

# WELCOME! WE'LL GET STARTED IN A FEW MINUTES!

Note: Attendees will be sent the slide deck  
after the workshop.

In the meantime, feel free to introduce  
yourself in the chat! (e.g., name,  
program/faculty, regular/co-op)



UNIVERSITY OF  
**WATERLOO**

Centre for Career  
Development

**ON AIR**

# FROM APPS TO INTERVIEWS: Your Crash Course to Employment

07/11/2024

Karina Wilk (she/her), Career Leader  
Centre for Career Development



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**WATERLOO**

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Development

# KARINA WILK (she/her)

- Career Leader, Workshop Facilitator @ Centre for Career Development
- Recent UW Faculty of Science graduate
- Past co-op experiences: University of Waterloo, SickKids Hospital, University of Toronto, Grand River Regional Cancer Centre
- [www.linkedin.com/in/karinawilk](https://www.linkedin.com/in/karinawilk)
- Fun fact: I have a dog named Winnie



# TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of Waterloo is located on the territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples and is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometers on each side of the Grand River.

Outside of KW area? Check out: <https://native-land.ca/>

Let's keep learning. Why not take a course?  
INDG 201 The Indigenous Experience in Canada  
<https://ucalendar.uwaterloo.ca/2223/COURSE/course-INDG.html>



# WE AIM FOR THIS TO BE A SAFE(R) SPACE

We are entering this space with the intention of creating as safe a space as possible for you. Safe space means something different for everyone, but we promise you that we will try our best!

- Participate in the way that feels most comfortable for you! Take what works for you, leave what doesn't.
- Ask questions whenever! Please use the chat during presentation time, but you can use your mic during the Q&A if comfortable.
- Feel free to send me a direct message to participate anonymously
- If having tech issues, feel free to message Sana/CCA Support. We appreciate patience if any tech problems arise on our end 😊
- Please be respectful of other participants and facilitators



# WE AIM FOR A SAFE(R) SPACE

Going into this workshop, the intention is to create as safe a space as possible.

A safe space means different things for everyone, but we'll do our best! Let's keep 3 things in mind:

- **Choice**
- **Respect**
- **Care**



# AGENDA



What skills  
do I have?

A resume?  
What's  
that?

Even more  
documents?  
Cover letter

Interview  
time!

What's  
next?



# GOING FROM 'ZERO' TO HERO - 5 STEPS:



**Know yourself  
& your goals**



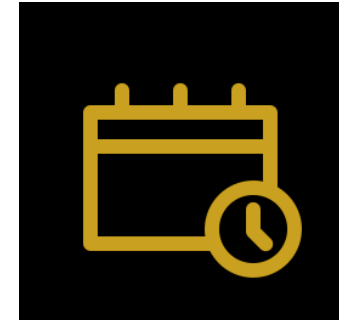
**Presenting  
Yourself**



**Gathering  
Documents**



**Interviewing**



**Next steps!**



# STEP 1: KNOW YOURSELF + YOUR GOALS

The world is going through major changes; so are you and your career plans and aspirations.

Take time to reflect on these changes and how you can adapt.

Different Approaches:

- Brain Storm/Word Cloud
- Pros and Cons List
- Where you see yourself in 5 years!



# SKILLS CAN COME FROM ANYWHERE



Image from: <https://blog.jobactive.gov.au/how-to-write-about-skills-experience-your-resume>

- Formal / informal training, courses, workshops
- Relevant skills/experience:
  - Paid jobs
  - Volunteering
  - Student club
  - Extracurricular activities
- Relevant projects/achievements
- Awards and recognitions



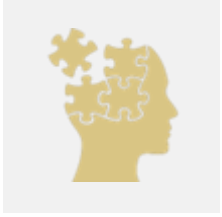
# REFLECT: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Self-assessment does not have to be a solitary activity. There are many resources available to help you:

- Attend appointments/workshops
- Consult family, friends, and your network
- Assessments (Decision-Making on CareerHub)
- Journaling
- Reading articles and books on career development



# STEP 2 : (ASPECTS) OF BUILDING A GREAT RESUME



**IDENTIFY** your skills, interests, experience, values and work search goals.



**ANALYZE** job description(s) and **IDENTIFY** what employers are looking for in a successful candidate.



**DESIGN & CREATE** a document that showcases how you could contribute via your skills/experience.



**REFINE** your document to ensure it is making the right impression, highlighting your strengths, and speaking to employers.



## THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

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“Imagine a doctor's résumé... do you want the doctor's résumé to say, “**has worked with patients**” or “**familiarity with medical practices**” or do you want her to say “**successfully performed 20 surgeries**” and leave all that other stuff off? [Use] the highest value points and leave the other stuff to be implied.”

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**Director of Product Management, Primal**

# THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

## What are employers looking for?

- Accomplishments and results – not duties performed
- Relevant knowledge/skills/education/experience
- Personality (and how it fits)

## What problems do they notice?

- Vague, confusing or irrelevant content
- Poor written communication
- Lack of visual appeal/formatting consistency
- "Here's what you can do for me"

# RESUME SECTIONS AND STYLING

## Name

Location, Telephone, Email

LinkedIn, Website, Portfolio

Summary of Qualifications

Relevant Experience

Relevant Projects

Volunteer Experience

Education

Awards & Scholarships

Professional Memberships

Publications

Presentations

Activities and Interests

- Include any relevant experience.
- Prioritize/order/place your resume sections based on relevance.
- Maintain visual appeal and clarity to capture employer attention.
- Consider industry standards – 1 or 2 pages?



# DESCRIBING YOUR SKILLS / EXPERIENCE



VS

Sales Associate, Campus Bookstore | Ottawa, ON

- Helped customers at the store cash register.
- Used Microsoft Excel to enter data.
- Answered questions and provided customer service.

**QUALIFIERS** & **SPECIFIC WORDING**





# DESCRIBING YOUR SKILLS / EXPERIENCE



**QUALIFIERS & SPECIFIC WORDING**

VS

Sales Associate, Campus Bookstore | Ottawa, ON

- Helped customers at the store cash register.
- Used Microsoft Excel to enter data.
- Answered questions and provided customer service.

Sales Associate, Campus Bookstore | Ottawa, ON

- Communicated **effectively** with **customers in-person, over email, and on the phone** to ensure satisfaction when responding to inquiries.
- **Improved** inventory management and tracking by creating **data storage spreadsheets** using Excel.
- Commended on **2 occasions for outstanding** problem-solving and customer service by the store manager.

# WHAT TO WRITE IN A COVER LETTER



# THE FUNCTION OF A COVER LETTER



- Cover letter = bridge between resume and interview
- A place to...
  - Demonstrate your interest in the role
  - Go into detail! (Skills, experiences, etc.)
  - Explain things – if you want to
  - Show you've done your research

# PRIORITIZING JOB APPLICATIONS

## Job Applications

### High priority

Jobs that align very well with my interests/career goals

### Mid-priority

Jobs that are appealing but not in complete alignment with my interests/career goals

### Low priority

Jobs in minimal alignment with my interests/career goals

- When should I submit a cover letter?
- How much time should I invest tailoring my cover letter?
- Is it OK to submit a generic cover letter?



## Your Name & Contact Information

 **John Doe**  
VP, Finance & Operations  
john.doe@gmail.com  
416-821-9879  
Toronto, Canada

To: Doris Johnson  
Human Resources Manager  
Optimal Workplace Inc. 321  
Employment Avenue. Toronto,  
Canada  
21 September, 2018

linkedin.com/in/john.doe  
john.doe

## Name & Address of Recipient

## Date

## Salutation

Dear Ms. Johnson,

## Opening

As the Vice-President of Finance and Operations at a national food chain, I bring proven success in enhancing productivity and gaining an advantage when it comes to profit margins. My work spans companies and business units at varying stages of growth, from start-up to multinational organizations.

