Ready? Camera Rolling… Action! Examining Interviewee Training and Practice Opportunities in Asynchronous Video Interviews

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Abstract

Asynchronous video interviews (AVIs) are becoming exponentially more common in the hiring landscape. Despite practical benefits to organizations, research demonstrates potential challenges for applicants, including lower performance in technology-mediated interviews, and a host of negative attitudinal reactions to AVIs. Given this, AVI companies often provide tips for applicants, and applicants often access online resources to improve their performance. To date, we know little about interventions that can mitigate negative applicant reactions and increase applicant performance in AVIs, or the mechanisms involved in such a process. In Study 1, 202 participants from Prolific were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions (in a 2x2 experimental design) and completed a 5-question mock AVI, to explore how an AVI training video and practice impacted a host of self-report behavioral (i.e., impression management; IM) and attitudinal (i.e., anxiety, attraction, fairness, usability) outcomes, as well as response length, structure of the response, and interview performance. Results indicated that practice had negligible effects. However, training was positively associated with fairness perceptions (particularly consistency) and interview performance. Moreover, mediation analyses indicated that trained interviewees provided more structured and longer responses, which led to higher performance. Study 2 offered a replication with a sample of 156 active job seekers (senior students and Prolific users). Training was associated with more structured responses, and through this, higher performance. Pre- vs. post-training comparisons for a sub-sample also showed performance improvements. Implications, limitations, and directions for future research are discussed.

Keywords: Asynchronous video interviews; training; impression management; interview anxiety; interview performance

Ready? Camera Rolling… Action! Examining Interviewee Training and Practice Opportunities in Asynchronous Video Interviews

Asynchronous video interviews (AVIs) are a new form of interview in which candidates are instructed to video-record their answers to a predefined set of interview questions, which are later reviewed and rated by the hiring organization (Lukacik et al., 2022). AVIs have become a prevalent tool many organizations use to screen or select job applicants, and their popularity has increased exponentially with the Covid-19 pandemic (Handler, 2020). For instance, HireVue, one of the largest providers on the AVI market, has demonstrated significant growth: from a mere 13,000 interviews hosted in 2012, to more than 24 million by the end of 2021 (HireVue, 2021). Initial AVI research showcased the many potential practical benefits of this modality for organizations, as they can be more flexible, faster, and cheaper to use than face-to-face or videoconference interviews (Brenner et al., 2016; McColl & Michelotti, 2019; Torres & Mejia, 2017). Despite this, studies demonstrate that AVIs are often perceived more negatively by applicants, including as less fair, less user-friendly, and less valid, leading to lower organizational attraction than traditional modalities and synchronous video interviews (Basch et al., 2020; Griswold et al., 2021; Hiemstra et al., 2019; Langer et al., 2017; Suen et al., 2019). Moreover, studies demonstrate that individuals tend to perform more poorly in technology-mediated (versus face-to-face) interviews more generally (Basch, Melchers, et al., 2021). Overall, applicants may encounter unique challenges in AVIs.

Many hiring organizations and AVI providers have attempted to alleviate these concerns in a number of ways, such as by providing applicants with more information, explanation, tips, training, or opportunities to practice before their actual interview. For instance, several AVI providers (e.g., HireVue, VidCruiter, ModernHire) have official webpages with AVI tips for

applicants.[1] There are also many YouTube videos, some of which have hundreds of thousands of views, with so-called best-practices, tips, or do's and don'ts for AVIs. However, despite these efforts to better prepare and explain AVIs to candidates, we know very little about the potential benefits and drawbacks of providing applicants with training, preparation opportunities, or advice – in other words, whether such initiatives work. In addition, we know little about the theoretical reasons *why* such interventions do or do not work – such as which applicant attitudes and behaviors are influenced, and the subsequent impact of these on performance. Some limited work has been done that focused specifically on explanations of AVIs and indicates that emphasizing AVI standardization and scheduling flexibility can improve fairness and usability perceptions, respectively (Basch & Melchers, 2019). While informative, this work was limited to participants' perceptions in an imagined scenario, where they did not complete an actual AVI, and was limited to a narrow set of attitudes about AVIs, versus applicant behaviors and outcomes. Turning to a focus on training, past research has demonstrated that training applicants for structured *in-person* interviews can help their performance without hurting interview validity (Maurer et al., 2001; Maurer et al., 2008; Tross & Maurer, 2008). While this indicates that training may be helpful, it is unclear whether such findings extend to AVIs, which are a unique modality in many ways (Lukacik et al., 2022). Indeed, findings from in-person interviews tend not to transfer systematically to technology-mediated interviews (Blacksmith et al., 2016).

Examining the value of AVI training is thus practically important for job applicants, many of whom are likely unfamiliar with this new interview format and technology. Given the aforementioned number of individuals accessing online resources regarding AVI preparation,

[1] See for instance: https://www.hirevue.com/blog/candidates/how-to-prepare-for-your-hirevue-digital-interview; https://vidcruiter.com/video-interviewing/how-to-ace-your-interview/; https://modernhire.com/8-tips-to-rock-your-video-interview/

this would indicate that many applicants want to know how to manage interview anxiety and improve their performance in AVIs. Understanding the impact of AVI training is also relevant for hiring organizations, because they are concerned with applicants' reactions (e.g., perceived fairness, organizational attractiveness) or behaviors (e.g., their use of deceptive impression management – IM) in AVIs. Indeed, it is well established that applicant reactions to the hiring process are critical for important hiring outcomes (Hausknecht et al., 2004; McCarthy et al., 2017). Consistent with this, Tippins et al. (2021, p. 18) recently called for more research examining what information should be provided to applicants, noting that "there is a largely unresolved issue about whether training for a video interview is possible, and if so, whether it produces invalid variance (faking/lying) or valid variance by ensuring candidates understand what is expected of them in the interview."

The present study contributes to the literature on employment interview training, interview practice, and AVIs in the following key ways. First, we build on prior work about interviewees' reactions (fairness perceptions, ease of use, and organizational attractiveness) and interview performance to examine if findings about training for in-person interviews (e.g., Tross & Maurer, 2008) and information about the benefits of AVIs (Basch & Melchers, 2019) extend to AVI training and practice. This would help organizations decide whether they should provide applicants with AVI-specific training and practice opportunities to facilitate more positive reactions. We also expand this work to include other theoretically and practically relevant affective and behavioral outcomes central in the interview literature: anxiety (McCarthy & Goffin, 2004) and use of IM behaviors (Bourdage et al., 2018; Levashina et al., 2014). This is important because both anxiety (Powell et al., 2018) and IM (Barrick et al., 2009; Ho et al., 2021) can influence interview performance ratings. Indeed, if providing training or practice

opportunities could help reduce anxiety or deceptive IM, while facilitating honest IM behaviors, it could benefit both applicants and organizations. Finally, we explore the mechanisms by which training can improve performance, for instance to what extent interviewees incorporate elements included in the training in their responses (e.g., structure responses using the Situation-Task-Action-Results model; Bangerter et al., 2014). In short, the present research represents a rigorous experimental approach to investigate the role of training and practice in AVIs, and the mechanisms and outcomes affected by such interventions.

Potential Benefits of Training and Practice in AVIs

In a recent conceptual model for AVI research, Lukacik et al. (2022) emphasized that decisions made by organizations (e.g., when designing AVIs) or interviewees (e.g., about how to complete their AVIs) can impact interview reactions and behaviors (e.g., fairness perceptions, anxiety, IM use), and ultimately interview outcomes (e.g., performance ratings, organizational attraction). In the next sections, we examine specifically how providing interviewees with AVI-specific training and practice opportunities can influence these important outcomes.

Applicant Reactions

Despite their growing popularity, AVIs are often associated with more negative reactions from applicants than in-person or even video-conference interviews. For instance, a recent survey of almost 650,000 applicants from 46 countries showed that AVIs were perceived as less effective and associated with lower satisfaction than video-conference interviews (Griswold et al., 2021). Theoretically, such negative reactions can be explained using Gilliland's (1993) theoretical model, which emphasizes how specific fairness or justice elements experienced by applicants during the selection process can trigger positive or negative reactions. By their very nature, AVIs should be associated with lower perceived interpersonal treatment (because there is

no two-way communication) and explanations (because no live feedback is offered), and thus could be associated with more negative reactions. Initial empirical evidence confirms such predictions: Because applicants have no opportunity to interact with an interviewer, they perceive AVIs to have lower social presence, to be less personal and "creepier", which results in lower perceptions of fairness and more limited opportunities to manage impressions (Basch et al., 2020; Langer et al., 2017; Muralidhar et al., 2020). Although most of this research was done before the Covid-19 pandemic, and reactions might have evolved as people were forced to rely more on technology-mediated forms of communication, such negative applicant reactions could be concerning for organizations. Indeed, more negative applicant reactions are associated with important outcomes, such as lower performance during selection or reduced intentions to accept a job offer (McCarthy et al., 2017).

Preliminary research has begun to examine how organizations could improve applicants' reactions to AVIs. For instance, in their model, Lukacik et al. (2022) suggested that introducing richer media content (e.g., a video introduction from the hiring organization, or recording of interviewers asking questions) could help improve reactions. In addition, in a scenario-based study where participants imagined doing an AVI, Basch and Melchers (2019) showed that explaining the benefits of AVIs (i.e., how AVIs can be valuable tools to increase the standardization and flexibility of the hiring process) improved interviewees' fairness and usability perceptions of AVIs. These positive reactions were associated with higher organizational attractiveness. Interviewees' perceived usefulness and, to a lesser extent, perceived ease of use are also central elements influencing their general attitudes toward AVIs (Brenner et al., 2016). These initial findings are, again, consistent with Gilliland's (1993) applicant reaction model, since the consistency of administration and equity elements are

emphasized. We thus argue that AVI training including information about the standardization of AVIs could similarly positively influence interviewees' perceptions of fairness.

