

# Help Me to Find A Job: An Analysis of Students' Delivery Strategies In Video Resume

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**Abstract:** Delivery strategy is paramount in presentations regardless it is employed using video recording or live presentation. Nevertheless, demonstrating appropriate delivery strategies is challenging for many presenters, mainly when video recorded. The present study analyses tertiary level students' delivery strategies when they were required to prepare video resumes. More specifically, the objectives of the study are to identify intonation, body language and creativity that the students demonstrated in preparing the materials. Using descriptive research design, the study analysed 21 video resumes, specifically evaluating students' delivery strategies. The results of the study showed that there were challenges in using intonation and demonstrating appropriate body language among the students during the recorded presentation. The study also found that students tended to be less creative since they had limitations in using resources to prepare the video resumes. The study implies that students need to sharpen their delivery strategies as preparing effective video resumes may provide better employment chances.

**Keywords:** Delivery strategy, Employment, Video resume

## 1. Introduction

Recent technological advances have resulted in introducing a new type of resume, which is the video resume. It is a short video-recorded message in which job applicants present themselves to recruiters and potential employers and elaborate on their academic qualifications, competencies and skills, as well as previous work experiences (Gissel et al., 2013; Hiemstra et al., 2012). Research into video resumes has not been able to keep up with the rapidly growing interest with which organisations and applicants adopt these kinds of new, internet-based technologies. Issues that need to be considered when introducing new technologies in high-stakes selection include, among other things, the effective delivery strategies that students use to distinguish themselves more from other applicants. In an attempt to fill this void, this paper investigates the delivery strategies used by students in video resumes, including tone of voice, body language, and creativity. In doing so, it attempts to add to our understanding of the use of video resumes as a technological innovation in personnel selection.

Rapid developments in digital technologies present new opportunities and implications for screening based on video resumes. Video resumes have emerged and are increasingly popular in Europe and the United States (Hiemstra et al., 2012; Oostrom et al., 2013; Silverman, 2012), urging more research. More specifically, a literature search in Scopus in April 2019 showed that since 2010, there have only been 15 studies on the subject of video resumes. Of these 15 studies, eight were written in the last five years, indicating growth in researchers' attention to video resumes. However, this growth in research is still limited and somewhat disproportionate when one compares this to the development of video resumes in practice. For example, according to a survey in February 2017, 5.53 million hits were found on YouTube for the keyword video resume (Apers & Derous, 2017). In September 2021, 551,000,000 results were found for the keyword video resume on Google. Indeed, studies have already mentioned that the use of video resumes is widespread among job applicants (Hiemstra et al., 2012; Nguyen & Gatica-Perez, 2016; Waung et al., 2015), but the subject of video resumes is little explored in studies (Ryan & Derous, 2016), and therefore considered here.

Many studies posed a positive attitude towards video resumes as it allows applicants to present their traits, talents, and, most importantly, motivation for specific positions (Apers & Derous, 2017). According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), employability skills can be defined as the skills, knowledge, and competencies that enhance a person's ability to secure and retain a job, progress at work and cope with change (Graham, 2017). Employability skills may implicate and reflect employment opportunities, especially among new graduates (Tanius, Johari, Yulia, Siong, & Pazim, 2019). According to Malaysian Employers Federation executive director Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan, video resumes are an out-of-the-box method that will grab attention, especially in the current soft labour market (Yuen, 2019). The LinkedIn communications head for South-East Asia and North Asia, Linda Lee, emphasised that video resumes can be used for relevant roles such as social media and content marketing jobs as it is a great way to showcase applicants' expertise and achievements (Yuen, 2019). Therefore, it is the role of higher education institutions (HEIs) in Malaysia to prepare students for the workplace demands. This includes the preparation of video resumes for job applications.

Video resumes are verbal reports of the job applicant's biographical information, including academic background, relevant work experience and extracurricular activities, comparable to the written biographical information in paper resumes (Cole et al., 2005). The objective of creating video resumes is to make a first impression. In Malaysia, graduate unemployment has become a national concern (Koe, 2019). Therefore, the government, academics, and non-governmental organisations have put forth a wide range of efforts to help improve graduates' employability skills. Still, the graduate unemployment rate remains high (Jumreornvong, et.al, 2020).

