

Interview Toolkit

Interview Toolkit

A Guide to Successfully Preparing for Employment Interviews

FANSHAWE COLLEGE

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LONDON



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About This Resource

This open resource has been compiled and edited by Employment and Student Entrepreneurial Services in partnership with the [OER Design Studio](#) and the [Library Learning Commons](#) at [Fanshawe College](#) in London, Ontario.

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Additional Open Resources

Below are additional open resources currently available from Career, Cooperative Education, and Community Employment Services, and Employment and Student Entrepreneurial Services:

- [Cooperative Education Workbook: A Work Term Guide for Co-op Success](#)
This workbook is designed to help Fanshawe students make the most of their cooperative education work term. Included are forms, information about steps to take throughout the term, documentation required, deadlines for submission, helpful links and contact information to have on hand should you need them throughout the work term
- [Job Search Workbook: 10 Steps to Job Search Success](#)
This workbook is designed to compliment the 10 Steps to My Next Job workshop., which is offered by Fanshawe College's Employment and Student Entrepreneurial Services

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EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEW SKILLS: BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER



Contents

This resources guide contains the following sections:

- [Before the Interview: Preparation](#)
- [Before the Interview: Potential Questions](#)
- [Before the Interview: Behavioural Based Questions](#)
- [Before the Interview: Situational Based Questions](#)
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Before the Interview: Preparation

What Is A Job Interview?

A structured conversation or dialogue between two or potentially more individuals to assess a candidate's skills, qualification and fit for a company or organization's vacant position.

The interviewer(s) asks pre-determined questions and the interviewee provides succinct responses confidently illustrating their skills and qualifications in relation to the job posting.

Two- way conversation:

- Employer to provide exceptional candidate care creating a welcoming and relaxed environment.
- Candidate is put at ease to communicate openly with self-assurance and confidence.
- Flow of discussion = both parties to be well informed.

Preparation is Essential

- **Research the employer.** 'Google' the employer and prepare questions which demonstrate your interest and understanding of the business or organization. What is their Mission, Vision and Values? Do they align with yours? Why do you want to work there?
- **Research the position.** Ask for a job description and become familiar with the qualifications and knowledge you will need to do the job.
- **Review your resume and list of skills** related to job and anticipate questions that might be asked.
- **Update your resume and reference** list and make copies to take to the interview.
- **Prepare and organize your portfolio** with information that is relevant to the job.
- **Plan your wardrobe.** Dress one to two levels above the job you are applying for.
- **Google map or GPS the location** to determine the best way to get to the interview.

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Before the Interview: Potential Questions

Generic Interview Questions

Questions You May Be Asked – Prepare Your Responses

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why did you apply for this position?
- What have you learned from your previous jobs?
- Why are you interested in a career in this field?
- What can you offer our organization?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- What are your salary expectations?



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Before the Interview: Behavioural Based Questions

Behavioural Based Interview Questions

Behavioural interview questions ask the candidates specific examples of past experiences.

Past performance -> Predicts future performance

Use the '**SAR**' Technique to Answer Behavioral Interview Questions.

Situation	Detail the background. Provide a context. Where? When?
Action	Elaborate your specific action. What did you do? How? What tools did you use?
Result	Explain the result: accomplishment, recognition, savings, etc. Quantify things.

Commonly Asked Behavioural Based Interview Questions

Accountability Questions

Being honest, reliable and responsible for our decisions and actions

- Provide an example of a time when you had multiple conflicting priorities and demands in your role which were time. What did you do to accomplish the required tasks? Or Explain how you prioritize work when everything is a priority?
- Tell me about a time a when you faced a tough. How did you address and resolve it?
- Walk us through a time when you knew things were not going well with a particular project or process. What happened? What was the end result?



Respect / Conflict Resolution Questions

Being inclusive, understanding and considerate

- Describe a time when you had to resolve a difference of opinion/conflict with a co-worker or supervisor.
- Tell me about a time when you were working on a team project and one of the team members was not fulfilling their obligations or contributing equally? How did you manage the situation?