## Body

With over 20 years of achieving profitability and long-term growth, I seek to monitor budgets and sales numbers closely to identify areas for improvement. I am known for enhancing performance through technology upgrades, implementing best practices, improving employee training protocols.

Examples of my achievements include:

- Drove successful launch of start-up organization through contemporary hiring practices, defining product implementation, and developing go-to-market strategies to achieve 50% margins and \$15M+ revenue within my first three years.
- Managed daily operations of a \$100M+ consumer goods department that introduced complete line of products to the U.S. and Canada, improving profit margins by 14%
- Proved a vital team member that conducted a complete leadership reorganization resulting in a 10% improvement in productivity within the sales department and a 1% improvement within the technical team.

## Closing

As a skilled professional with a CPA degree and a background in analyzing and improving sales numbers, I am confident I will prove an asset to your company and respectfully submit my application for your review. I would like to request a meeting to discuss how I can help meet your goals. I am available at your convenience and hope to hear from you soon.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
John Doe

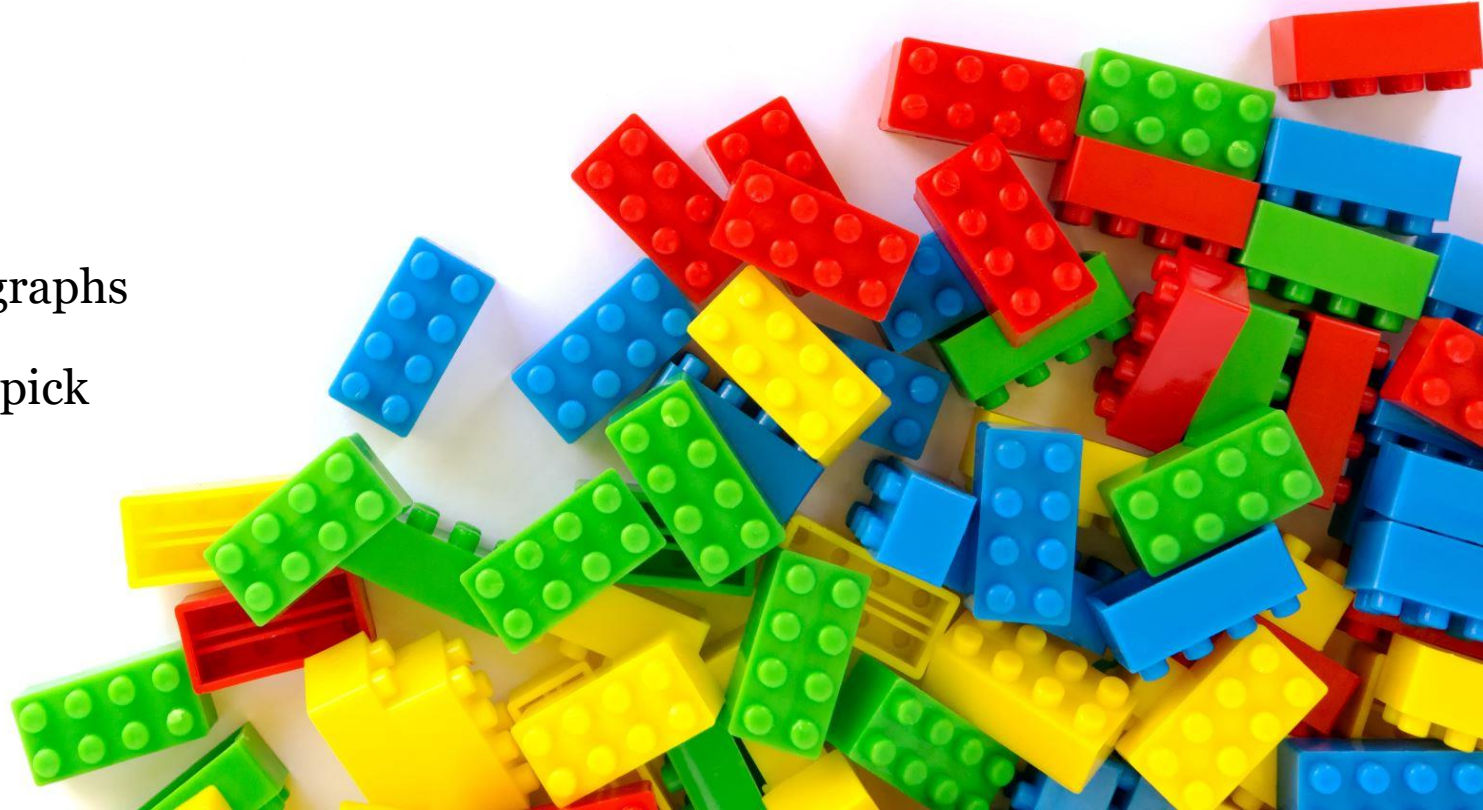
## Respects & Your Name

# COVER LETTER STRUCTURE

# SMART TAILORING

- Don't write every cover letter from scratch!
- Look for patterns and recurring key works in job postings