In addition to emphasizing the benefits of AVIs, another option is to help applicants become more familiar and comfortable with the technology, for example by offering them training, coaching, or opportunities to practice. As noted above, many AVI providers offer training resources to job applicants. For example, VidCruiter's website includes a list of tips to succeed, including recommendations about how to position one's camera, what to wear, how to chose one's background, how to maintain eye contact, what to say (vs. avoid saying), or the importance of practicing. Both providing such information in a training session and offering applicants the chance to practice using the AVI platform before their actual interview should improve perceptions related to several element of Gilliland's (1993) reaction model. For example, providing information and advice in training materials could foster both the "formal characteristics" (e.g., by emphasizing the job relatedness or consistent of administration of AVIs) and the "explanation" (e.g., by providing information about how selection decisions are made in AVIs) components of the model. Offering a chance to practice using the AVI platform before completing their actual interview could also increase interviewees' perceived opportunity to perform, because they would be able to test their technology (e.g., webcam) and check that their environment is adequate, but also have a clearer understanding of how AVIs function, what is expected of them, and how to behave to obtain higher ratings.

In addition, the technology acceptance model (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000) suggests that users should view a specific technology as being more useful and easier to use if they perceive a positive subjective norm associated with it (i.e., believe that important people approve of it – which should be enhanced through AVI training) and have more experience using the technology

(which should be increased via practice with the AVI platform). Overall, we expect AVI training and practice to be associated with more positive applicant reactions:

Hypothesis 1. Interviewees provided with (a) AVI training and (b) practice opportunities will perceive their AVI to be fairer.

Hypothesis 2. Interviewees provided with (a) AVI training and (b) practice opportunities will report more positive AVI usability perceptions.

Hypothesis 3. Interviewees provided with (a) AVI training and (b) practice opportunities will be more attracted to the hiring organization.

Interview Anxiety

AVI training and practice could also help reduce interviewees' anxiety. Interview anxiety has been described as having five core dimensions (McCarthy & Goffin, 2004), all of which may be relevant in an AVI context (Lukacik et al., 2022). For instance, interviewees can experience communication anxiety given the one-way communication in AVIs or the absence of verbal or non-verbal feedback from interviewer. They can also experience appearance anxiety because they are concerned about how they will look on video, social anxiety stemming from the lack of social interaction, behavioral anxiety due to unfamiliarity with the technology, and ultimately performance anxiety caused by a lack of experience with a new technology. Interview anxiety is practically important for both applicants and organizations because it is negatively associated with interview performance (Powell et al., 2018), but unrelated to work performance (Schneider et al., 2019) thus potentially harming interview validity. Unfortunately, empirical evidence about the antecedents or outcomes of anxiety in AVIs is lacking (Constantin et al., 2021). A recent large-scale study with real applicants found that anxiety experienced in AVIs was negatively related to performance ratings (McCarthy et al., 2021). Another (experimental) study examined

experienced strain (which is conceptually similar to anxiety) in AVIs, and found that it was negatively related with interviewees' fairness perceptions, but unrelated to performance ratings (Basch, Brenner, et al., 2021).

We argue that training and practice opportunities might help reduce interviewees' anxiety in AVIs. For instance, providing interviewees with sample AVI questions or advice on how to best prepare and structure their answer them could help reduce communication and performance anxiety. Advice on how to look professional and confident in front of the camera could help reduce appearance and behavioral anxiety. Similarly, the opportunity to practice with the AVI platform before the actual interview might help interviewees become more familiar with the technology, understand how to make eye contact with the webcam, or how to manage the absence of an interviewer. This can possibly help reduce several dimensions of interview anxiety (McCarthy & Goffin, 2004), such as appearance, behavioral, or performance anxiety. In face-to-face contexts, although Tross and Maurer (2008) did not find any relationship between coaching comprehensiveness and interviewees' anxiety (but did see higher performance), Langer et al. (2016) provided preliminary evidence that a short virtual training can help decrease interview anxiety experienced in a subsequent interview. That being said, for the reasons above, we believe anxiety in AVIs may be particularly amenable to practice and training. As such, we expect:

Hypothesis 4. Interviewees provided with (a) AVI training and (b) practice opportunities will experience lower anxiety during their AVI.

Impression Management

There is limited evidence how of how interview training and preparation influences IM use in the in-person interview literature, with only a handful of studies demonstrating positive relationships between prior reported training and IM use (e.g., Bourdage et al., 2018; Kristof-

Brown et al., 2002; Schudlik et al., 2021). Yet, no research has examined this relationship in the context of AVIs, and only one of these studies (Schudlik et al., 2021) went beyond asking about interview training received in a general sense (i.e., yes/no). In general, AVIs might reduce interviewees' opportunities to use IM tactics, because there is no interviewer to build rapport with, who can ask follow-up questions to encourage specific IM tactics, or who reacts to interviewees' IM attempts (Basch et al., 2020; Lukacik et al., 2022). The one-way, asynchronous nature of AVIs might make it especially difficult to engage in tactics oriented towards the interviewer or hiring organization, such as ingratiation, although AVIs could still facilitate self-promotion – chances to attractively describe oneself.

Conceptually, the absence of a live interaction with an identifiable interviewer in AVIs can create uncertainty for job applicants, and trigger training/preparation-relevant reactions that can be understood through theories of accountability (e.g., Frink & Klimoski, 1998; Hall et al., 2017; Tetlock, 1985). Accountability refers to a situation were an actor's actions will be evaluated by an audience, leading to some form of reward or sanction, and thus motivating the actor to create a positive impression (Hall et al., 2017). Importantly, Tetlock (1985) argues that when an individual feels accountable to someone with unknown views or preferences, they become more motivated to consider arguments and evidence from multiple perspectives, and invest more efforts and resources to prepare themselves, with the hope of proposing a more convincing argument, looking more competent, and ultimately being evaluated more positively. Similarly, a job applicant invited for an AVI will be accountable to the hiring manager(s) who will ultimately review and score their recorded responses, but often ignore who they are or what their preferences or expectations are. Accountability research thus suggests that the applicant

should be more motivated to prepare themselves (e.g., through training or practice) in order to cope with this uncertainty and make a good impression.

Theoretical models of interview IM (Levashina & Campion, 2006; Roulin et al., 2016) posit that IM use depends on interviewees' willingness, capacity, and opportunity (vs. risks) to engage in such behaviors. We argue that providing interviewees with AVI training and a chance to practice can increase their capacity and willingness to use IM, and specifically facilitate their use of self-focused (e.g., self-promotion) or defensive (e.g., excuses, justifications) IM tactics. Yet, the effect might be different when examining honest vs. deceptive forms of IM, for example whether interviewees describe work experiences they truly possess vs. exaggerate, embellish, or invent them (Bourdage et al., 2018). Empirical findings are limited and mixed. For instance, Bourdage et al. (2018) found interviewees' self-reported training to be positively associated with honest IM use (e.g., honest self-promotion, ingratiation, and defensive IM), but relationships with deceptive IM were much weaker and non-significant (except to some extent for deceptive defensive IM). Schudlik et al. (2021) found no relationship between training and *intentions* to use honest or deceptive IM in one study, but some relationships with *self-reported* IM use in a second study (e.g., positive effects for watching online videos, but no effect for practicing).

Such relationships may depend on training content. If AVI training is focused on providing applicants with information about the technology, what kinds of questions to expect, or how to best organize one's answers, this should enable interviewees to use more honest IM tactics like self-promotion – which are important for applicant performance (Bourdage et al., 2018). This is consistent with earlier suggestions about in-person interviews by Palmer et al. (1999) that *preparation-driven* training or preparation materials (e.g., books) encourage applicants to conduct a self-assessment and identify ways to honestly describe ones'

qualifications in ones' answers. In contrast, interviewees who do not receive AVI training or practice will be less familiar with the technology or AVI-specific expectations, perceive the interview to be more difficulty, which can trigger using more deceptive IM (Bourdage et al., 2018). As such, we propose:

Hypothesis 5. Interviewees provided with (a) AVI training and (b) practice opportunities will use more honest IM but less deceptive IM in their interview.

Interview Performance

Research suggests that coaching or training can improve applicant performance in structured *in-person* interviews (Maurer et al., 2001; Maurer et al., 2008; Tross & Maurer, 2008). Even a short virtual training automatically delivered by a computer can help increase performance in a subsequent in-person interview (Langer et al., 2016). Maurer et al. (2008) also emphasized the value of providing trainees with the opportunity to practice, for instance as a way to try using the strategies taught in a training session before an actual interview. Although AVIs have become popular, no research has examined the potential benefits of AVI training and practice. While we expect the benefits observed in the in-person interview literature to apply to AVIs as well, training and practice opportunities could be especially important given that most interviewees likely are unfamiliar with this new technology (Lukacik et al., 2022). They might thus particularly benefit from receiving information about how AVIs function, what to do vs. avoid, as well as a chance to practice using the AVI platform before the actual interview. All this should ultimately help improve their performance in the interview.

Hypothesis 6. Interviewees provided with (a) AVI training and (b) practice opportunities will receive higher interview performance ratings.

Training, Behavioral Changes, and AVI Performance

Finally, we examine potential mediating mechanisms that may explain why training leads to increased performance. Specifically, providing AVI training might be particularly beneficial for interviewees if they are able to implement the advice and recommended behavioral strategies. Indeed, in-person interview training research shows that performance improvements are, in part, driven by an increase in knowledge or self-efficacy (Tross & Maurer, 2008) as well as by using response strategies taught as part of the training program (e.g., providing more organized responses or using humor; Maurer et al., 2001). Similarly, Langer et al. (2016) showed that attending a virtual interview training providing feedback on nonverbal behaviors was associated with subsequent interview performance, and this effect was mediated by the nonverbal behaviors interviewees used in their interview. In addition, interviewees who use more story-telling and structure their responses, for instance by applying the "STAR" technique (i.e. providing information about the situation and tasks they faced, the action they took and the results they obtained) are evaluated more positively by interviewers (Bangerter et al., 2014). Yet, while researchers have argued that interviewees could be trained to more effectively "tell their stories" (Ralston et al., 2003), this has not been directly empirically tested.

