

# 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**

# PREPARING FOR INTERVIEWS

6/19/2024

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



UNIVERSITY OF  
**WATERLOO**

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Development



# KARINA WILK (she/her)

- Career Leader, Workshop Facilitator @ Centre for Career Development
- Recent 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](http://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

- Participate in the way that feels most comfortable for you!
- Take what works for you, leave what doesn't.
- Ask questions whenever!
- Feel free to ask your questions in private at the end, if you prefer.
- Please be respectful of other participants and facilitators

# LEARNING GOALS

- 1 Identify the steps to prepare effectively for an interview
- 2 Describe the factors that contribute to a positive first impression
- 3 Apply effective strategies for answering interview questions in both an in-person and a virtual setting

# CHECKING IN!



*How it feels to be interviewed (sometimes)*

**Share in the chat, if you're comfortable!**

- Your academic program, year
- A GIF (or emoji) that captures how you feel about cover letters!

**WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU HAD AN  
INTERVIEW?**







# PREPARING FOR INTERVIEWS

# 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 ROLE

## WHAT IS THE EMPLOYER LOOKING FOR?

- Experience
- Education
- Knowledge
- Technical Skills
- Transferable Skills
- Personal Attributes



# 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!



# VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS

# VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS: FIRST GREETING

- **Test your Tech:** test run the software with a friend to ensure a smooth experience
- **Be early:** set up your computer, close extra tabs, turn off notifications and open the program
- **Start with a strong introduction:** say hello, smile and look into your camera
  - “Thank you for taking the time to with me today.”
  - “I’ve been looking forward to our conversation”
  - ”It’s nice to meet you!”
- **Be prepared for small talk:** remain positive, find a common interest, avoid oversharing or controversial topics



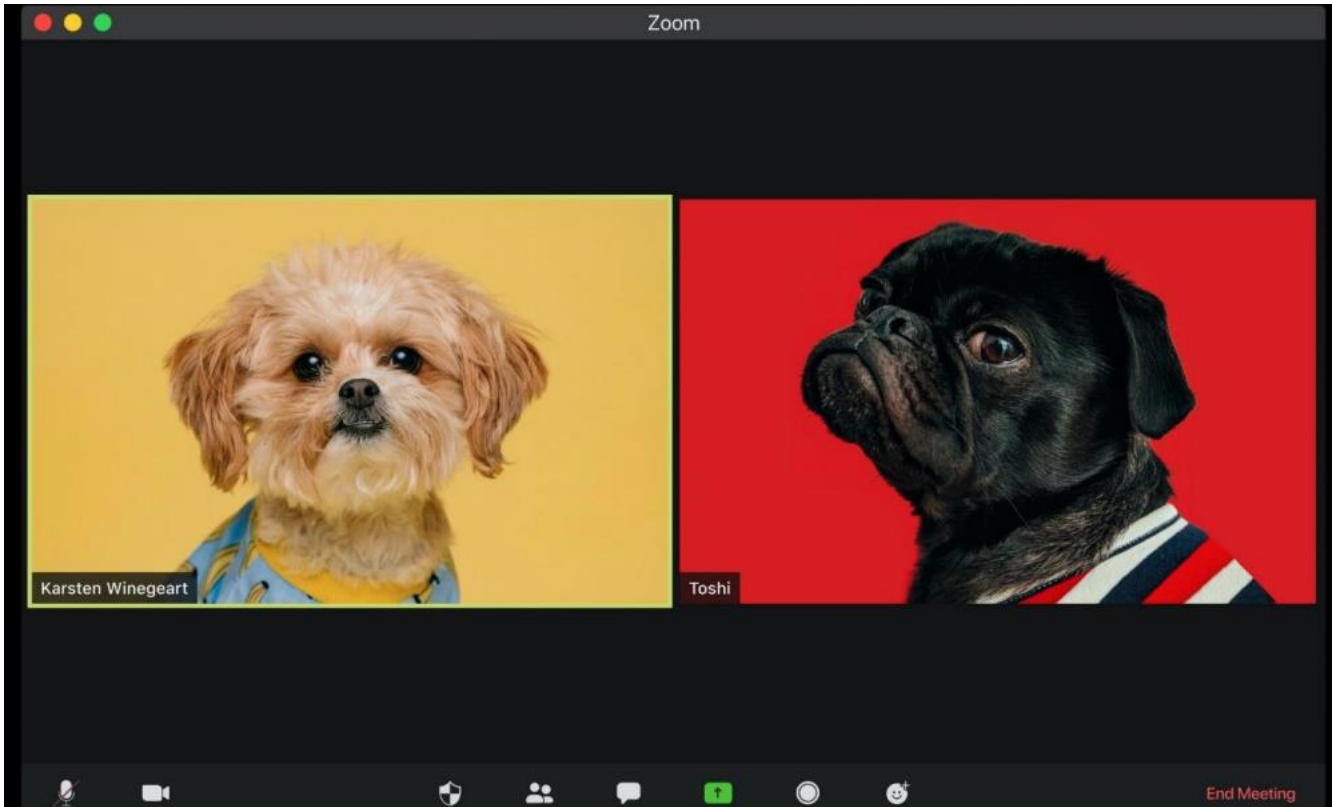
# VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS: APPEARANCE

