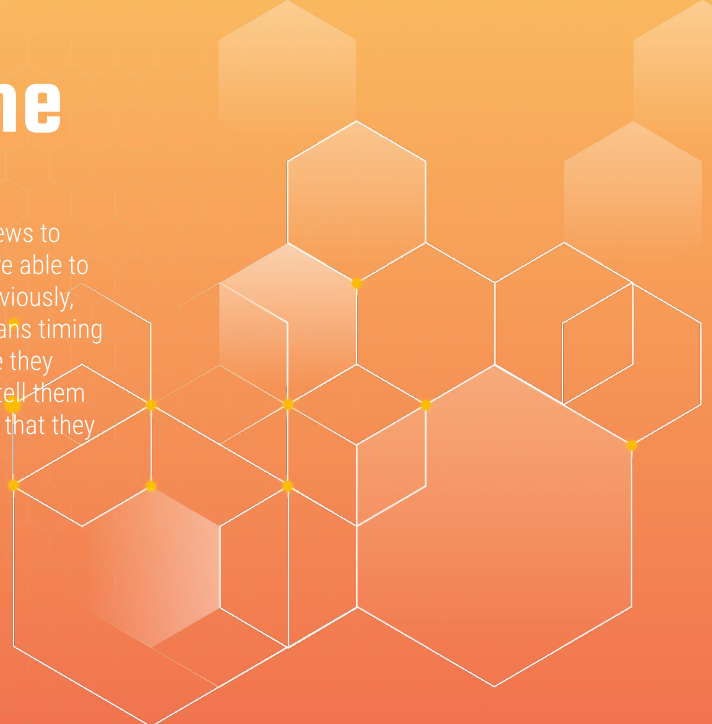
The first thing you'll want to do is send a quick introduction email about who you are and explain why you would like to interview them. Obviously, if you have already developed the person you want to interview as a contact then this part can be skipped and you can communicate with them in the way you have communicated with them in the past.





Finding a Time

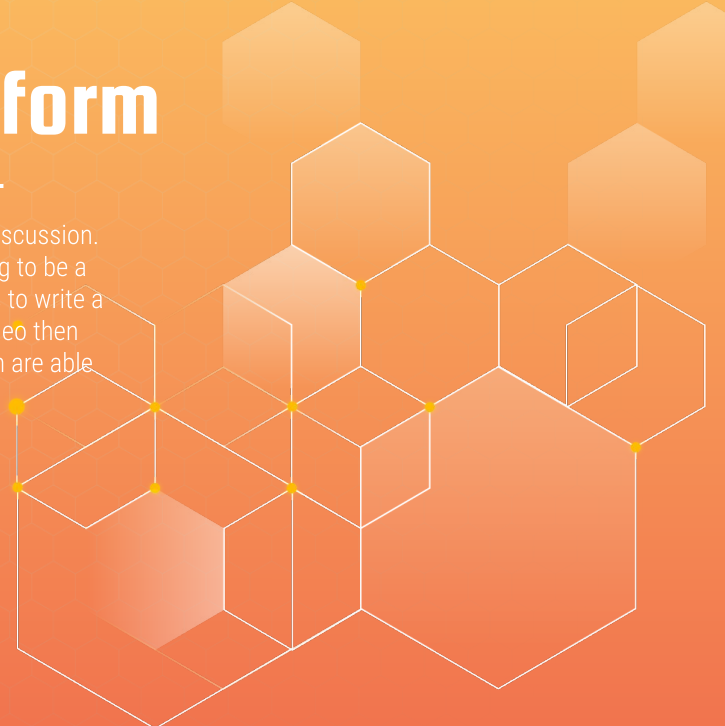
Generally, during school we confine interviews to specific windows that teachers or students are able to talk with us without effecting their class. Obviously, there's more freedom at the moment. This means timing becomes much more important. When are they available to do the interview? Make sure you tell them how long you believe the interview will last, so that they will be able to schedule around it.





What's the Platform

This may be the part that requires the most discussion. HOW is interview taking place? Is it just going to be a phone interview because you just need quotes to write a story? Or do you need video? If you need video then you'll need to decide which software you both are able to use.