The current study attempts to evaluate the delivery strategy employed by the undergraduate students taking the final English course at one of the universities on the East Coast of Malaysia. Specifically, it investigates three components when students deliver information about themselves. These are voice, body language and creativity. In evaluating voice, they are assessed on their abilities to use intonation and pacing when delivering information about their skills and academic background. Meanwhile, they needed to demonstrate appropriate postures, gestures, and facial expressions for body language. They are also evaluated on their creativity. Specifically, the organisation of information about themselves and the use of transition are assessed for the scores in creativity.

Having said that, the current study was conducted to answer the following research questions.

- Research Question 1 : How do students use voice, intonation and pacing in their delivery when producing video resumes?
- Research Question 2 : How do students use body language, postures, gestures, and facial expressions when delivering content of video resumes?
- Research Question 3 : How do students employ creativity, organisation, and transition as elements in delivery strategy when producing video resumes?

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Design

A descriptive research design was employed in the current study. Fluet (2021) states that the design can be utilised for qualitative and quantitative research. The former enables researchers to explore a more in-depth understanding of certain phenomena, while the latter assists researchers in collecting quantifiable information for statistical analysis (Fluet, 2021). Using the method for qualitative inquiry in the current study enables the researchers to answer the "how" of delivery strategies that the students demonstrate. For quantitative exploration, it helps to quantify the students' scores as raters evaluate their recorded presentations.

#### 3.2 Research Sample

A total of 21 video resumes were selected as the samples in the current study. In particular, purposive sampling was employed to select the videos the respective students emailed to their instructors. During the data collection period, the students who produced the video resumes took an English course, namely English for Professional Communication in Semester 1 2018/2019. These students were in an intact group, and all of the videos sent were included in the study. The researchers sought consent from the students to use the materials in analysing their delivery strategies.

#### 3.3 Research Instrument

The formulation of the research instrument is based on the rubric for Assessment 3 of Mock-Job Interview. The overall scores for the assessment are 130 marks with 95 marks for interview and 30 marks for video resume. The evaluation for video resumes is divided into three (3) parts: 1) 'Language' that constitutes ten marks, 2) 'Content' which contains ten marks, and 3) 'Delivery' that has ten marks. However, the present study discusses only the third criteria, i.e. Delivery of the evaluation. In other words, it focuses on the use of voice, including intonation and pacing. The body language is assessed in postures, gestures and facial expressions. Finally, creativity is evaluated based on the students' organisation and transitions during their delivery. They are given 1 to 3 marks for voice and body language in terms of scoring. "1" is for Poor, "2" for Average and "3" is for Good. While 1 to 5 is the marks for creativity. Figure 1 shows the components of delivery in a video resume.



**Fig. 1** Components of delivery strategies assessed in producing video resumes  
*Source:* UHL2432 English for Professional Communication Assessment 3:

## Video resume marking scheme

### 3.4 Data Collection Procedures

For the data analysis, a total of five raters were selected to evaluate the video resumes. They were among the instructors that taught the subject for several semesters. Before the rating process was conducted, they were required to watch all the video resumes. This was meant to familiarise them with the set of data. Next, raters were briefed on the focus of the study to only look at the delivery strategies. A marking form was given to all of them where they were required to rate the video resumes. They were also required to rate the presentation based on the three-point rating scales.

### 3.5 Data Analysis Procedures

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the quantitative data obtained in the current study. In particular, frequency (f) was employed to analyse the quantitative data. At the same time, content analysis was employed to analyse the qualitative data. For the latter, thematic coding was used to formulate themes when reporting the research findings. The method records or identifies texts or images having common themes or ideas that allow researchers to index the texts into categories (Gibbs, 2007).