- Try out the Lego approach:
  - Paragraphs = building blocks
  - Swap out the opening and closing paragraphs
  - Prepare multiple middle paragraphs to pick and choose from

**WHAT ABOUT USING  
GenAI?**



# PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW



# INTERVIEW PREPARATION

- Review resume
- Review job description
- Research employer (Mission, challenges, motivators, culture and strategic plan)
- Practice interview questions
- Prepare questions to ask the interviewer
- References
- Copy of your resume
- Know yourself and what you bring to the position



# KNOW THE INTERVIEW DETAILS

If information is not provided, its acceptable to ask about the format of the interview

- How many people will interview you? Who are they?
- How long will the interview be? Is it supposed to be 20 minutes?
- What components will it include?
  - Technical?
  - Application?



Knowing this information can help relieve anxiety and reduce surprises!



# THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Classic

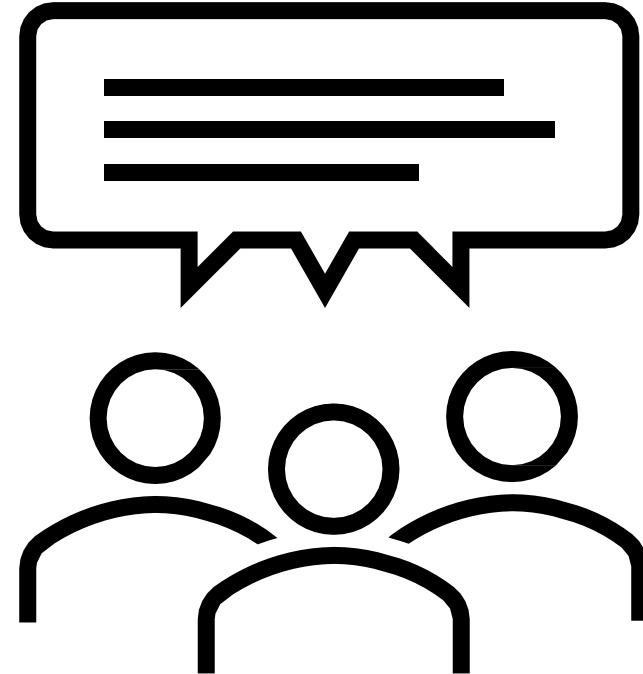
Behavioural

Situational

Skill Testing/Problem  
Solving

# CLASSIC QUESTIONS

- Why did you apply?
- Why should we hire you?
- Organizational knowledge
- Short/long-term career goals
- Strengths/weaknesses
- Tell me about yourself



# OUTLINE FOR “TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF”

- When/how did you become interested in this field?
- What have you done since then to grow your knowledge, skills and/or experience?
- Can you tie this into the job/role?
- Give yourself about 2 minutes (give or take) for this answer



