Best Practices for Virtual Trojan Talks

Recruiting virtually is different than hosting an in-person event On-Campus and requires a unique approach. Below are a few best practices for hosting virtual events with Viterbi students.

How to set up a virtual event:
1. Request an event in [Viterbi Career Gateway](#)
2. Once your request is approved, the session is set up on a Viterbi Career Connections (VCC) account on either WebEx, Zoom, BlueJeans, or any other USC - platform.
3. VCC will provide you with the link to the event. Both employer representatives and students are required to register to participate in the session.
4. Once registered, follow the link on the date and time of your event and VCC will grant you access.
5. Once the session begins, VCC will make you a "Co-Host". This will allow you to share your screen to present content.
6. You will run and present your session.

Set yourself up for success:
Communicate as much information as you can about the event in advance. Students are more likely to register and engage in your virtual sessions when detailed information is provided.

- To captivate and engage attendees during the session, include the following information in the event description:
  - A brief overview of the topic.
  - An agenda for your session.
  - A company attendee list with position titles, alumni status, etc.
  - The student demographic you are targeting for this event (ex: Class level, majors, and sponsorship status).
  - The purpose of the event (ex: Actively recruiting, recruiting for 2021, for students to learn about your program(s), workshop on resume tips, etc.).

Set the tone at the beginning of the session:
Unlike an in-person event, students can't always see everyone on the screen, so take time to set the tone and introduce each representative who is present.

- Introduce all organization attendees at the beginning of the session.
  - Even if representatives aren't presenting, let students know who is there.
  - Include ice breakers during your session (Examples: your favorite movie, hidden talent or a fun fact about your experience at USC).
- Adding in an ice-breaker question / activity by announcing it at the beginning of the session. If you have a smaller session you could include a quick introduction with all of the participants.
- Decide how you would like to address students' questions. Examples: Let them know at the beginning of your session to put their questions in the chat box and you'll answer them at the end. Or you can tell them to unmute themselves and ask questions anytime throughout the session, or offer both options. You can choose what works best for you.
- Utilize the chat box to explain how you would like them to use it.
  - Private messaging - Send questions directly to a particular attendee.
  - Public messaging - Send questions that the whole group can view.

Engage with your audience throughout the presentation:
Remember that virtual events are unable to replicate the connection you make at "in-person" events. To keep your audience interested and invested throughout the virtual session, try customizing your event with the following suggestions:
- Use fun facts, jokes and personal anecdotes throughout your presentation to keep it light-hearted.
- Incorporate short and fun knowledge quizzes to build brand awareness. These activities help students stay focused and encourage active participation throughout the session.
  - Example: "Everyone guess and put your answer in the chat. How many people are saved every minute due to a Medtronic medical device?"
  - Use the chat box, Poll Anywhere, Kahoot!, or your favorite polling sites to improve active participation and engagement with you
- When possible, include practical, internal information on your organization, hiring process, etc. that is not easily found on a simple web research. Students appreciate obtaining information they believe are "insider tips" about your organization.
- Invite a recent hire or current intern who can share their experience with your organization, or invite someone in a leadership role to provide their perspective (Director, CEO, etc.)
- Utilize the breakout rooms on Zoom.
  - Create private video groups within the main session to increase active participation.

○ Pre-assign panelists or representatives to breakout rooms to meet with students in small sessions.

Managing student questions:

Allow at least one third of the session time for Q&A. One of the main reasons students join virtual sessions is to engage directly with the representatives. Allocating ample time for them to utilize the virtual face-time increases their interests in your company.

- To best prepare for your event, be ready to answer a variety of student questions. The amount of questions will also increase if multiple employees are part of the event.
- Examples of students questions:
  - What does a day-to-day life of your role look like?
  - What are the minimum requirements for being hired as an engineer?
  - What are the top 5 skills that you are looking for in an engineer?
  - Is there an opportunity for flexible schedules?
  - What's the typical work environment look like for an intern or full-time employee?
  - How much mentorship can a student get in an internship?
  - Are there courses that you recommend we take to be a competitive candidate?

- Managing questions:
  - Accept advance submissions through email or qualtrics that you can manage or you can request the VCC team to manage.
  - Invite students to submit their questions to the chat box for everyone to view or privately to the presenter or a designated person.

Provide the opportunity to follow up:

- Virtual sessions are unable to replicate engagement and networking that traditionally occurs after an in-person presentation. To increase the success of your event, provide information at the end of your presentation on how to follow-up and ways to connect with the presenters before you end the video.
- Provide the process on how students should follow up with you and share their appropriate contact information. Examples include:
  - Email.
  - LinkedIn profile.
  - Links to follow-up events / interviews.

    ○   Include links in the chat box with job application instructions

Virtual event content:
- Keep the presentation portion of the session short to provide more time for direct interaction between students and representatives (panel, open Q&A, etc.)
- Limit the use of video or external media to one or two clips that is under 2 minutes.
  - Test your media content with VCC before your session.
- Use infographics on slides to explain any complicated processes.
- Include Visual media such as fun photos throughout your presentation.
- Incorporate memes, jokes, quotes, and other engaging information in addition to the important information you want students to know.

Recording sessions:
Viterbi Career Connections prefers to record and post virtual sessions on Viterbi Career Gateway that allows students to access the content if they missed the event. Videos posted on Viterbi Career Gateway are only viewable to Viterbi students with an active account, the videos are not open to the public. If you do not wish to have your session recorded and posted, simply let VCC know.

Platforms Viterbi Career Connections utilizes:
- Brazen - Chat-based networking
- Zoom - Video meetings and presentations
- BlueJeans - Video meetings and presentations
- WebEx - Video meetings and presentations
- Qualtrics - Platform to submit questions in advance
- Skype - Video meetings and presentations