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Use of voice, intonation and pacing in delivery when producing video resumes

The first research question is intended to investigate how the use of voice, intonation, and pacing can hold the audience's interest and attention in video resumes. The raters gave the marks to find out how students used their voice, intonation and pacing to keep the audience's interest and attention in watching their video resumes. The Rating scale "1" (one) refers to Poor, "2" (two) for Average and "3" (three) is for Good. The students were assessed on their delivery in the video resume according to three (3) components: voice tone, intonation, and pacing. In voice tone, they were required to use clear voice while intonation should be appropriate with the message they wanted to convey. Finally, in pacing, the students are expected to balance the time they spend on each part of the video.

Based on the results, four (4) students obtained excellent scores, 14 students obtained average scores, and another two (2) students obtained poor scores. The four (4) students who received excellent scores are Participant 6, Participant 17, Participant 18, and Participant 21. A theme is formulated concerning students who obtained excellent scores, namely "Delightful Intonation". Raters have remarked their presentation with "*intonation is good*", "*good intonation*", "*good tone*", and "*good intonation and tone*". Meanwhile, the majority of the students obtained average scores from the raters. They are Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, Participant 4, Participant 5, Participant 7, Participant 8, Participant 11, Participant 13, Participant 14, Participant 15, Participant 16, Participant 19, and Participant 20. As for the average scorers' category, two (2) notable themes were formulated based on the researchers' findings. The first theme is "Passionate throughout". It was identified that Participant 4, Participant 5, Participant 7, Participant 13, Participant 15, and Participant 16 used a monotonous tone when delivering the content of the video. Remarks received from the raters were "*monotonous*", "*no rising or falling tone*", "*intonation is monotonous*", "*dull*", and "*slow rate*". Meanwhile, the second theme that was produced concerning average scorers is "Reading from a script". The raters identified Participant 2, Participant 4, Participant 8, Participant 14 and Participant 20 to demonstrate the quality of "*reading from a script*". "*reading*", "*reading from a text*", "*read from a script*" and "*reading most of the time*". There were also two (2) students who obtained poor scores - Participant 9 and Participant 12. Two (2) themes were identified for this category. The first one is "Monotonous Tone". Four (4) of the raters gave such remarks to Participant 9 by commenting

"monotonous", and "no intonation" on the students' score sheets. Three (3) other raters provided these remarks "flat", "monotonous", and "monotonous intonation" to Participant 12. The second theme is "Unnatural tone". Raters remarked Participant 9 with "rate of speech is slow, like reading from script" and Participant 12 with "reading from text".

The findings showed that students need to adjust their voices due to the physical distance between the speakers and the settings that they are in (Eunson, 2015). As a result, some of them could not use appropriate tones. In relation to the video resume, it could be justified that when they recorded the materials, they were conversing alone without the presence of an audience. This could have affected how they adjust their tone of voice during the presentation as they could not assess the audience's reaction. On another note, Apers and Derous (2017) state that voice, intonation and pacing are fundamental tools in preparing video resumes. They argue that video resumes and interviews are different in features, such as synchronicity, duration and opportunities for impression management. Thus, considering these features, students in the present study needed to ensure that the last feature; opportunities for impression management, can be achieved when varying tones are employed to deliver the video content. Yet, opportunities for impression management as far as producing video resumes are concerned may negatively affect the applicants. A study conducted by Waung et al., (2015) found that video resumes caused harm to female college students when sending their applications to potential recruiters. For male students, the resource was ineffective for their job applications.

Therefore, the researchers concluded that job applicants should be cautious when promoting themselves using video resumes. Majid (2018) argues that a report, Graduate Employability Blueprint (2012-2017) reported that a minimum of 75% of graduates would be able to secure employment upon graduation. And as far as graduate employability is concerned, communication skills, particularly the ability to communicate well in English, are crucial for graduates seeking employment opportunities in Malaysia (Balakrishnan et al., 2022). Therefore, students should be able to employ different vocal forms of communication in that they needed to use voice to inform others, voice to show that they were being direct and assertive, a voice that was chatty and informal and voice that might inspire others (Pellicano, 2021) to secure a job in the ever-competitive market.

