

Using your virtual exchange experience, try writing about your own experience in the formats we covered during the webinar.

### Application Essays

#### Prompting Questions

- How has this experience helped your decision to go into your field of interest?
- What skills did you learn from your virtual exchange and how do those connect to what you hope to study?
- How did you grow as a result of your virtual exchange?

Try writing about your own experience on a sheet of paper!

One experience that I have had that really encouraged me to grow was a virtual exchange program that I participated in with an organization called World Learning. During this program, other students and I participated in a virtual intercultural exchange focused on specific problems in our communities. My group was made up of young people from many different countries and backgrounds. I had never spoken or worked with so many different people. We created a small community and learned a lot from various perspectives. I learned how to communicate with others who are different than me. The program really opened my eyes to looking at the world from a different lens. I think this program challenged me and helped me to grow, and I look forward to bringing that sense of open minded collaboration to your institution.

### Resume Writing

Bullet point formula: Action verb + details + result/impact

Communicated with 7 international young people in 8 virtual dialogues focused on youth civic engagement, resulting in multicultural learning and professional relationships.

Write your own bullet points about your experience:

_____	+	_____	+	_____
_____	+	_____	+	_____
_____	+	_____	+	_____

### Interviewing

#### STAR Method (Situation, Task, Action, Result)

- **Situation** - Set up the situation you were in. Specifics are important.
- **Task** - Be clear about what the task that YOU had to accomplish (even if in a group setting).
- **Action** - What actions did you take? This should be the focus of the answer.
- **Result** - What happened at the end? Your story is not complete without an ending.

Try writing out your interview answer about your own experience on a separate sheet of paper, and then, practice it out loud!

- S: I participated in a virtual exchange during my junior spring semester. In this program, students formed international teams to identify social challenges and create entrepreneurial solutions.
- T: Our main focus was communicating with our international/virtual team and accomplishing multiple tasks towards achieving our goal.
- A: I tried to get to know my international partners as well as I could. I asked questions, shared information about myself, tried to establish some communication norms and ways to work together. We had to make some adjustments for cultural differences, but in the end I was really proud of the project we put together.
- R: Not only did we complete our project, but I gained multiple skills, including communicating with an international team, problem-solving, and working with technology platforms.

### Resources

- For Applications: College Board, Sample Essays, Ask for help from parents, teachers, and peers
- For Resumes: Action Verbs, Sample Experiences, Sample Resumes, Ask career center professionals, advisors, parents, etc.
- For Interviews: Sample Interview Questions, Mock Interviews, Record yourself and ask others for feedback.



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# Stevens Initiative

## Share your Alumni Success Story!

Help us help you! The Stevens Initiative is very proud of the impact that virtual exchange has had on the young people who participate in its programs and we want to help you share your story about how your exchange experience had made an impact in your life! Do you have a story to share, professional or personal, about your success? Please follow the tips below and share your Alumni Success Story with us at [stevensalumni@aspeninstitute.org](mailto:stevensalumni@aspeninstitute.org).

### TIPS FOR YOUR ALUMNI SUCCESS STORY

#### Do Include:

- Your full name, age, country, city, professional level (secondary school student, university student, working full time/part-time, etc.).
- Your virtual exchange program's information: Program name, description of your program, program dates and location, and your international partners.
- A description of your exchange program's impact on your current success: Write about what skills you developed, connections you made, lessons you learned, or other program results. Be sure to describe how these outcomes are present in your life now or how they helped you achieve a goal.
- A description of your accomplishments and successes, because this story highlights you!

#### If possible, also include:

- A photo of you (a headshot or portrait) and an "action shot" of you either during the virtual exchange or of the impact you describe. Photos should be original size/high resolution (as high quality as possible).
- A link to a posted video, picture, or recording that relates to your story. Because of file size restrictions, please upload the media online (e.g., Dropbox or Google Drive) and then share the link with us.
- A link to your specific virtual exchange program's social media accounts.
- Your social media contact information if you would like those to be shared publicly.

### WHEN WRITING YOUR STORY:

- Keep it brief, two to three paragraphs, or 350-500 words.
- Tell your story in a way that can be understood by people who might not be familiar with the Stevens Initiative.
- Think about these questions to guide your writing:
  - What meaningful insight or unique perspective can I provide about my virtual exchange program and how it affected my life?
  - Who were you before your program and who are you now? What is the difference and how did your exchange contribute to that change? Why are you writing this story?
  - What makes you stand out from your peers? How did your program change your outlook or goals?
  - Do you feel like you have developed global competence or skills that have prepared you for the global workforce? How?

**Need inspiration?** Check out examples of great success stories from exchange alumni of other State Department-sponsored programs at <https://alumni.state.gov/alumni-news/alumni-stories#> or at Stevens Initiative projects, [www.stevensinitiative.org/impacts/](http://www.stevensinitiative.org/impacts/).

**Need help?** Reach out to us and we can work with you to develop your story or fine tune it. Email us at [stevensalumni@aspeninstitute.org](mailto:stevensalumni@aspeninstitute.org) and write "Alumni Success Story Help" as the subject.



[www.stevensinitiative.org](http://www.stevensinitiative.org)



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