Platform Options



Zoom

Quick and easy. Most people have become familiar with this.



Google Hangouts

Might be the easiest with another student as you can use your emails.



FaceTime/Skype

Both are great options if you are planning on doing the interview with your phone.

The background features a gradient from light yellow at the top to orange at the bottom, overlaid with a pattern of white-outlined hexagons. Some hexagons are filled with a semi-transparent orange color, creating a layered, geometric effect.

The Choice

The platform you choose will depend on what you're trying to do. But it will mainly depend on what your subject is most comfortable using. Remember, we always want the person we're interviewing to be comfortable. You need to be familiar with all platforms, so that you are capable of using anything that they are comfortable with.



Preparation

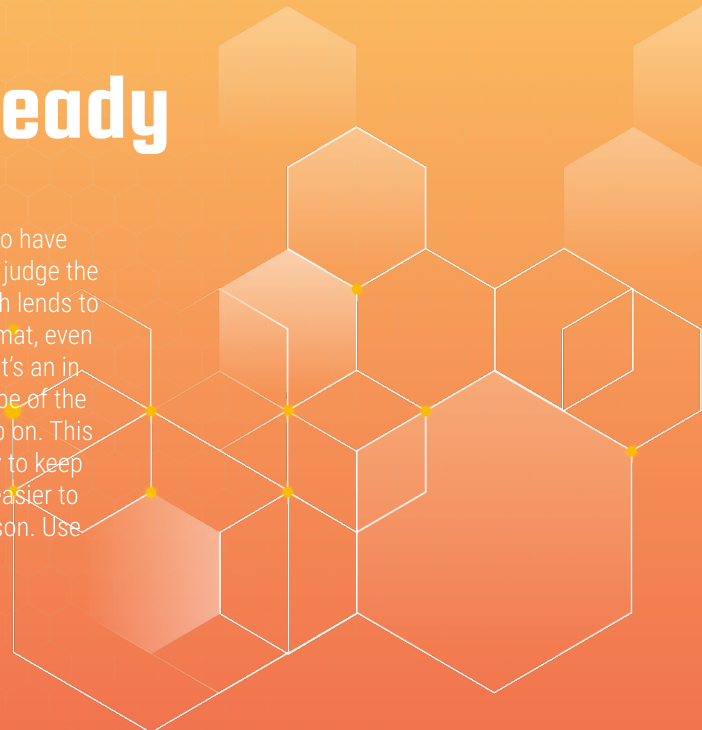
Prep work is always important for interviews as you guys are well aware. But when you're interviewing remotely the prep work is even more important.





Questions are Ready

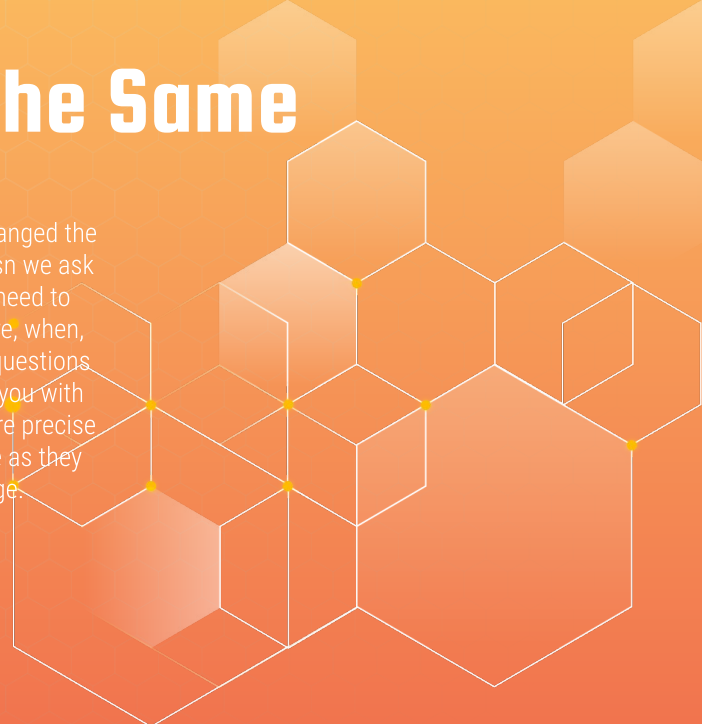
When interviewing in person it's important to have questions, but the interview also allows you to judge the environment and feel of the conversation which lends to more natural question asking. In a remote format, even though we like to believe video makes it like it's an in person interview, it's actually different. The vibe of the interview will be much more difficult to pick-up on. This means you should have your questions ready to keep things moving within the interview. It's also easier to check notes remotely as compared to in person. Use this to your advantage.