We thus propose to explore to what extent improvement in AVI performance for trained interviewees can be explained by behavioral changes associated with specific recommendations included in the training. For instance, AVI "best practices" recommendations provided to applicants often include using all the response time allocated to them, which is something not all applicants do (Dunlop et al., 2022), or structuring their responses. As such, our training included AVI-specific advice (based on prior research and online resources) about non-verbal behaviors and how to choose one's background, but also recommendations for interviewees about how to best prepare their response, take notes, and then use all the time allocated to them and effectively

structure their responses.[2] We thus predict that AVI training can effectively change applicant behaviors (providing longer and more detailed answers, structuring answers using the STAR technique) and indirectly lead to higher performance ratings.

Hypothesis 7. The positive relationship between AVI training and interview performance ratings is mediated by changes in behavior (i.e., use of STAR technique and providing longer answers) related to training content.

We describe below the steps we took to create a realistic AVI training video, conduct an initial pilot study designed to test reactions to the training video (in terms of perceived AVI self-efficacy and ease of use), and conduct two experimental studies to test our hypotheses (the first one with a sample of online participants from Prolific, the second one with university students and online participants actively looking for jobs/co-op placements).

Training Video Development and Pilot Study

Training Video

The training video was designed to be comprehensive, rigorous, include the types of information typically included by AVI providers, and be driven by evidence to date. For example, we incorporated information about what AVIs are and why they are used by organizations (e.g., to reduce costs and offer more flexibility), given many individuals would not have been exposed to AVIs in the past, and studies indicating that explaining the benefits of AVIs positively relates to applicant reactions (Basch & Melchers, 2019). We also incorporated common best-practice recommendations for applicants, such as choosing a quiet location with good lighting, avoiding distracting backgrounds, using the time available, how to dress professionally, or how to look at the camera and what non-verbal behaviors to use (vs. avoid)

[2] See our Online Supplement for illustrative examples of the AVI training content. https://osf.io/p8a6w/?view_only=aec437176af142188901953068246a69

when recording one's responses. The content was derived from recent AVI research (e.g., Basch, Brenner, et al., 2021; Langer et al., 2016; Lukacik et al., 2022) as well as instruction videos AVI providers (e.g., HireVue, VidCruiter) make available to job applicants. The training video also included more general information and advice about interview elements adapted from past interview research, such as the types of questions that can be expected (Maurer et al., 2001), using the STAR technique to structure one's responses (Bangerter et al., 2014), or using honest self-promotion strategies (Bourdage et al., 2018). At the end of the training, participants were asked to complete a 4-item questionnaire testing their knowledge of the content covered in the video. Only those scoring at least 3/4 were considered to have attentively watched the video, and their data was used in analyses.[3]

Pilot-Testing

Prior to conducting our main studies, we pilot-tested the training video with a sample of 50 U.S. participants (M_{age} = 36.80 *SD* = 9.44, 57% male, 74% White, 59% college-educated, 87% employed) recruited on Amazon Mechanical Turk. They were asked to complete two pre-training measures: a 5-item (α = .96) measure of AVI self-efficacy, adapted from Tay et al.'s (2006) interview self-efficacy measure, and a 7-item (α = .92) measure of AVI ease of use, adapted from Basch Melchers' (2019) ease or use and usefulness measures. They then watched the 16-minute training video and completed the 4-item knowledge test (46/50 participants scored 3 or more, and were used in analyses). Finally, they completed the same measures of AVI self-efficacy (α = .95) and ease of use (α = .92). Paired *t*-tests confirmed that participants' scores were higher post- vs. pre-training for both AVI self-efficacy (*M* = 3.70, *SD* = .90 vs *M* = 3.43,

[3] See online supplement for more information/examples about the training video content and the knowledge test. The supplement also includes the job description, full instructions, all the measures, BARS, behavioral coding categories, and anonymized datasets: https://osf.io/p8a6w/?view_only=aec437176af142188901953068246a69

SD = 1.08), *t*(45)=3.63, *p* = .001, *d* = .40, and ease of use (*M* = 4.14, *SD* = .77 vs *M* = 3.84, *SD* = 1.00), *t*(45)=3.59, *p* = .001, *d* = .53. This suggests that watching the training video made participants feel more comfortable with, and more confident in their ability to do well in, AVIs.

Study 1

Method

Sample

We recruited a total of 267 Canadian and U.S. participants from Prolific. They were compensated £5.50 (about USD $7) for completing a 35- to 55-minute study. In addition, as an incentive to encourage participants' motivation, the top 10% performers in the AVI received an extra £5. We eliminated participants for the following four reasons: (1) those who provided very incomplete responses or duplicates (e.g., the same individual completing the study multiple times using different Prolific accounts); (2) those who failed one or more of the two attention check items embedded in the post-interview questions (i.e., "I have never used a computer", "I can teleport across time and space"); (3) for participants in the training condition, those who obtained a score lower than 3 on the post-training 4-question quiz (see above); or (4) those whose video-recorded responses that were unusable (e.g., no image, no sound). This led to a final sample of *N* = 202.

Mean age was 35.10 (*SD* = 12.51). Participants had on average 13.77 (*SD* = 10.87) years of work experience, and participated in 10.04 (*SD* = 9.84) in-person interviews in their careers. The sample was 52% male, 45% female (with 3% other genders or not reported), 63% White, 7.5% Black, 15% Asian, 3.5% Latino (with 11% mixed-race or other races), 80% college/university-educated, and 75% were currently employed. Only 23.5% of participants had experienced an AVI, and 3% had received AVI training, prior to the study.

Procedure and Design

Participants were randomly assigned into one of four conditions, using a 2x2 between-subjects design with AVI training (yes/no) and practice (yes/no). Those in the training conditions watched a 16-minute training video. Those in the practice condition could practice using the AVI platform and recording their responses to two interview questions, which were similar to those used later in the actual interview. All participants read a job description for a project manager position, received general instructions to use the AVI platform, and then went through an AVI which consisted of 5 structured, past-behavioral interview questions. After the interview, all participants completed measures of honest and deceptive IM use, interview anxiety, fairness perceptions, ease of use, organizational attractiveness, as well as demographic questions. Response time for each question was recorded by the AVI platform. Trained research assistants watched the video-recorded responses and rated participants' performance on each question using Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales (BARS). Later on, we coded for the specific behavioral elements associated with the training content (i.e., use of STAR technique).

Measures

Fairness perceptions. We combined the nine items (α = .84) from Basch and Melchers' (2019) measures of perceived opportunity to perform, consistency, and global fairness. Items were slightly reworded to capture participants' experience instead of expectations (e.g., "I was able to show what I can do in the interview" vs. "I would be able to show what I can do in such an interview"). Responses were on a 1-5 scale (strongly disagree-strongly agree).

Ease of use. We combined the six items (α = .83) from Basch and Melchers' (2019) measures of perceived ease of use and usefulness. Items were also slightly reworded to capture participants' experience instead of expectations (e.g., "I found it easy to complete the video

interview" vs. "Completing a video interview would be easy for me"). Responses were on a 1-5 scale (strongly disagree-strongly agree).

Organizational attractiveness. We combined the ten items (α = .94) from Basch and Melchers' (2019) measures of general attractiveness and intentions to pursue (e.g., "I would accept a job offer from this company"). Responses were on a 1-5 scale (strongly disagree-strongly agree).

Interview anxiety. We used the MASI (McCarthy & Goffin, 2004), with slight adaptations to capture experienced anxiety during the AVI. We measured the anxiety facets relevant to an AVI context, including communication (6 items, α = .86, e.g., "I became so apprehensive in the interview that I was unable to express my thoughts clearly"), social (5 items, α = .87, e.g., "I became very uptight about having to record my responses for an interviewer"), performance (6 items, α = .93, e.g., "I was overwhelmed by thoughts of doing poorly when I was in the interview"), appearance (6 items, α = .86, e.g., "I felt uneasy about my appearance while recording my interview"), and behavioral (6 items, α = .85, e.g., "My mouth got very dry during the interview"). We also computed an overall anxiety score (α = .95). Responses were on a 1-5 scale (strongly disagree-strongly agree).

Impression management. Honest and deceptive IM were measured with versions of the HIIM-S and IFB-S (Bourdage et al., 2018) slightly adapted to the AVI context. Honest IM included 4-item measures for honest self-promotion (α = .71, e.g., "I made sure I emphasized my skills and abilities"), honest ingratiation (α = .90, e.g., "I discussed interests that I shared in common with the hiring organization"), and honest defensive IM (α = .78, e.g., "I gave reasons why I felt I benefited positively from a negative event I was responsible for"). We also computed an overall honest IM score (α = .85). Deceptive IM included 4-item measures for slight image

creation (α = .89, e.g., "I exaggerated my responsibilities on my previous jobs"), extensive image creation (α = .84, e.g., "I invented some work situations or accomplishments that did not really occur"), deceptive ingratiation (α = .86, e.g., "I tried to show that I shared the organization's views and ideas even if I did not"), and image protection (α = .77, e.g., "I tried to avoid discussing my lack of skills or experiences"). We also computed an overall deceptive IM score (α = .89). All responses were on a 1-5 scale (to no extent-to a very great extent).