#### **4.2 Use body language, postures, gestures, and facial expressions when delivering content of video resumes**

The second research question identifies how students use their body language, postures, gestures, and facial expressions to present themselves in video resumes. Students were expected to deliver effective body language and appropriate facial expressions in their video resume. In evaluating the materials, it was identified that one (1) student obtained an excellent score, 14 of them obtained average scores, and the remaining five (5) of them received poor scores. Only Participant 18 obtained excellent score. One (1) theme was identified concerning the result, namely "Distinguished gestures and expressions". The raters gave these remarks to the students "good gestures", "good facial expression", and "good gestures, good expressions, confident".

Most of the students achieved average scores - Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 5, Participant 6, Participant 7, Participant 8, Participant 11, Participant 12, Participant 13, Participant 15, Participant 17, Participant 20 and Participant 21. Two (2) themes were formulated for the average scores. The first theme is "Devoid of eye contact", which was demonstrated by Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 8, Participant 17 and Participant 20. The remarks that were made by the raters were "no eye contact", "lack of eye contact", "eye contact okay but sometimes not consistent", "not focussed on the camera" and "poor eye contact". The second theme is "Stiff body language". Participant 5, Participant 6, Participant 7, Participant 11, Participant 12, Participant 13, Participant 15 and Participant 17 demonstrated such quality. To quote the raters, they remarked "no expression", "lack of movements", "lack of hand gestures", "dull", "no facial expression", "no gestures", "too little movement", "lack of movements or gestures" and "limited facial expressions and gestures" for the students' body language, postures, gestures, and facial expressions. Five (5) students obtained poor scores. Two (2) themes were formulated in response to the students' poor performance. The first

theme is "Inconsistent eye contact," demonstrated by Participant 4, Participant 14 and Participant 19. The second theme is "Inadequate gestures and movements", which was shown by Participant 4, Participant 14, Participant 16 and Participant 19. The remarks given for their presentation were "*no expression, no movement*", "*lack of body language*", "*no movement*", and "*limited facial expressions and gestures*".

These results support the idea that the absence of a conversational partner might be the necessary factor that made students fail to demonstrate quality use of body language, postures, gestures, and facial expressions. Although these non-verbal cues are important, Nguyen and Gatica-Perez (2016), in their study, however, found that such qualities might not be able to be produced when presenters are speaking in front of a camera. In essence, non-verbal communication allows people to communicate when teaching language (Surkamp, 2014). His study reported that teachers need to encourage learners to concentrate on using the latter's voices. Moreover, non-verbal information provides the opportunity to present dynamic information, contrary to the experience of attending face-to-face interviews (Karlsson, 2019). The author further argues that job seekers may use non-verbal communication as it may enhance their presentation that cannot be presented in a text resume.

Meanwhile, Sheth (2017), in his study on non-verbal communication as a significant aspect of proficient occupation, suggested these aspects to produce effective body language: watching one's body language, maintaining eye-contact, working on posture, keeping a tidy surrounding, reading the audience, listening attentively and questioning oneself in a given situation. While demonstrating body language in communication is commendable, it is also essential for speakers to be tactful as to avoid being distracting. For instance, nodding excessively, folding arms across your chest and staring at the audience might cause the others to feel uncomfortable (Pham et al., 2016).

Nevertheless, on the question of the uses of body language, postures, gestures, and facial expressions highlighted in this study, Hiemstra et al's study (2012) reported that text or paper resume tends to be more valid since it is more detailed. The researchers noted that job-relevant knowledge, for instance, grades and duration of employment, to name a few, are indicators they may not be well stated in a video resume. Yet, the researchers viewed the opposite. In the current study, some students employed good gestures to show their grades and work employment. Pointing to the texts on the left and right while smiling when presenting the information was one of the effective gestures in the video resumes.

### **4.3 Use of creativity, organisation, and transition as elements in delivery strategy when producing video resumes**

The third research question is intended to identify how students' creativity, organisation, and transition affect the video resumes' effectiveness. In determining students' creativity, they were expected to use their ideas in creating unique and attractive videos. Meanwhile, the scores for organisation and transition required them to be innovative using effective camera techniques. Therefore, they might use their technology know-how to impact the materials that were being produced. Other aspects that were emphasised in this part were the organisation and background of the video. They were anticipated to create neat and presentable audio and video clips combinations. Finally, they needed to make sure that the background of the videos was not cluttered.