Questions Remain the Same

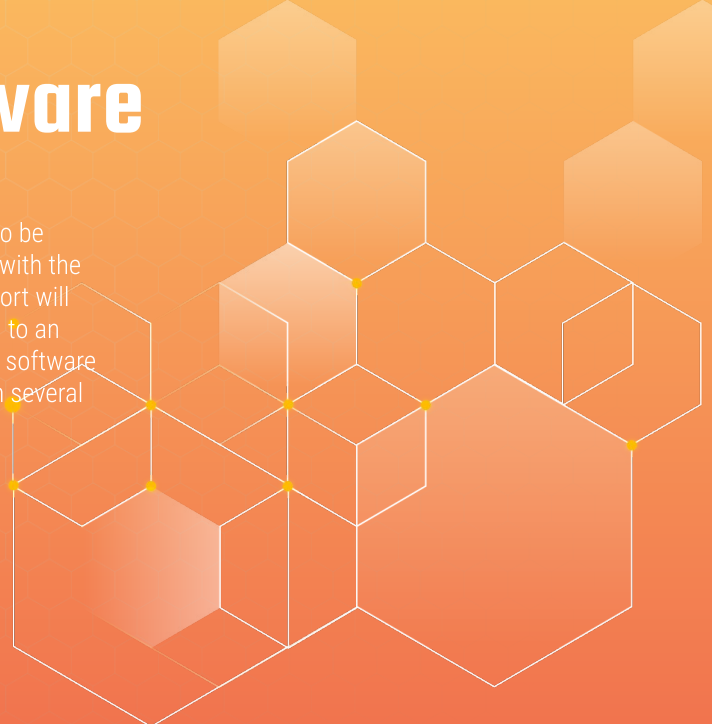
While many things about interviewing have changed the one thing that hasn't changed are the questions we ask and the answers we're looking for. You still need to make sure you're getting the who, what, where, when, why, and how of the story. The why and how questions are still the crux of the story and will provide you with the best quotes. Questions will need to be more precise though if you are interviewing over the phone as they won't be able to read your body language.





Know the Software

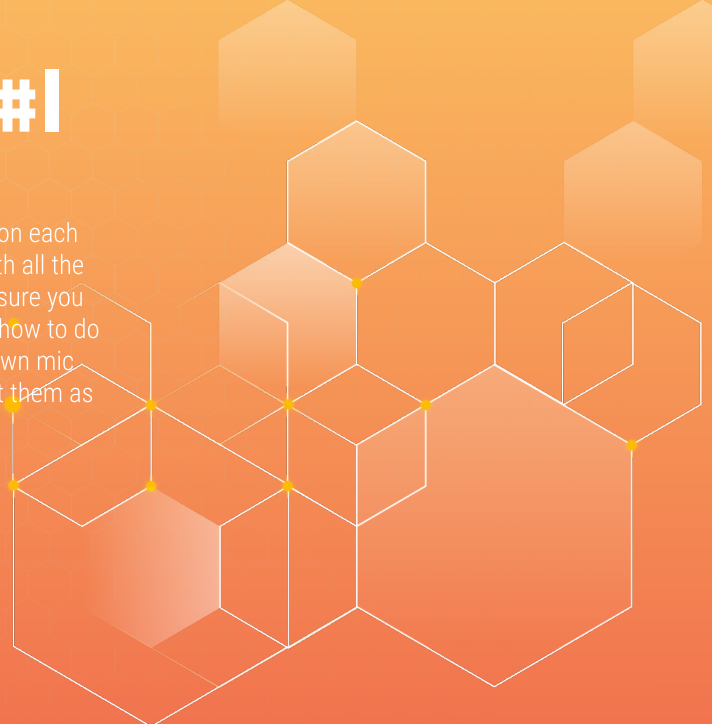
This was mentioned earlier, but it needs to be mentioned again. If you are not comfortable with the software it will show. And your lack of comfort will make your subject uncomfortable and lead to an awkward interview. Never do an interview with software that you haven't used yet. Always run through several tests before you do the interview.