Interview performance. Each interview question was designed to assess a competency derived from the job description (e.g., persuasion, initiative). We developed behaviorally anchored rating scales (BARS) to rate participants' interview performance (i.e., a score between 1 and 5) for each of the five questions. Three research assistants (RAs) received initial training on how to use the BARS, including scoring, together with one of the authors, the performance of a few participants. Then, RAs independently scored the responses from same 10 participants to assess inter-rater consistency. Each RA was later assigned a different set of participants to score. Finally, ten of the participants were randomly chosen and scored by the other RAs (the two who did not code them previously). Inter-rater consistency was assessed on the 20 participants scored by all three RAs. ICCs were excellent across the five interview questions (i.e., .90 for Q1-3, .96 for Q4, and .91 for Q5).[4] In this paper, we considered ICC values above the .75-.80 range to be good to excellent, consistent with previous recommendations (Koo & Li, 2016; Liljequist et al., 2019), and similar to those reported in previous interview studies (e.g., Bangerter et al., 2014; Heimann et al., 2021; Horn & Behrend, 2017).

[4] RAs also assessed participants overall performance with one item: "Based on whole the interview, I would evaluate this applicant positively" (1 - strongly disagree to 5 - strongly agree). However, this variable correlated .86 with the average score across the five questions. We thus only use the more structured approach in our analyses.

Use of STAR technique. The same three RAs were later trained to code the use of the STAR technique (situation-task-actions-results; e.g., Bangerter et al., 2014) by the applicant across the interview (0=no use, 1=seldom use, 2=frequent use, 3=systematic use; ICC = .82). We used the same general approach as for the performance scoring. We started with an initial training session including an introduction to the technique[5], practice videos to rate together, then assigning a set of 10 videos for all RAs to code independently to check initial consistency. The remaining videos were then assigned to one of the three RA, with an extra ten participants coded by all RAs. ICC (.82) was computed on 20 participants coded by all three RAs. In addition, we ensured that RAs were assigned different participants to code than those they scored previously to alleviate potential concerns associated with common-method variance. For instance, if participant #125's interview performance was scored by RA1, their STAR use was coded by RA2 or RA3.[6]

Response length. The AVI platform automatically recorded how much time interviewees spent reading and answering each interview question (in seconds). We computed the average across all questions. Interviewees were provided with a maximum of 180 seconds to complete each question (including a combination of up to 60 seconds to read the question/prepare their answer and up to 120 seconds to record their answer). This design is consistent with a recent study with over 600,000 job applicants (Dunlop et al., 2022), showing that about 90% of AVIs included 60 seconds or less of maximum preparation time, and about 79% included 120 seconds

[5] For instance, we explained that "S" involves the interviewee's describing the situation or context where their experience took place, "T" describing the task(s) they had to perform or the responsibilities they had in that situation, "A" describing the actions they took, decisions they made, or behaviors they engaged in, and "R" describing the results or outcomes of that experience – for themselves, their team, or their organization.

[6] RAs also coded how formally the participants dressed for the AVI, the quality of the video recordings, para-verbal and non-verbal behaviors participants used (e.g., looked at the camera, smiled), and the type background used (i.e., distracting vs. neutral/quiet). However, we focus on the STAR element since it is the behavioral outcome more likely to be impacted by training, especially in a mock interview with online panel participants (who do not have the time, motivation, or opportunity to change the way they dress or their background just for completing a study).

or less of maximum response time. Moreover, our interviewees spent on average 146.17 seconds per question (or 81% of the total maximum time allocated), which is also consistent with findings from Dunlop et al. (2022), who reported that job applicants in such AVIs use about 81% of their allocated preparation time and 72% of their allocated response time.

Results

Hypothesis Testing – Main Effects

Descriptive statistics and correlations between our study variables are presented in Table 1.[7] We tested hypotheses 1-6 using a MANOVA, with training and practice as independent variables and all key outcomes (perceived fairness, usability, organizational attractiveness, anxiety, honest and deceptive IM use, and performance ratings) as dependent variables. Results showed an overall main effect of training, $F(7, 183) = 2.57$, Wilks' $\Lambda = 0.91$, $p = .015$, $\eta^2 = .09$. However, there was no main effect of practice, $F(7, 183) = 0.78$, Wilks' $\Lambda = 0.97$, $p = .61$, $\eta^2 = .03$ and no interaction, $F(7, 183) = 0.84$, Wilks' $\Lambda = 0.97$, $p = .56$, $\eta^2 = .03$. Table 2 includes the results of follow-up analyses for between-subject effects, as well as means and standard deviations, for each of our four experimental conditions for each outcome.

Consistent with H1a, interviewees provided with AVI training ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 0.73$) reported higher fairness perceptions than those who did not receive training ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 0.75$), $F(1, 189) = 3.85$, $p = .05$. We also examined the different facets of the broader fairness measure, and found that the positive effect of training was only observed for the perceived consistency facet ($p = .01$) but not for opportunity to perform or global fairness. However, contrary to H1b, there was no effect of practice opportunities, $F(1, 189) = 0.38$, $p = .53$.

[7] Detailed correlations between training/practice and facets of applicant reactions, anxiety, and IM can be found in the online supplement.

Contrary to H2ab, neither training, $F(1, 189) = 0.95$, $p = .33$, nor practice, $F(1, 189) = 0.88$, $p = .35$, were associated with improvements in AVI usability perceptions. Similarly, interviewees provided with training, $F(1, 189) = 0.20$, $p = .66$, or practice, $F(1, 189) = 0.38$, $p = .54$, were not more attracted to the hiring organization. H3a and b were thus unsupported. Neither training, $F(1, 189) = 0.01$, $p = .92$, nor practice opportunities, $F(1, 189) = 0.00$, $p = .98$, helped lower interviewees' anxiety during their AVI. Follow-up analyses also showed that neither were related to any of the anxiety facets. H4a and b were thus also unsupported.

Interviewees provided with training did not report using significantly more honest IM than those who did not receive training ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 0.84$ vs. $M = 3.20$, $SD = 0.72$), $F(1, 189) = 2.65$, $p = .10$. Similarly, trained interviewees did not report using significantly less deceptive IM than untrained ones ($M = 1.61$, $SD = 0.68$ vs. $M = 1.80$, $SD = 0.72$), $F(1, 189) = 3.45$, $p = .07$. Taken together, although the effects were in the expected direction, H5a was not supported. Contrary to 5b, the effect of practice on both honest IM, $F(1, 189) = 0.34$, $p = .56$, and deceptive IM, $F(1, 189) = 0.06$, $p = .81$, were not significant. We further explored how training or practice influenced interviewees' use of each type of IM tactic separately, using ANOVAs (see Online Supplement for detailed results and descriptive statistics). Participants who received training (vs. untrained) used more honest defensive IM ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 1.10$ vs. $M = 3.12$, $SD = 1.10$), $F(1,216) = 5.25$, $p = .02$. However, there was no significant main effect of training for the other IM tactics, although differences were in the expected direction for honest self-promotion ($p = .08$), image protection ($p = .06$) and deceptive ingratiation ($p = .07$). There was no main effect of practice or interaction for any of the tactics.

Importantly, consistent with H6a, interviewees who were provided with AVI training received higher interview performance ratings than those who did not ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 0.79$ vs.

M = 3.34, *SD* = 0.74), *F*(1, 189) = 6.58, *p* = .01. Conversely, interviewees offered the opportunity to practice did not receive significantly higher ratings that those who did not (*M* = 3.57, *SD* = 0.73 vs. *M* = 3.37, *SD* = 0.81), *F*(1, 189) = 3.48, *p* = .06. H6b was thus not supported (although the difference was in the expected direction).

Hypothesis Testing – Mediation Analyses

Hypothesis 7 predicted that the positive impact of training on performance would be mediated by interviewee behaviors related to training content, with a focus on responding using the STAR technique and providing longer responses. Above, we found that training was positively associated with interview performance. Separate ANOVAs showed that training (but not practice) was also positively associated with our two behavioral outcomes: response length, *F*(1, 198) = 12.07, *p* = .001 and the use of the STAR technique, *F*(1, 198) = 7.89, *p* = .005. In addition, we note that all data points came from different sources (i.e., AVI training was manipulated, average response length was automatically captured by the AVI platform, STAR and performance were rated by RAs – but by different RAs at different times). Given this, we examined whether performance could be considered as an indirect outcome of training, mediated by response length and STAR use.

We examined two parallel mediations using Model 4 in PROCESS (Hayes, 2022). Results are presented in Figure 1. We found that the effect of training on performance was fully mediated, both via response length and use of the STAR technique. More precisely, we found significant paths between training and response length (*ß* = .48) and response length and performance (*ß* = .27), but also between training and STAR use (*ß* = .39) and STAR use and performance (*ß* = .40). The indirect effects of AVI training on performance via response length (*b* = .11, *SE* = .05) and STAR use (*b* = .13, *SE* = .05) were also significant. In other words, in

support of Hypothesis 7, people who received the AVI training provided longer responses and incorporated systematically more of the STAR elements, and thus obtained higher performance scores when assessed by trained raters using BARS.[8]

Exploratory Analyses

There were a few additional noteworthy correlations between AVI behaviors and outcomes (see Table 1) that can enhance our understanding of AVIs. For instance, interview anxiety was associated with lower fairness perceptions (r = -.38, p < .001), lower ease of use (r = -.45, p < .001), less honest IM use (r = -.31, p < .001), and more deceptive IM use (r = .23, p < .01). Moreover, our findings suggested that different sub-groups of interviewees might have different reactions to – or behaved differently in – AVIs. For instance, older interviewees used the STAR technique less consistently (r = -.17, p =.02) and performed less well in the AVI (r = -.21, p < .01). Male interviewees perceived the AVI platform to be easier to use than their female counterparts (M = 3.66, SD = 0.77 vs. M = 3.38, SD = 0.93, t(194) = 2.38, p = .02), experienced less anxiety (M = 2.36, SD = 0.85 vs. M = 2.72, SD = 0.95, t(194) = 2.80, p < .01), and used slightly more honest IM (M = 3.38, SD = 0.77 vs. M = 3.15, SD = 0.81, t(190) = 2.06, p = .04) and deceptive IM (M = 1.78, SD = 0.77 vs. M = 1.58, SD = 0.57, t(191) = 1.98, p = .05). Finally, across IM tactics, we found that only honest self-promotion use was associated with interview performance (r = .19, p < .01 – see Online Supplement for details).