For this criterion, none of the students was awarded excellent scores. Yet, 12 of the total students obtained average scores (Participant 1, Participant 5, Participant 6, Participant 7, Participant 8, Participant 9, Participant 11, Participant 12, Participant 13, Participant 18, Participant 20, and Participant 21) and eight (8) students obtained poor scores (Participant 2, Participant 3, Participant 4, Participant 14, Participant 15, Participant 16, Participant 17 and Participant 19). The researchers formulated three (3) themes related to the average scorers. The first theme is "Unsatisfactory quality of video". Participant 1, Participant 12 and Participant 13 demonstrated poor video qualities as raters provided these comments on their score sheets "*low quality video*", "*shows effort and attempts to be creative but video is of low quality*", "*quality of video is poor*" and "*blurry video*". The second theme is "Bothersome background audio". Participant 1, Participant 8 and Participant 11 displayed the said quality as it was remarked by the raters providing comments for instance "*background audio*

*distracting*", *"sound not consistent"*, *"background audio too loud"*, and *"background audio too loud and distracting"*. The third theme is "Rudimentary demonstration of creativity". Participant 13, Participant 18 and Participant 20 received these comments regarding their inability to be creative producing the video resumes: *"very simple video and lacks creativity"*, *"lack of creativity"*, *"odd choice of background (elephant in a triangle) which has a cultural meaning"* and *"lacks creativity (very simple and basic editing)"*.

Compared to the other two (2) criteria, creativity has the highest number of students who obtained poor scores. Participant 2, Participant 3, Participant 4, Participant 14, Participant 15, Participant 16, Participant 17, and Participant 19 failed to produce creative video resumes. Analysing the remarks that were made by the raters, it was found that there were three (3) themes that could be formulated from the responses. The first theme is "Background distraction", as shown by Participant 2, Participant 3, and Participant 17. The raters provided these remarks in commenting on the audio that the students selected: *"loud noise in the background"*, *"background audio too loud and distracting"*, *"audio too loud"*, and *"background (is too) noisy"*. The second theme is "Low video resolution". This theme was identified based on the remarks that was given to Participant 14, Participant 15 and Participant 16. These comments were *"low quality of video"*, *"poor quality of video"*, *"video is blurry"*, and *"poor quality and short video"*. The third theme is "Inappropriate choice of background". Participant 2, Participant 17 and Participant 19 shot their videos in inappropriate places for instance in their bedrooms and unattractive neighbourhood/ location. The raters made these remarks for the students' works: *"place setting is not suitable"*, *"background choice is poor"*, and *"background is unattractive"*.

The current study found that presenting in front of a camera and recording it requires proper planning from the students. Suppose they could carefully plan and visualise their end-product of the video resumes prior to recording them. In that case, issues such as poor audio and video quality and poor background choices could be resolved accordingly. Nevertheless, such was an unexpected finding as students majoring in technology and engineering are expected to be knowledgeable in adjusting to the audios and videos when editing the video resumes. Generation Z students are dominated with the internet of things (IoT) (Persada et al., 2019) and, therefore, are expected to be more positive in accepting the use of technology.

Nevertheless, a possible explanation for these results may be the lack of adequate facilities and resources that the students could use in producing more creative video resumes. Determining suitable software for editing seemed to hinder creativity among them. As a result, only cluttered background and unsmooth transitions of video contents were presented to their lecturers. Therefore, selecting easier technology sources needs to be promoted to the students (Persada et al., 2019).

On the raters' comments of low quality of video, Cole et al. (2005) opined that it was not certain whether the use of multimedia was an accurate way of judging job-seekers' personalities or abilities for the positions they were applying. Their study concluded that video resumes used in recruitment and selection were stepping tools *per se* in the Human Resource Management policy being implemented at the current job market. Instead, recruiters need to be cautious in making personality inferences if video resumes are used in identifying suitable candidates for the related positions. They believed that the psychological processes underlying the resume evaluation were somewhat ambiguous. Instead, managers' decisions in hiring candidates nowadays could result from looking at the job seekers' social media profiles. The study conducted by Kwok and Muñiz (2021) found that one of the hiring managers in their qualitative inquiry looked at the candidates' posts, videos and pictures on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The use of LinkedIn served as a review of the potential candidate. In particular, the hiring manager would be looking at the candidate's information, ensuring that it matched with the information written in the latter's resumes.