Team Work / Collaboration Questions

Working together to achieve positive results

- Provide an example of when you had to work with someone who was extremely difficult to get along with and as a result, made it challenging for you to complete your work. How did you handle the interaction with that person?
- Teamwork is essential in the smooth operation of the department. Describe your best example of contributing positively to the team to achieve a favorable outcome.
- Describe a time when you worked as part of a team.



Problem Solving Questions

Relate your ability to identify issues, obstacles and opportunities and develop and implement solutions

- Tell me about a time when you had to solve a challenging problem.
- Describe a time when you identified a potential problem and fixed it prior to it becoming urgent.



Customer / Client Service Questions

Align with values, providing service excellence

- Tell me about a time when you interacted with a difficult customer / client. What happened and how did you rectify the situation?
- Tell me about a time when you went above and beyond to support a customer's needs.
- Describe a time when a customer was pleased with your service.



Innovation / Process Improvement Questions

Create and adopt better more efficient processes

- Provide an example when you implemented an idea or process that had a positive impact on the work you do or the team that you work.
- Describe a process improvement which you have been involved in. What did you do to contribute to making it a success? What roadblocks did you encounter and how did you overcome them?



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Before the Interview: Situational Based Questions

Situational Based Interview Questions

Situational interview questions are when you are asked to put yourself in a hypothetical situation and explain what action(s) you would take in that scenario.



- What would you do if you and your co-worker disagreed?
- You are working on many projects with tight deadlines, your manager approaches you and assigns you a new equally important project, how would you prioritize your work?
- You are overwhelmed in your role due to a heavy workload, what would you do?
- What would you do if you were asked to complete a task that you have never done before?
- You are asked to do something that is not part of your role. What would you do?
- You are working on a project which has a deadline fast approaching. You are waiting on important facts from a colleague who promised they would get it to you last week, this is impacting the submission. What would you do?

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Before the Interview: Qualification Based Questions

Qualification Based Interview Questions

Interview questions targeted at your qualifications are a critical part of demonstrating that you not only possess the required education, training and experience but also that you can apply them to the job making you the ideal candidate and the best fit for the role. The greatest way to answer qualification-based interview questions is to prepare prior to the interview.



- Review the job posting in detail and document all the requirements.
- Describe your qualifications using concrete applicable examples.
- Focus on how your skills and abilities benefited or brought success to the company.

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Before the Interview: Illegal Interview Questions

Interview Questions That Should Not Be Asked

Canadian Human Rights law prohibits interviewers from asking questions concerning:

- County/place of origin and citizenship status – *What country are you from?*
- Religion, faith or creed
- Age – *How old are you?*
- Gender or sexual orientation
- Race or ethnicity
- Family structure, children or marital status – *Are you married? Do you have children? Do you plan to have children in the future?*
- Mental or physical health and disability – *Do you have any physical impairment or disability?*
- Appearance, height and weight
- Pardoned offences



Although the interviewer may be making casual conversation and the inquiry is innocent, the above listed questions are deemed discriminatory and are inappropriate in an interview.

Interview questions should solely be based on the candidate's skills and ability to perform the duties of the job and the bona fide occupational requirements deemed essential in performing those duties.



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Before the Interview: Candidate Questions and Practice Resources

Suggested Candidate Questions

Questions You May Ask:

- Can you describe the company culture?
- Why is this position available?
- What are the two or three most important characteristics you are looking for in a candidate for this position?
- What future career opportunities exist within the company?
- What are the greatest challenges and opportunities facing the successful candidate in performing this job?
- What is your favorite part of working here?
- Who are the main people or teams that the successful candidate would collaborate with?
- How are work assignments handled? Will I work independently or as a member of a team?
- What might a typical day be like for a person in this position?
- How often are an employee's performance evaluated and what criteria are used? What are the next steps in the recruitment process?
- When will the hiring decision be made?