Study 2

A main limitation of our initial study was the reliance on a sample of online respondents that were not pre-screened to be active job seekers. Despite the financial compensation and

[8] We also tested two alternative models using Model 6 in PROCESS with response length and STAR in a serial mediation. Results are included in our Online Supplement, but were equivalent to those presented above.

performance-based bonus system, their motivation might not have been equivalent to that of more active job seekers – for instance, this may have attenuated the size of the effects of training or practice. As such, Study 2 aimed to replicate the core findings of Study 1 using a sample of active job seekers (e.g., senior university students actively looking for job or internship opportunities, completing the study as an opportunity to practice their AVI skills and prepare for real interviews, and Prolific users actively looking for jobs). Given the findings of Study 1 indicated that training possessed much more promise than practice, we focused solely on the training component in this follow-up study.

Methods

Sample

We recruited a total of 177 participants. We started with three groups of students at a large Canadian University: (1) 30 senior undergraduate students in Engineering; (2) 32 Master students in Engineering; (3) 3 senior undergraduate students in psychology. All participants were 4th or 5th year students approaching graduation and looking for a full-time job, or 3rd year students looking for an internship as part of their program. Engineering students were recruited via email with the help of an Engineering Career Centre, and compensated CAD $25 (about USD $18) for completing a 35- to 45-minute study. Psychology students were recruited through a research participation platform, and received course credit. The top 10% performers received an extra $25. We then supplemented this data with 112 Prolific respondents pre-screened for being active job seekers. They were compensated £8 (about USD $10) with the top 10 performers receiving an extra £8 (i.e., doubling their compensation). We used the same data screening process as in Study 1, leading to a final sample of N=156 (with 60 students and 96 Prolific users).

Mean age was 31.03 (*SD* = 11.58). Participants had on average 9.69 (*SD* = 10.39) years of work experience and participated in 8.26 (*SD* = 10.39) in-person interviews in their careers. The sample was 62.8% male, 34.6% female (with 2.6% other genders or not reported), 43.6% White, 10.3% Black, 34% Asian, 7.7% Latino (with 4.4% Indigenous, mixed-race or other races), and 61.5% were currently employed. Almost half (47.4%) of participants had experienced an AVI, but only 7.7% had received AVI training, prior to the study.

Procedure and Design

The procedure and design were largely consistent with Study 1, with a few key changes. First, we replaced the project coordinator role by a project engineer (for engineering students) or manager (for psychology students and Prolific) job for a Canadian (and well-known) oil and gas company, to make the job more attractive. Second, we slightly revised the interview questions, so that they matched the new job requirements. More precisely, we swapped the questions about customer service and persuasion for questions about communication and planning/organization (the other three questions remained the same), and we created new BARS to evaluate responses to these questions. Third, we revised two questions of the training understanding test, to make it more difficult and thus ensure participants truly paid attention to the training content. Fourth, participants were randomly assigned to a training or control condition, but we eliminated the practice component (given the findings of Study 1). Finally, to ensure that all participants had a chance to receive the AVI training (and potential benefit of the study), those in the control condition were invited (but not required) to watch the training video after completing all the measures. All participants were also invited (but not required) to complete three "bonus" AVI questions (the two removed from Study 1, as well as one about leadership) at the study's end.

Those extra question can be used to test differences in interview performance pre- vs. post-training for participants assigned to the control condition.

Measures

We used the same scales as in Study 1 to measure fairness perceptions (α = .84), ease of use (α = .80), organizational attraction (α = .95), interview anxiety (α = .94), honest IM (α = .91), and deceptive IM (α = .93). Like in Study 1, response length was automatically captured by the AVI platform as the total time interviewees spent on each question, and then averaged across all questions. We used a similar approach to Study 1 to rate interviewees' use of the STAR technique and interview performance with three exceptions: (a) we used two separate teams of two trained graduate research assistants for rating STAR and interview performance; (b) more videos were rated by both raters to check ICCs (i.e., for 73 participants in total - and we used the average scores in analyses for those cases); and (c) to obtain a more precise measure of STAR usage, raters coded whether interviewees covered or did not cover (1/0) each of the four S-T-A-R elements for each question, and we then computed an average across all elements across the five questions. Internal consistency was good for the overall STAR score (ICCs = .88, with ICCs for specific S-T-A-R elements ranging from .67 to .91). Interrater consistency was also good for interview performance (ICCs = .78, .74, .78, .81, and .69 for the five main interview questions, and .87, .78, and .84 for the three extra questions)

Results

Hypothesis Testing – Main Effects

Descriptive statistics and correlations between our study variables are presented in Table 3. We tested hypotheses 1-6 again using independent *t*-tests, with training as our independent variable and all key interview outcomes as dependent variables (Table 4). Largely similar to

Study 1, but contrary to H1-5, results showed no differences between the trained and untrained participants on any of the self-reported outcomes (i.e., perceived fairness, ease of use, organizational attractiveness, interview anxiety, and honest or deceptive IM). We also examined specific IM tactics, and only found a small difference for deceptive ingratiation, with higher use for trained vs. untrained interviewees (M = 2.14, SD = 1.11 vs. M = 1.83, SD = 0.95, p (one-tailed) = .03, d = .30). Contrary to the findings of Study 1 (and H6), training was also not *directly* associated with interview performance ratings.

Hypothesis Testing – Mediation Analyses

We again examined parallel mediations using Model 4 in PROCESS (Hayes, 2022) to test Hypothesis 7. Results are presented in Figure 2. Contrary to Study 1, training was unrelated response length (ß = -.01). However, response length was positively associated with performance ratings (ß = .29). Consistent with Study 1, we found significant paths between training and STAR use (ß = .36) and STAR use and performance (ß = .23). We found a significant indirect effect of AVI training on performance via STAR use (b = .06, SE = .03), but the indirect effect with response length was not significant (b = -.00, SE = .04) and. Taken together, we only found partial support for Hypothesis 7 in Study 2.

Pre- vs. Post-Training Differences

The unique design of Study 2 also allowed us to test the effect of AVI training (and indirectly practice) in a second way. We examined whether the participants in the *control condition* who decided to watch the training video after completing their initial (5-question) AVI changed their response strategy and improved their performance when answering the extra three AVI questions (post-training). In short, these individuals had an initial interview for practice, before engaging with the training and doing a second interview. Out of the 86 participants in the

control condition, 30 watched the training video, "passed" the post-training knowledge test (answered at least 3 of the 4 questions correctly) and subsequently recorded responses to the extra questions. Paired-sample *t*-tests results showed that those interviewees used the STAR technique more post-training (M = .94, SD = .11) than pre-training (M = .86, SD = .11), $t(29)$ = 3.14, p = .002, d = .57. They also received higher performance ratings post-training (M = 3.42, SD = .72) than pre-training (M = 3.00, SD = .59), $t(29)$ = 3.48, p = .001, d = .64. As a comparison, the 44 participants in the *training condition* who also answered the extra AVI questions did *not* use the STAR technique more (p = .36, d = .06) and did *not* receive higher performance ratings (p = .22, d = .11) in those extra questions (i.e., confirming that the extra AVI questions were not easier or more prone to using STAR). These findings provide some *indirect* support for Hypothesis 6, suggesting that AVI training was still beneficial in Study 2, but only after interviewees had the chance to extensively practice using the AVI platform.

Exploratory Analyses

Table 3 shows a few noteworthy correlations between AVI behaviors and outcomes in Study 2, largely similar to Study 1. For instance, interview anxiety was associated with lower fairness perceptions (r = -.33, p < .001), lower ease of use (r = -.42, p < .001), and more deceptive IM use (r = .18, p = .03). Like in Study 1, male interviewees experienced less anxiety than female interviewees (M = 2.47, SD = 0.83 vs. M = 2.75, SD = 0.93, $t(150)$ = 1.96, p = .03). Unlike in Study 1, we found no gender difference in honest or deceptive IM use, and only a small, non-significant difference for perceived ease of use. Like in Study 1, across IM tactics, we found that only honest self-promotion use was (marginally) associated with interview performance (r = .16, p = .06 – see Online Supplement for details).

General Discussion

Main Findings and Theoretical Implications

Over the last few years, AVIs have emerged as a new screening and selection tool, which are generally perceived as cost-effective by organizations (Lukacik et al., 2022; Torres & Mejia, 2017), but are not always viewed positively by applicants (Griswold et al., 2021; Langer et al., 2017; Suen et al., 2019). It is therefore important to better understand what triggers such negative reactions, and to develop ways for organizations to improve them. Building on prior work showing the benefits of training for in-person interviews (e.g., Maurer et al., 2001; Maurer et al., 2008) or how information about AVIs can improve applicant reactions (Basch & Melchers, 2019), the present study examined how AVI-specific training and practice opportunities can influence interviewees' reactions, behaviors, and performance in AVIs.