Table 1 shows the themes formulated in responding to the research questions stated at the beginning of the paper. While the appendix provides the overall data based on the formulated research questions, it has to be notified that there is no themes for excellent scorers in Creativity, organisation & transition since none of the video resumes fall under this category.

**Table 1.** Summary of themes based on scores of video resumes

Types of delivery strategies	Themes No.	Poor Scorers	Average Scorers	Excellent Scorers
Voice, intonation and pacing hold interest and attentions of audience	Theme 1	Monotonous	Passionless throughout	Delightful intonation
	Theme 2	Unnatural tone	Reading from a script	
Body language, postures, gestures+ facial expressions	Theme 1	Devoid of eye contact	Inconsistent eye contact	Distinguished gestures and expressions
	Theme 2	Stiff body language	Inadequate gestures and movements	-
Creativity, organisation & transition	Theme 1	Background distraction	Unsatisfactory quality of video	-
	Theme 2	Low video resolution	Bothersome background audio	-
	Theme 3	Inappropriate choice of background	Rudimentary demonstration of creativity	-

## 5. Conclusion

The paper has argued that students faced challenges in using voice, intonation and pacing in delivery in their submitted video resumes. The majority of the students were also unable to display appropriate body language, postures, gestures, and facial expressions in the recordings. Moreover, the organisation and transition of the video resumes were also less engaging. Finally, it was challenging for the students to be creative in their video resumes as their resources were limited. The organisation and transition were also not interesting. Samples of video resumes will help the students prepare a good video resume, especially those who are not familiar with video resumes. Therefore, supplying the students with samples of video resumes is hoped to empower them to be more inspired and animated in producing and recording better quality video resumes. They can refer to the samples to see examples of effective delivery, body language, and facial expressions to incorporate them into their video resumes.

These data suggest that it is high for students to produce video resumes that may amalgamate their physical infographic resumes. At the same time, students need to challenge themselves in making creative video resumes that could 'win' the hearts of future employers. They should be able to produce video resumes that stand out from other video resumes to help them to attract their potential employers' interest. More importantly, they need to sharpen their delivery strategies and display non-verbal gestures appropriately in recording video resumes to gauge more attention. Since many companies are accepting video resumes as part of application documents for employment, a few tips for producing effective video resumes need to be considered and utilised in making video resumes. Writing a good script, identifying a proper place for shooting, allowing several takes are some of the proposed tips to produce effective and engaging video resumes (Rabab, 2021).

## 6. Suggestions

Several questions still remain to be answered. Therefore, it is suggested that semi-structured interviews need to be conducted among students to understand further the challenges they face in creating video resumes. The data from the interviews may provide ideas for them to improve the quality of the materials produced. Considerably more work will need to be done to determine the

quality of being creative in producing the videos. The rubric detailing creativity in the students' score sheets is vital to be revisited. The criteria for being creative in completing the tasks should be determined more precisely. Also, further work is needed to fully understand the implications of using field background in recording video resumes. The current study found that students chose to shoot the videos around campus and hostels. Choosing these backgrounds seems to affect the professionalism of the recorded materials, especially when they are sent to potential employers. Last but not least, further research in this field would be of great help when a few personnel from Human Resource from selected companies can be appointed to assess the video resumes.

## 7. Co-Author Contribution

This study was designed, directed, and coordinated by Associate Prof. Dr. Zuraina Ali. As the principal investigator, she provided conceptual and technical guidance for all aspects of the study. Amy Zulaikha constructed the literature review and reviewed the article for its mechanics and intellectual content. Shamsul Harbi constructed the methodology of the study while Alia Najaa and Siti Ainun Jariyah collected the findings and analysed the data. Nor Suhardiliana provided the reviewers' rubrics and helped draft the manuscript. The manuscript was written by and commented on by all authors.

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