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Familiarize yourself with the company and position. This provides you with background information for answering interview questions. It will show that you have spent the time to learn more about the company because you want the position.

Use the **Website** to find company:
- Goals
- Direction
- Environment

Use the **Job Posting** to find specific:
- Skills
- Experiences
- Duties

This information allows you to identify how your experiences, skills, etc. align with the company and what they are looking for; what you can do for them/ bring to the company.

**Practice**

This is the most important and best way to prepare for the interview. Mock Interviews allow you to practice your interview skills in a simulated environment. Interviewstream ([http://uwo.interviewstream.com/](http://uwo.interviewstream.com/)) is an online program that is free for UWO students. If you have a microphone and webcam you can easily conduct a mock interview from home 24-7.

**Interview Questions**

Many employers are using traditional interview questions combined with behavioural questions. Behavioural questions are situational questions, i.e. ‘Tell me about a situation in which you were…’

The STAR Method is good strategy to use in answering behavioural questions.

- **Situation**: Give an example of a situation you were involved in that resulted in a positive outcome.
- **Task**: Describe the tasks involved in that situation.
- **Action**: Talk about the various actions involved in the task.
- **Result**: What results directly followed because of your actions?

**STAR Example:**

**Situation**: During my job last summer, I was responsible for planning staffing schedules for a summer camp. **Task**: When I started, I noticed that the current schedule was difficult to read and understand. We were also unexpectedly understaffed and unable to maintain proper staff to child ratios. I needed to do something to improve this quickly.

**Action**: I redesigned the schedule taking into consideration staffing regulations and child to staff ratios. I collected feedback from staff and supervisors. **Results**: As a result I utilized some of the wonderful ideas I received and made our scheduling system more understandable, ensuring that we always maintained proper ratios.
Traditional Interview Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are 3 strengths of yours?
- Why do you want to work for us?
- What are you long-term career goals?
- What are your short-term goals?
- What three adjectives best describe you?
- What are 2-3 weaknesses you need to improve?
- How would you describe your ideal job?
- What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
- What is your greatest achievement and why?
- What did you learn from your past part-time job?
- Why do you want to work for us?
- How would you define success?
- Why do you want to work for us/ work here?
- What would you bring to this position/this company?
- How would you rate your communication skills?
- What would your colleagues say about your working style?
- Why do you want to work abroad/overseas? (International Interview)

Behavioural Interview Questions

- Tell me about a situation where you were challenged.
- How have you motivated yourself to complete an assignment or task that you did not want to do?
- Tell me about the riskiest decision you have made.
- Tell me about a time on any job when you faced a stressful situation or problem.
- Give an example of a time when you had a conflict with someone and how you handled the situation.
- Tell me about a problem you faced and how you dealt with the problem/ developed a solution.
- Can you tell me about a time when you needed to work with a group to get a job done?
- Tell me about a problem that you had to analyze and what your recommendation was?
- Give me an example when you were working in a group and there was a conflict between members. How did you handle this situation? What was the outcome?
Employer Questions

It’s important for you to prepare 2-3 questions to ask the interviewer about the position/company. This shows your genuine interest in the position.

Sample Employer Questions

- What are the most challenging aspects of this job?
- What type of initial training do you offer?
- Could you describe a typical day on the job?
- How are employees evaluated in this position?
- What are the next steps in the interview process?

Resume
Print 3-4 copies of your resume in case there are multiple interviewers. Keep in a clean and professional looking folder so they do not get bent.

References
Print your reference list.
If you have not contacted your references do so before the interview. You need their consent before the potential employer contacts them; you do not want to catch them off guard/ unprepared or you do want to provide a reference who is not comfortable giving you a reference.

Directions
Make sure you know how to get to the interview. If time permits take a test run to the interview location; if not, leave extra time for traffic, weather, and construction.

Interview Clothing
Dress a step above normal work attire for the position you are seeking.
Clothes and shoes should be clean and neat, pressed if necessary.
Accessories should be limited
Your appearance should be well groomed
Avoid fragrances
Telephone Interviews

Telephone interviews provide a different and challenging environment. With the lack of visual contact your voice and words are even more important.

- Practice and be prepared.
- Have notes and your resume in front of you; these are just points, skills, and experiences you want to touch on. You don’t want to just read from the papers because the employer will be able to clearly know you are.
- Don’t shuffle papers while in your interview. Have notes, pen, paper, and telephone all set up before the interview.
- Write down any questions that arise during the interview.
- Plan for the call and be ready 10 minutes before the call comes in.
- Answer questions in short sentences not rambling paragraphs.
- Speak clearly and at a normal talking speed. Most people speed up their sentences when nervous.
- Keep the interview lively and interesting by ‘checking in’ with the employer. Ex. ‘would you like me to expand on that?’
- Give the interviewer your undivided attention; be courteous, professional and concise.
- Treat telephone interviews as face to face interviews by dressing up, sitting at a table or desk, and eliminating any distractions.
- Avoid using a cell phone or portable phone since the connection can be poor.
- Smile during the interview as it shows in your voice.
- Remember to thank the interviewer and welcome them to call you if they have any other questions.

After the Interview

Follow Up

Send a thank you card, email, or phone message after the interview.
The Suggested format is:

1st Paragraph:
Express your appreciation for the opportunity and your gratitude for their time. Also mention the date of your interview.

2nd Paragraph:
Personalize the letter by mentioning a strong point of your interview or you can summarize your main credentials, skill or experience that you were not able to expand upon during your contact, but remember to be brief and concise.

3rd Paragraph:
Reiterate your interest in the position and thank the interviewer for their time.

Signature:
Sign your name, print your name, and include your contact information.
Feedback

If you are not offered the position, use this opportunity to ask for feedback on how you could have improved your interview skills.
The best time to ask for feedback is when the interviewer calls to inform you of their decision.

Reminder!

Remember to Bring:

- Directions
- Resume
- References
- Portfolio/folder to write on
- Pen

Do:

- Arrive 10 minutes early (know your route).
- Use a firm handshake.
- Be aware of your body language and maintain good eye contact.
- Show enthusiasm and good manners.
- Keep a positive attitude.
- Remember to thank the interviewer(s).
- Always follow up with a thank you email, phone message or written note.

Don’t:

- Give rambling answers.
- Choose to ‘pass’ on a question.
- Interrupt the interviewer.
- Discuss your personal problems.
- Criticize yourself or former employers.
- Arrive late.

References

The Student Success Centre, [www.success.uwo.ca](http://www.success.uwo.ca)
Laurier Interview Salary Guidebook,
[www.lauriercc.ca/content/documents/fileItemController/interviewbook%20salary%20excerpt%2020080.pdf](http://www.lauriercc.ca/content/documents/fileItemController/interviewbook%20salary%20excerpt%2020080.pdf)
InterviewStream, [uwo.interviewstream.com](http://uwo.interviewstream.com/)