In terms of interviewees' self-reported reactions, perceptions, or behaviors, our findings were generally mixed. Interviewees who received training perceived the AVI to be (slightly) fairer than those who did not receive training in Study 1, as they viewed the process as more consistent. Yet, this effect was not confirmed in Study 2. Across both studies, training did not improve perceived ease of use or organizational attraction. And, practice had no (direct) effect on any of the outcomes. These findings are only partly consistent with those of Basch and Melchers (2019), who showed that emphasizing the standardization and flexibility of AVIs increased participants' fairness and usability perceptions, and indirectly organizational attractiveness. However, Basch and Melchers (2019) only asked their participants to read a scenario (including their information manipulation), to imagine they were invited for an AVI, and then to report what their anticipated reactions would be. In contrast, participants in our study watched a 16-minute training video with only a small portion dedicated to AVI standardization and flexibility, actually completed a 5-question AVI, and then reported their reactions. We also used specific

jobs in real organizations, which means that attraction to the hiring organization (e.g., intention to pursue) were higher across conditions in our study (e.g., M = 3.99 in Study 1, 3.49 in Study 2 vs. 2.99 in Basch and Melchers, 2019). That said, our findings suggest that the positive effects of informing interviewees about the benefits of AVI (e.g., flexibility or standardization) are perhaps more limited, or short-lived, when they are made less salient (i.e., presented alongside other information and advice) and/or when individuals actually experience an AVI. It could also be that the positive effects of informing job seekers about the benefits of AVI on reactions were stronger when AVIs were still largely an unfamiliar technology. However, AVIs have grown in popularity over time. Indeed, only 2% of participants in Basch and Melchers's (2019) study had prior experience with an AVI. That number was 23% in our Study 1 and 47% in Study 2.

Neither training nor practice had any impact on interviewees' experienced anxiety, and this was true across all forms of interview anxiety from McCarthy and Goffin's (2004) typology in both our studies. Although disappointing, for instance when compared to promising preliminary evidence from virtual training (Langer et al., 2016), these findings are consistent with prior work done in in-person interviews (Tross & Maurer, 2008). Our results suggest that a short, video-based training might not be sufficient to help reduce interviewees' anxiety. In addition, our training content was not specifically focused on addressing interview anxiety. One counter-argument might be that our participants were not particularly anxious given that it was a mock interview. However, anxiety levels reported by our participants were only slightly lower than those reported in a recent large-scale survey with real applicants (McCarthy et al., 2021). In addition, we found that interview anxiety was negatively related to perceived fairness, perceived ease of use, and honest IM, but positively associated to deceptive IM. Interestingly, relationships between anxiety and fairness were almost identical to those reported by McCarthy et al. (2021).

And the relationships between anxiety and IM were similar to those observed recently in in-person interviews (Powell et al., 2021). Overall, our findings thus add to our understanding of how interviewees experience anxiety in AVIs, and thus contribute to the emerging literature on applicant anxiety in technology-mediated interviews (Constantin et al., 2021) and how this is associated with other important interview variables.

The relationships between training and IM use were largely small and inconsistent. In Study 1, we found only a small positive effect of training on the use of honest defensive IM. In other words, the information and advice provided in the video helped interviewees defend their qualifications when questioned (i.e., likely in the interview question asking them to describe an experience when they received negative feedback). And in Study 2, we found only a small positive effect of training on the use of deceptive ingratiation. Although the training encouraged interviewees to honestly describe their qualifications and highlight their fit with the hiring organization, the company was in the oil and gas sector, which might have forced some interviewees trying to implement the advice provided to exaggerate their degree of person-organization fit in their responses. Overall, our findings only partially confirm propositions about the role of AVI design elements on applicant IM (Lukacik et al., 2022). Consistent with theoretical models of IM (Levashina & Campion, 2006; Roulin et al., 2016), this suggests that other elements, such as individual differences, may play a larger role in interviewees' capacity and willingness to use IM in AVIs. Interestingly, in both our studies, honest and deceptive IM in general were largely unrelated to interview performance ratings (although honest self-promotion specifically was positively related to performance). Evidence from past in-person interviews research shows that honest (but not deceptive) IM is associated with higher interview performance ratings or chances to obtain a job (Bourdage et al., 2018; Ho et al., 2020). And

preliminary evidence from AVI research seem to concur (Roulin et al., 2022). Moreover, organizations mostly value honest IM but cannot effectively detect when applicants use deceptive tactics (Jansen et al., 2012; Roulin et al., 2015). As such, more extensive training programs might be needed to advise interviewees on how to best portray themselves in AVIs. Ideally, such training show encourage honest IM use, but discourage deceptive IM use (which can happen when applicants engage in interview preparation; Schudlik et al., 2021). However, the results with IM and anxiety could point to the importance of covering less material or focusing on more specific elements to target those variables (e.g., target training directly on IM or anxiety to aid in retention/improvement).

Finally, our results confirm that training can help perform better in AVIs, just like training or coaching can be beneficial for in-person interviews (Maurer et al., 2001; Maurer et al., 2008; Tross & Maurer, 2008). This effect was particularly salient in Study 1. In that initial study, we additionally found that positive effect of training on performance was fully mediated by interviewees' response length and their use of the STAR techniques. In other words, interviewees who followed the advice provided in the training, and provided more detailed and better-structured answers, were rewarded by interview raters. The benefits of training were less clear in Study 2, although we replicated the indirect effect of training on performance via the use of the STAR technique (but not response length). We also found evidence for pre- vs. post-training differences in performance. It is important to note that raters were blind to which training condition participants were in, unaware of the content of the training video, and instructed to assess performance using BARS, which is a central element of structured interviews (Levashina et al., 2014). Our findings thus expand prior work showing the benefits of structuring interview responses (e.g., using structure and storytelling; Bangerter et al., 2014) by

demonstrating that such strategies can be effectively trained. In contrast, we found only very limited benefits to providing interviewees with practice opportunities in Study 1. Indeed, practice was only weakly (and non-significantly, at $p = .06$) associated with interview performance. Yet, as we mentioned above, in Study 2, there were improvements for those in the control (who were given "practice" before viewing the video and doing a second interview), which could indicate that practice could have some benefit when more substantial and given prior to the training (perhaps allowing a context for the training). In addition, as we discuss in more detail in our *limitations* section below, the more limited findings for practice could be due to the use of online panel participants and mock interviews, possibly limiting interviewees' motivation to spend extra time on practice questions.

Overall, the weaker effects of training on performance observed in Study 2 vs. Study 1 could be due to several factors. First, we relied on graduate students in I/O psychology with expertise in AVIs as raters for Study 2. They could have been stricter in their evaluations than the more novice undergraduate psychology students used in Study 1, thus limiting the effect of training. Indeed, performance ratings were lower in Study 2 than Study 1 (Ms = 2.94 vs. 3.59). Second, data from Study 1 was collected in 2021, whereas data from Study 2 was collected in 2022-23. AVIs have become more commonplace over time, such that a larger proportion of participants had prior AVI experience in the second study, thus possibly limiting the unique benefits of the training provided here, and indicating that training may be more valuable for those newer to AVIs.

Practical Implications

This study has a number of practical implications. Our findings show that a short training video like the one created in this research can help improve various outcomes important for job

applicants, hiring organizations, and AVI providers/vendors. For instance, applicants should be encouraged to spend time collecting information about AVIs, for instance via training material provided by hiring organizations or AVI providers, because this can help increase their AVI self-efficacy (as we found in our pilot study), better structure their answers, and ultimately increase their performance in AVIs. As such, job seekers using training resources provided by hiring organizations or AVI vendors (as long as the content is designed properly) could increase their chances of performing better and obtaining a job. This also indirectly benefits organizations, helping them assessing video-responses from applicants who are better-prepared, more confident, but also perceive the AVI process to be fairer. While applicant interview anxiety, IM use, or organizational attractiveness were not directly influenced by AVI training, they were associated with fairness perceptions, suggesting that there might be additional indirect benefits to training. Moreover, it is possible that training directly targeting those variables can be effective.

Hiring organizations should, by themselves or in collaboration with AVI providers, provide resources like training videos for job applicants, and encourage applicants to use them, since it can help applicants provide longer and more structured responses, and ultimately perform better. Of course, the content of the material provided also likely matters. Our training included a combination of information about why organizations value AVIs (e.g., flexibility, consistency, lower costs), elements unique to AVI that interviewees should consider (e.g., checking one's technology, being mindful of one's background, how to interact with one's webcam), AVI-specific advice (e.g., how to dress, non-verbal behaviors, time management), and general interview advice (e.g., what questions to expect, how to structure responses). AVI vendors and/or hiring organizations might also benefit from developing their own training content focusing on providing the "right" type of advice to applicants. For instance, our training provided suggestions

for interviewees to emphasize their qualifications or fit, without engaging in exaggeration or inventions. This generally worked (although to a moderate extent) in Study 1. Yet, this was less effective in Study 2, where we observed higher deceptive ingratiation for trained interviewees. This is practically important because past research has found that when applicants search for (and use) various forms of interview preparation by themselves, it can result in more deceptive IM (Schudlik et al., 2021). In addition, it is possible that some of the training elements we included are more beneficial than others, that more engaging or interactive training activities (even fully virtual, like in Langer et al., 2016) would be more effective than a mere video, or that a longer and more comprehensive training or coaching programs could be more impactful (similar to in-person interviews; Tross & Maurer, 2008). Yet, our findings show that a short video, which is less resource-intensive to develop for organizations or vendors and less time-consuming for applicants, can already be valuable.

Lastly, organizations should be aware that applicants use somewhat different IM tactics in AVIs as compared to traditional in-person interviews. As predicted by Lukacik et al. (2022), the one-way communication involved in AVIs somewhat limits opportunities to use other-focused tactics like ingratiation, but still allows interviewees to use self-focused tactics like self-promotion or defensive IM. Hiring professionals or managers in charge of rating AVI recordings might initially be surprised by differences in response content as compared to what they might be used to from in-person interviews. Organizations could thus consider providing training to raters too, especially when using AVIs for the first time. They should also ensure that this does not put some applicants at a disadvantage. While our study shows that AVI training can help applicants, organizations should also consider the impact of completely replacing traditional face-to-face interviews (or video-conference interviews) with AVIs.