Photo by Beci Harmony on Unsplash

# BEHAVIOUR-BASED QUESTIONS

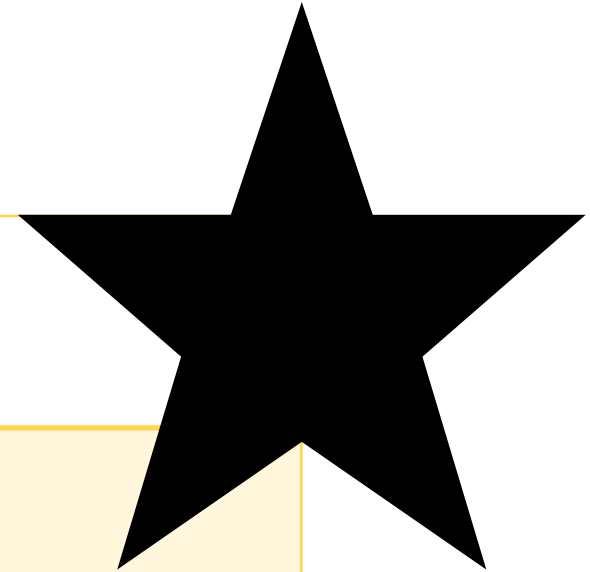
Past behaviour is a good indicator of future behaviour.

Typical behavioural questions begin with:

- Tell me about a time when...
- Describe a situation in which...
- Recall an instance when...
- Give me an example of...

# STAR APPROACH

<b>Situation</b>	Background and context
<b>Task</b>	What you needed to do
<b>Action</b>	What you did and how you did it
<b>Result</b>	The outcome of your actions



# Q: TELL ME ABOUT A TIME YOU COMMUNICATED SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE TO A NON-SCIENTIFIC AUDIENCE

<b>Situation</b>	“Let’s Talk Science” Volunteer
<b>Task</b>	Create workshop on global warming for 8 <sup>th</sup> graders
<b>Action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Researched the 8<sup>th</sup> grade science curriculum</li><li>• Consulted with professors and TAs on strategies to simplify information</li><li>• Delievered the workshop to 20 students and kept them engaged by inserting analogies, videos and activities into the workshop</li></ul>
<b>Result</b>	Students expressed their newfound interest in global warming, and I was invited to deliver another workshop



The image features a bright yellow background with several abstract, colorful geometric shapes and lines. On the left, there is a red L-shaped block at the top, a light purple L-shaped block below it, and a horizontal light purple bar at the bottom. A teal horizontal bar is positioned below the light purple bar. On the right, a blue vertical line runs down the edge, with a light purple diagonal bar crossing it. A red vertical bar is at the bottom right. The text "WHAT ARE MY NEXT STEPS?!" is centered in the middle of the image.

**WHAT ARE MY NEXT STEPS?!**



# LINKEDIN PROFILES



**Azzam Bin Aamir** (He/Him)

Data Science Analyst @ Purolator | ADCS Design Team @ UW  
Orbital | Social Media Lead @ MealCareUW  
Kitchener, Ontario, Canada · [Contact info](#)



**Phil Miletic**

Career Advisor | Social Media  
Communications | Tech Ethics |  
Researcher in Digital Media and  
Games | Coffee Lover

# HOW DID WE DO?

We are always looking for ways to improve and your feedback is important. Complete the feedback survey delivered to your inbox at the end of this week.

*Our mission is to educate and motivate all members of the University of Waterloo community to develop and take action to achieve current and future career goals.*



**Regular  
Co-op  
Undergrad  
Masters, PhD, Postdocs  
Alumni  
Employees**



**Job Search Tactics  
Résumé  
Cover Letter  
Interview Prep  
Career Exploration  
Grad School Prep**



**Individual Appointments  
Drop-ins  
Workshops  
Online Resources**

**[uwaterloo.ca/career-development](http://uwaterloo.ca/career-development)**

# PRACTICE SELF-CARE

- Make a list of 3 things you are grateful for (daily)
- Resist comparing yourself to others; create a sense of community
- Remember to take time to do things that you love
- [Embrace "radical acceptance" \(Aisha Ahmad\)](#)



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**QUESTIONS?**