Assignment #1


Find some time to get in touch with a friend on each platform, so that you can get comfortable with all the different software we have discussed. Make sure you record the conversation too, so that you know how to do that. This will also allow you to check your own mic levels and recording levels, and you can adjust them as needed.





Conversation

The best interviews are always more like conversations than a list of questions. This is easier to achieve in person. But, there's plenty of things we can do to make the remote interview work in a similar fashion.



Components for Good Conversation Remotely

Pay attention to what they are saying, so that you can ask great follow-up questions that lead to better answers.

Active Listening

If you are doing a remote video interview make sure you pay attention to their background and ask questions about it.

Observation


Put them at ease. The small talk before the interview is even more critical remotely. That helps build rapport for the actual interview.

Comfort



Video Tips

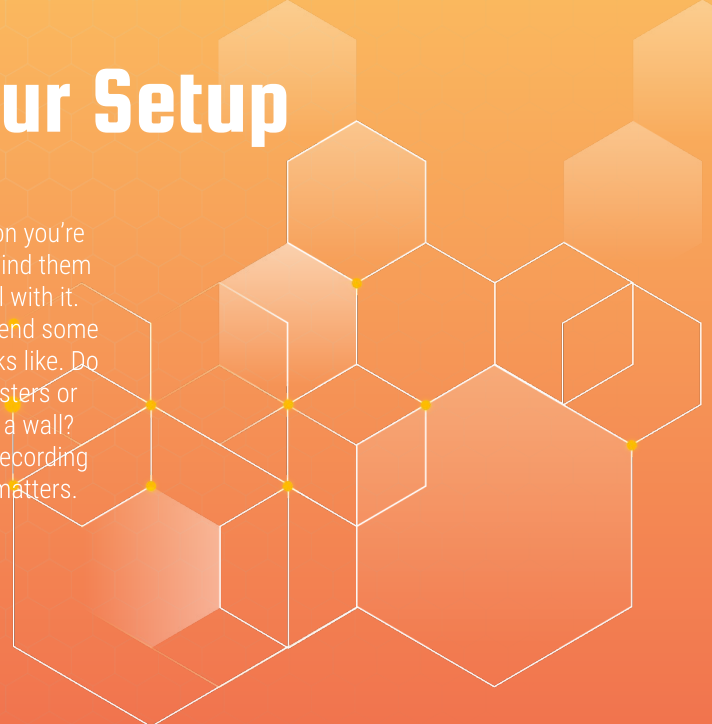
If the video from the interview is going to be used then you will need to be comfortable doing a little bit of pre-production.





Pay Attention to Your Setup

You can't control the background of the person you're interviewing. If they just have a white wall behind them or junk behind them you will just have to deal with it. However, you can control your own setting. Spend some time thinking about what your background looks like. Do you have a bookshelf or some interesting posters or anything that's more visually appealing than a wall? Then use it. Is the place you are planning on recording clean? If not, then clean it. The background matters.





Matching Your Setting to Topic

If you want to get really creative think about the topic of the interview and see if you have anything in your house you can add to your setting. Is it an interview about protecting yourself during the pandemic? Then see if you can have a mask in the foreground and maybe some cleaning supplies or rubber gloves in the background somewhere. Is it about entertainment? Then maybe you have a television or a bookshelf or a video game system in the background. This little bit of extra effort will make your video seem that much more professional.



Assignment #2

- Pick one of the story ideas you brainstormed last period.
 - Come up with a short list of people you would need to interview for the story.
 - Follow the steps we went over today and conduct interviews for the story.
 - Then, put the story together and we'll post it on our website.
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