From an applicant perspective, this research also implies that there are several things that applicants can and should do to improve their performance. For example, where possible, craft longer and more detailed responses. Moreover, it appears that the things that contribute to performance in in-person interviews are similar to those that contribute to performance in AVIs. For instance, applicants should structure responses to behavioral questions using the STAR technique (Bangerter et al., 2014), and engage in additional honest self-promotion (Bourdage et al., 2018), by thinking of ways to attractively and honestly highlight one's skills and abilities. Finally, if the AVI company or hiring organization provide a training video or preparation materials, they should take the time to view these. This advice is in accordance with other research indicating that candidates should use the opportunities provided to them (but many do not) such as the opportunity to re-record answers (Roulin et al., 2022).

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study is associated with a number of limitations, which should be addressed in future research. We relied on online panel participants (Study 1) and students or panel participants currently looking for jobs (Study 2) completing a mock AVI. This might not fully replicate the stakes of an AVI in a real selection context, where actual job applicants can experience more anxiety, be more concerned about the fairness of the interviewing process, but are also more motivated to impress raters and perform to land a job. While we used real companies and (slightly adapted) real job descriptions in our experiments to enhance realism, this still does not guarantee that all participants were interested in (or a good fit for) the roles. In addition, we attempted to increase motivation by including not only a base compensation for all participants, but also a bonus for the top performers (i.e., the top 10% performers in both studies could almost double their compensation). Yet, this certainly does not replace the motivation

induced by the chance to secure a real job. The relationships between IM, anxiety, and interview performance in the present research (especially in Study 1) were largely similar to those observed in prior in-person interview research (e.g., Bourdage et al., 2018; Ho et al., 2020; Powell et al., 2021; Powell et al., 2018), which is reassuring. Future research could explore how to best replicate our findings using real job applicants interviewing for a position they are fully interested in. For instance, it might be that the benefits of interview training (or even practice) are stronger in a high-stakes selection context. That said, there could also be methodological and ethical concerns to consider. For instance, it might be unethical to conduct a between-groups experiment (i.e., with a training vs. control group) if this means providing an unfair advantage to some applicants (trained) vs. others (control). This could be particularly problematic if training is less accessible for some (e.g., minority, equity-seeking, or historically disadvantaged) groups, for instance if completely random assignment to conditions could not be guaranteed. Perhaps more importantly, there could be social desirability issues when asking real applicants to complete measures of fairness, anxiety, or IM (especially deceptive IM), as they might be concerned it would impact their chance to get the job and thus could engage in under/over-reporting.

We used a short (16-minute) training video and (in Study 1) two practice questions. We attempted to increase the realism of the training material, and thus the external validity of our findings in several ways. The content of the video was derived from the interview literature, as well as real advice provided by AVI providers on their websites. We included visual elements (i.e., PowerPoint slides with voice-over, as well a small video window with the “trainer”) to make the content engaging. The “trainer” in the video had prior experience working on television. And, we implemented a test to ensure that participants paid attention to the training content. We have evidence that participants attended to the training material. For instance, in

Study 1, participants in the training condition also took significantly more time to complete the study (M = 55.56 minutes, SD = 17.43) than those in the no-training condition (M = 34.33 minutes, SD = 17.12), $t(198) = 8.68$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.23$, consistent with the time to watch the 16-minute training video and complete the test. Yet, it is possible that a longer, more comprehensive, or more professional-looking training program could have a larger impact on interviewees' reactions or behaviors.

Similarly, although we found no effect for practice on any of our outcomes in Study 1, perhaps it takes more than two practice questions (or more time between the practice and the actual interview) to impact interview outcomes. Although participants in the practice condition could try out the AVI platform with two questions, we did not offer them the opportunity to review their responses, and did not specifically ask them to reflect on their performance. Future studies could explore if adding such features might help interviewees self-regulate, which could lead practice to have a stronger effect on performance. Tross and Maurer (2008) found that more comprehensive in-person interview training led to more interview knowledge and, indirectly, higher interview performance. Similarly, future research could examine whether implementing longer AVI training and/or more practice opportunities can result in better interview outcomes for interviewees. For instance, the pre- vs. post-training results from Study 2 suggest that training might be particularly beneficial when it complements more extensive practice.

We report exploratory analyses highlighting some differences in terms of general behaviors in AVIs (e.g., male experiencing less anxiety and using more IM than female interviewees). However, our research was not specifically designed to examine sub-group differences in relation to AVI training (or practice), and we did not have enough participants from different racial groups to properly test this. Past work examining interventions aimed at

improving reactions to AVIs (Basch & Melchers, 2019) also did not examine sub-group differences. Yet, as suggested by Lukacik et al. (2022), individual differences (e.g., based on age, gender, race, but also cultural background, socio-economical status, disability, etc.) should play an important role in how interviewees react to, behave in, and ultimately perform in different types of AVIs. Past research also suggests that online training outcomes can be influenced by trainer-trainee (subjective or objective) similarity (Behrend & Thompson, 2011). Therefore, we encourage future research to directly explore how to design training interventions that benefits all applicants and/or examine specific training content targeted for specific groups.

Finally, the present study focuses on interviewee-oriented outcomes, like anxiety, IM use, reactions, or performance. Of course, such outcomes are indirectly relevant for hiring organizations too. For instance, applicant reactions are associated with intentions to accept a job offer (McCarthy et al., 2017) or could influence other potential applicants through word-of-mouth (Stockman et al., 2020). Yet, it remains unclear whether the positive relationship between AVI training and interview performance benefits or harms organizations. Our results were generally mixed. Study 1 findings showed that training was associated with more of (some types of) honest IM but (slightly) less deceptive IM use. Yet, this was not the case in Study 2. Conceptually, organizations should benefit from interviewees using more honest but less deceptive IM, since it should provide them with more reliable information about interviewees' qualifications to make an accurate decision (Bourdage et al., 2018). There is also evidence that interviewers expect and value applicants using honest, but not deceptive, IM (Jansen et al., 2012). And, interviewers are generally unable to detect when interviewees are using deceptive IM (Roulin et al., 2015). The fact that trained interviewees provided longer and more structured answer (i.e., using the STAR technique) should also help interviewers assess their qualifications

(Bangerter et al., 2014). Moreover, in-person interview training can help improve both interviewees' performance and the reliability and validity of the interview (Maurer et al., 2008). Yet, future research could directly examine how AVI training influences interview validity.

Conclusions

The present study provides initial evidence that offering interviewees to watch a short video-based AVI training can positively influence attitudinal (fairness perceptions, but not anxiety) and behavioral (some types of IM use, interview performance) outcomes. In contrast, offering preparation opportunities seemed to have limited impact. Our findings expand on past research showing the effectiveness of training/coaching for in-person interviews (e.g., Tross & Maurer, 2008) or via computer-generated feedback (Langer et al., 2016), highlighting that training can also benefit interviewees, and indirectly hiring organizations, in AVIs.

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Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Between Main Variables (Study 1)

		M	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	Training	-	-															
2	Practice	-	-	.01														
3	Age	35.10	12.51	-.12	.02													
4	Gender	0.54	0.50	-.01	-.00	-.03												
5	Ethnicity	0.62	0.49	-.11	.01	.25**	.00											
6	Int. experience	10.04	9.84	.06	.09	.33**	.04	.18**										
7	AVI experience	0.52	1.47	.04	-.05	.01	.10	.03	.20**									
8	Perceived fairness	3.63	0.74	.14*	.03	.06	.10	-.10	.04	.03								
9	Ease of use	3.54	0.86	.09	.05	-.01	.17*	-.09	.01	-.05	.58**							
10	Org. attraction	3.77	0.68	.02	-.06	.00	-.04	-.09	-.05	-.02	.32**	.26**						
11	Interview anxiety	2.54	0.92	-.00	-.02	-.10	-.20**	-.02	-.11	-.09	-.38**	-.45**	-.01					
12	Honest IM	3.26	0.79	.12†	.02	-.03	.15*	-.01	.18*	.12†	.25**	.29**	.13†	-.31**				
13	Deceptive IM	1.71	0.71	-.15*	-.03	-.12†	.14*	-.06	-.01	.17*	-.04	-.02	.06	.23**	.14†			
14	Response length	146.17	54.42	.24**	.03	-.06	.02	-.10	.07	-.03	.06	.11	.14†	-.09	.13†	-.11		
15	STAR technique	2.43	0.71	.20**	-.01	-.17*	-.15*	-.13†	-.06	-.06	.05	.04	-.01	.05	.05	-.08	.44**	
16	Int. performance	3.59	0.84	.16*	.13†	-.21**	-.06	-.07	.01	-.05	.15*	.16*	.00	-.09	.09	-.06	.51**	.54**

Note: N = 202. Gender: 0 = female, 1 = male; ethnicity: 0 = non-White, 1 = White; int. experience = number of prior in-person interviews done; AVI experience = number of AVIs done prior to this study; Response length = Average response length (across questions) in seconds; † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 2. Effect of AVI Training and Practice on Interview Outcomes (Study 1)

	No Training				Training				ANOVAs					
	No Practice		Practice		No Practice		Practice		Training		Practice		Interaction	
										partial		partial		partial
	M	***SD***	***M***	***SD***	***M***	***SD***	***M***	***SD***	***F***	η^2	***F***	η^2	***F***	η^2
Self-reports														
Perceived fairness	3.51	0.64	3.52	0.84	3.67	0.81	3.79	0.66	3.85†	.02	0.38	.00	0.25	.00
Ease of use	3.41	0.91	3.56	0.97	3.56	0.87	3.65	0.65	0.95	.01	0.88	.01	0.04	.00
Org. attractiveness	3.79	0.70	3.71	0.71	3.81	0.65	3.77	0.68	0.20	.00	0.38	.00	0.04	.00
Interview anxiety	2.58	0.86	2.53	0.96	2.52	1.02	2.56	0.91	0.01	.00	0.00	.00	0.09	.00
Honest IM	3.24	0.63	3.15	0.82	3.27	0.84	3.49	0.83	2.65	.01	0.31	.00	1.75	.01
Deceptive IM	1.76	0.62	1.84	0.82	1.67	0.72	1.55	0.65	3.45†	.02	0.06	.00	0.97	.01
Recorded by AVI platform														
Average response length	133.63	52.97	135.77	57.55	157.88	52.64	161.80	49.50	10.63**	.05	0.15	.00	0.01	.00
Rated by research assistants														
Use of STAR technique	2.29	0.70	2.33	0.73	2.60	0.66	2.60	0.68	8.19**	.04	0.04	.00	0.04	.00
Interview performance	3.29	0.81	3.39	0.67	3.47	0.81	3.77	0.75	6.58*	.03	3.48†	.02	0.82	.00
N	52		52		42		47							