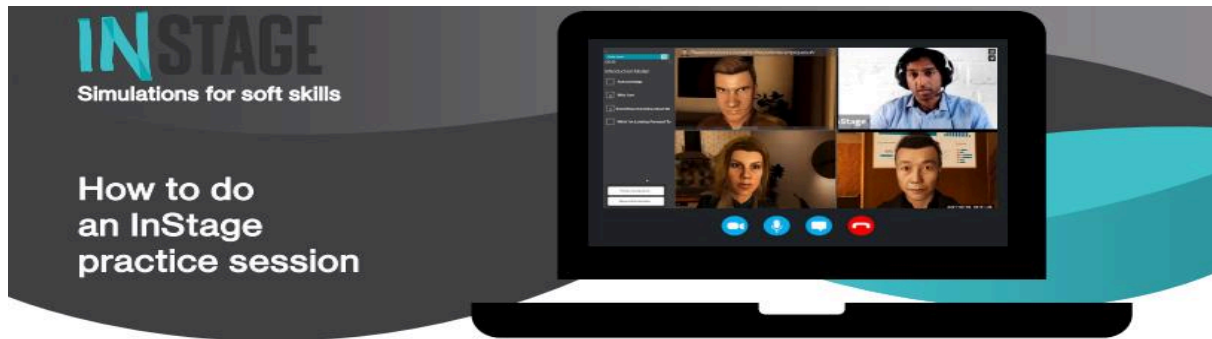
Practice Your Interview

PRACTICE+ PRACTICE + PRACTICE = SUCCESS

- Build confidence and reduce stress! Rehearsing for an interview allows you to respond to questions with ease and communicate effectively.
- Why not practice your answers to typical interview questions in video format? If you have access to a webcam you can practice your interview skills using Interview Stream.
(<http://fanshawec.interviewstream.com>).
- Start by watching the tutorial, select questions and conduct a video interview. See and hear what you look and sound like in an interview setting. You can even customize your own video.

InStage Resource

Great resource and practice tool – INSTAGE Simulation for soft skills: https://www.instage.io/library/fanshawe_career



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At the Interview: First Impressions

Tips to Impress During the Interview

Make a good first impression:

- **Arrive 5 to 10 minutes early.** Do not be late and do not be too early either. Turn off your cellphone upon arrival.
- **Greet all parties** with respect and professionalism.
- **Present yourself positively.** Make eye contact, offer a firm handshake, fist pump, positive nod, smile and be aware of your body language.
- **Listen and think carefully** before you answer. Repeat the question aloud to make sure you are clear on the question. Try to relax.
- **Pause and reflect** on the question. It is ok to carefully consider your answer before responding.
- **Ask relevant questions** and inquire about the next steps / follow up.
- **Close by restating your strengths and interest** in the position and why you are the best suited candidate for the role.



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After the Interview: Following Up

Tips to Follow Post Interview

- **Send a follow up** 'Thank You' letter by email to the interviewer(s) immediately upon your return home. Include a brief paragraph reiterating your interest in the position and company and how you qualify for the role.
- **Reflect on the interview.** Document the questions and your responses. Were there questions you struggle with? How have you better prepared?
- **Review your performance.** What would you do the next time to improve your success?
- **Request feedback.** If you are not successful ask for feedback from the interviewer.
- **Treat every interview as an opportunity** to improve your skills. Focus on the positives, what you learned and what you can do better next time.



Rock the Interview!
Congratulations! You're Hired!

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Let's Review: Quiz

Key Takeaway Quiz

After reading through our Interview Toolkit, complete the following review to test your knowledge recall. Select the most appropriate answers for each set of questions.

Be sure to pay attention to the feedback given when you select the correct answer to each question.



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/fanshaweinterviewtoolkit/?p=118#h5p-1>

Version History

This page provides a record of edits and changes made to this resource since its initial publication. Whenever edits or updates are made in the text, we provide a record and description of those changes here. If the change is minor, the version number increases by 0.1. If the edits involve a number of changes, the version number increases to the next full number.

The files posted alongside this book always reflect the most recent version.

Version	Date	Change	Affected Web Page
1.0	04 January 2022	First publication	N/A