

# Interviews

## PURPOSE OF AN INTERVIEW

Congratulations on scoring an interview! Now the interviewer is interested in you and wants to know more about:

- Can you do the job? (based on your skills, experience/ education)
- Will you do the job? (based on your personality and commitment)
- Will you fit in with their company? (based on your personality and values)

You'll need to prepare yourself to ensure you can successfully provide the company with that information.

You should be also interviewing them trying to find out:

- Does this role fit with the scope of your interest and abilities? (and is there support for challenging times)
- Will you fit in with their company? (based on their culture and values)

## PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

### 1. Know the job posting thoroughly to understand:

- What is required/ what is an asset?
- What kind of personal traits do they seek?

### 2. Know the company; some considerations are:

- What are their products/ services and who do they serve?
- Know their history, mandate, values, goals
- Where are they located and what is their structure?
- What direction is the company moving and what are their challenges?

### 3. Know yourself:

- Review your resume to easily recall your work history and skills
- Use course outlines to help verbalize the key skills and knowledge you bring

Researching the job/ company won't guarantee you get the job, but not doing your research will likely guarantee that you don't get the job!

## TYPES OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### TRADITIONAL QUESTIONS

Common interview questions that are generally open-ended and can easily be prepared for ahead of time:

- Tell me more about yourself
- Why do you want to work here?
- Why should we hire you?

These questions should be answered in a narrative format (past/ present/ future). Convey your information chronologically and always connect it back to how you're a good fit for this position!

### EXAMPLE:

"While I was at TRU, I had the opportunity to work on X project, which allowed me to develop Y skills/ foster Y interest. From these reasons, I'm hoping to bring my experience/ skillset to this role."

## BEHAVIOURAL QUESTIONS

These questions ask you to relate examples of what you have to demonstrate your skills that are related to the job. Prepare for these questions by thinking of personal experiences sorted into these three categories: Tough Times, Highlights, and Working with Others.

Behavioural questions typically begin with:

- Tell me about a time when: (conflict with a coworker; didn't know what to do, etc.)
- Describe a situation where: (your values conflict with your role; you had to motivate yourself, etc.)

These questions are best answered through the STAR method:

### Situation:

- Explain the context of the example/ event
- "In my organizational behaviour class, I was working with a group of 5 students on an 8-page research proposal"

### Task:

- Describe what goal you were working towards
- "My role was to complete the introduction and conclusion and editing of this article."

### Action:

- Describe your actions or what took place
- "As it came close to submitting the assignment, several group members..."

### Result:

- Describe the outcome of your actions and what you accomplished or learned
- "I received all the pieces a few days before the due date. I spent long nights..."

## SITUATIONAL QUESTIONS

These questions require you to respond to a hypothetical situation or problem. They can be Case Scenarios, Technical Problems, or Skill Based questions. These questions usually begin with "What would you do if..." These questions can be difficult to anticipate often relying on you to draw on your education and experience while utilizing your best judgement. Prepare for these questions by understanding the job along with its responsibilities and revisiting your previous education and training.

## DIRECTIVE QUESTIONS

Highly structured questions that tend to tempt you to respond with "yes" or "no" answers. Respond with a comprehensive answer that includes an example if possible.

### EXAMPLE:

- "Are you able to work weekends?"
- "Have you designed websites?"
- "What do you know about XYZ?"

## FINAL TIPS

- Arrive 15 minutes before the interview and be friendly to all staff; they all have a say in the hiring decision
- Present a professional appearance and attitude; show positive body language and remember to smile
- Get the interviewer to describe the position early so you can relate your skills and experience to the position
- Watch the interviewer's body language to gauge your answers as whether they're looking for more details
- Ask for clarification if you are unsure whether you are interpreting the question correctly
- Prepare three questions to ask the interviewer at the end of formal questions
- Afterwards, send a thank you email/ note/ card to each of the interviewers after the interview



✳ Use all of these tips for virtual interviews

For more support, book an appointment with Career & Experiential Learning at [tru.ca/cel](http://tru.ca/cel)

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