Note: $N = 192$ (based on a MANOVA with listwise deletion). $^{\dagger}p < .10$; $^{*}p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Between Main Variables (Study 2)

		M	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	Training	-	-														
2	Age	31.03	11.58	-.01													
3	Gender	0.64	0.48	.21*	-.10												
4	Ethnicity	0.40	0.49	.02	.35**	-.11											
5	Int. experience	8.26	8.94	-.01	.34**	-.08	.17*										
6	AVI experience	1.09	1.52	.03	-.19*	-.10	-.14†	.07									
7	Perceived fairness	3.85	0.71	.01	.13	.09	-.07	.06	.05								
8	Ease of use	3.68	0.84	-.04	.13	.13	-.09	.02	.01	.60**							
9	Org. attraction	3.49	0.80	-.07	.22**	.24**	-.07	.04	-.11	.43**	.37**						
10	Interview anxiety	2.57	0.87	.02	-.31**	-.16†	-.04	-.15†	.08	-.33**	-.42**	-.24**					
11	Honest IM	3.19	0.90	.01	.21**	.05	-.12	.08	.15†	.39**	.42**	.31**	-.15†				
12	Deceptive IM	1.84	0.86	.11	-.04	.07	-.21*	-.13	.21*	.10	.15	.11	.18*	.40**			
13	Response length	149.42	52.17	.04	-.17*	-.08	-.12	-.22**	-.06	.16†	-.03	.06	-.03	-.01	-.10		
14	STAR technique	0.88	0.11	.17*	.20*	.13	-.00	-.01	.01	.10	.06	.08	-.05	.17*	.04	.14†	
15	Int. performance	2.94	0.71	.02	.03	-.04	.02	.02	.08	.09	.02	-.10	.01	.08	.09	.34**	.27**

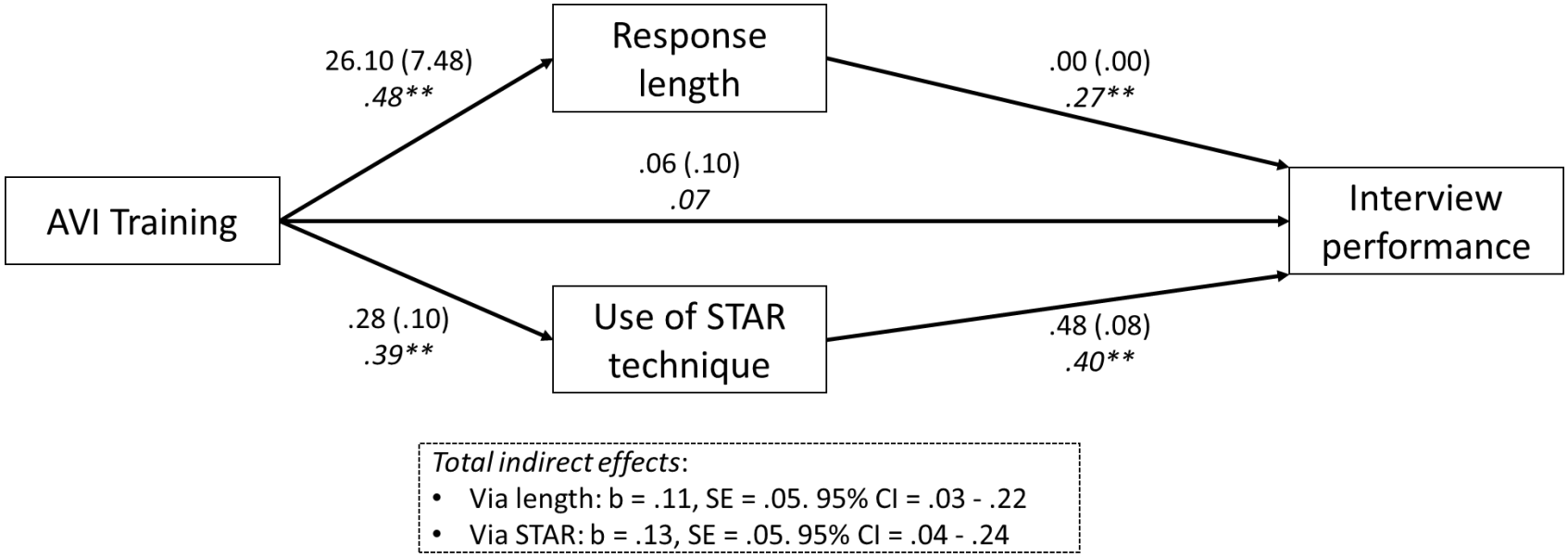
Note: N = 156. Gender: 0 = female, 1 = male; ethnicity: 0 = non-White, 1 = White; int. experience = number of prior in-person interviews done; AVI experience = number of AVIs done prior to this study; Response length = Average response length (across questions) in seconds; † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 4. Effect of AVI Training on Interview Outcomes (Study 2)

	No Training		**Training**		**Difference testing**		
	M	***SD***	***M***	***SD***	***t***	***p***	***d***
Self-reports							
Perceived fairness	3.84	0.68	3.86	0.76	0.12	.45	.02
Ease of use	3.71	0.87	3.65	0.81	-0.43	.34	.07
Org. attractiveness	3.37	0.78	3.23	0.73	-1.17	.12	.19
Interview anxiety	2.56	0.91	2.59	0.83	0.19	.42	.03
Honest IM	3.18	0.97	3.20	0.82	0.13	.45	.02
Deceptive IM	1.75	0.82	1.95	0.90	1.37	.09	.22
Recorded by AVI platform							
Average response length	147.51	53.01	151.77	51.40	0.51	.31	.08
Rated by research assistants							
Use of STAR technique	0.86	.11	0.90	.11	2.23	.02	.35
Interview performance	2.93	0.70	2.95	0.73	0.22	.41	.04
N	86		70				

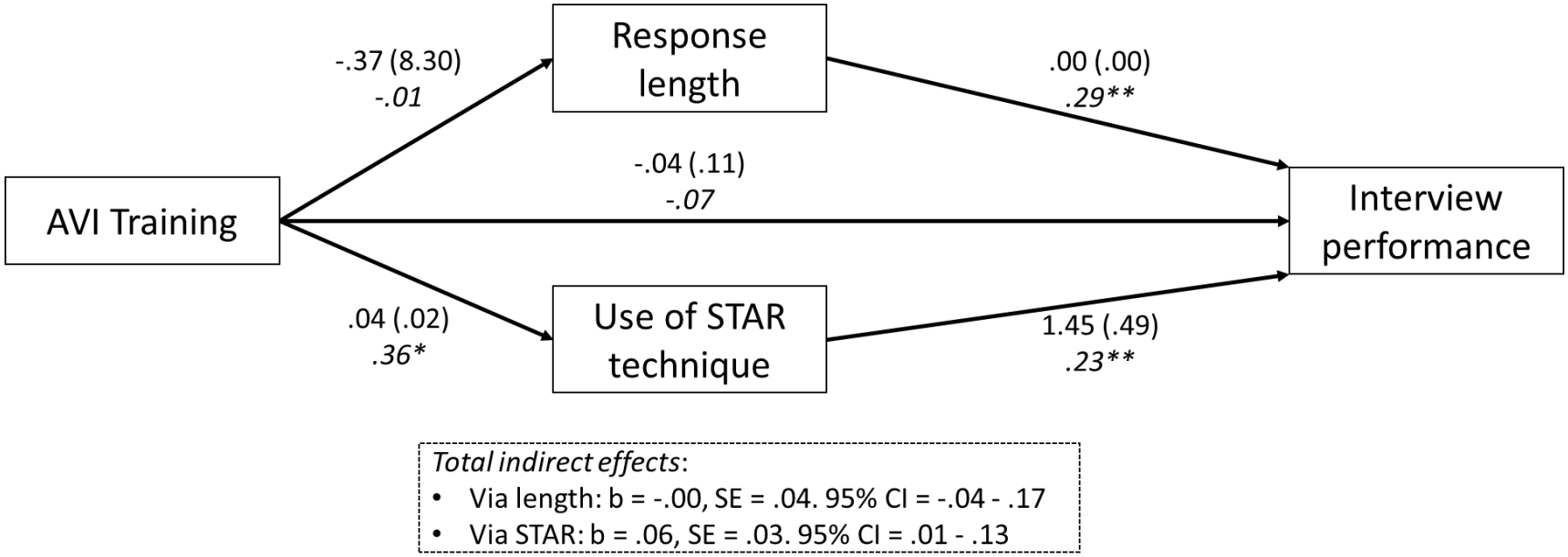
Note: N = 156 (based on independent *t*-tests, with one-tailed *p*-values).

Figure 1. Mediation Model (Study 1)



Note: N = 202; Based on PROCESS model 4, using 5000 bootstrap samples; reported values include unstandardized estimates with standard errors (top line) and standardised Betas (bottom line). R^2 = .04 for use of STAR technique, .06 for response length, and .36 for interview performance.

Figure 2. Mediation Model (Study 2)



Note: N = 149; Based on PROCESS model 4, using 5000 bootstrap samples; reported values include unstandardized estimates with standard errors (top line) and standardised Betas (bottom line). R^2 = .03 for use of STAR technique, .00 for response length, and .16 for interview performance.