1. **Sound:** find a quiet space and a room with some sound insulation
2. **Background:** have a clean, simple and professional background
3. **Camera Angle:** ensure your camera is at eye-level
4. **Lighting:** use natural light or a lamp. Ensure you are not backlit!
5. **Dress:** dress appropriately and professionally from head to toe



Photo by Christina @ wointechchat.com on Unsplash

# VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS: BODY LANGUAGE



1. **Posture:** positive body language
2. **Eye contact:** look into the camera
3. **Facial Expressions:** smile when appropriate
4. **Voice:** be mindful of if you need to slow down
5. **Practice your answers out loud!**





**WHAT MAKES YOU... YOU?  
BE YOURSELF!**



# THE QUESTIONS

# THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF QUESTIONS

**Classic**

**Behavioural**

**Situational**

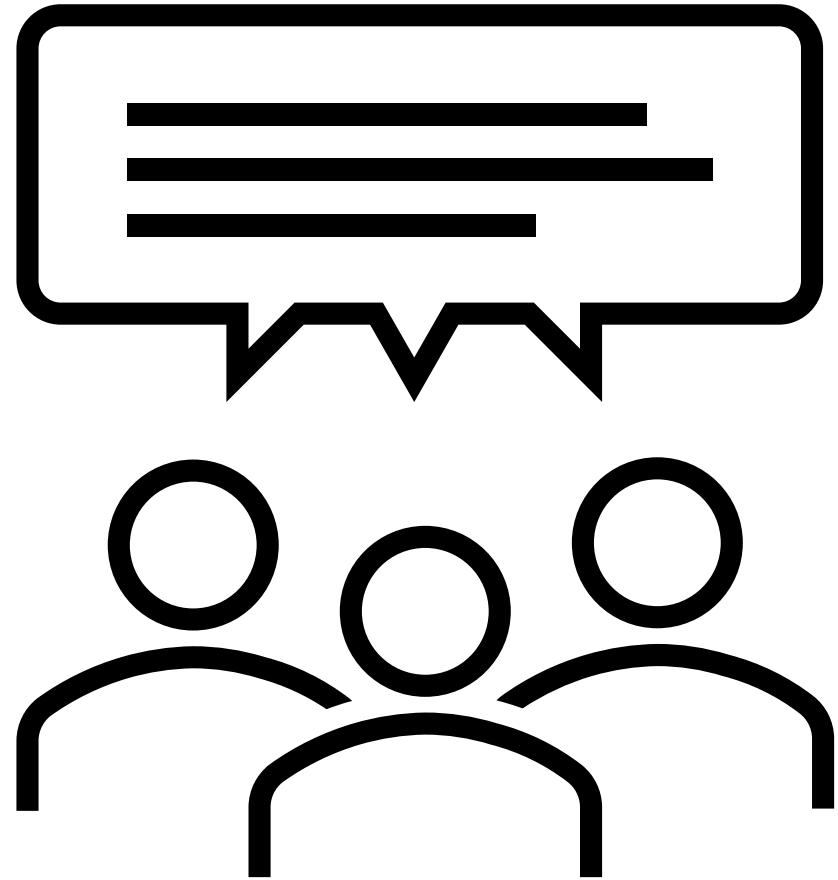
**Skill Testing/  
Problem Solving**



# CLASSIC QUESTIONS

# 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



# BEHAVIOURAL QUESTIONS

# BEHAVIOUR-BASED QUESTIONS

Past behaviour is a good indicator of future behaviour.

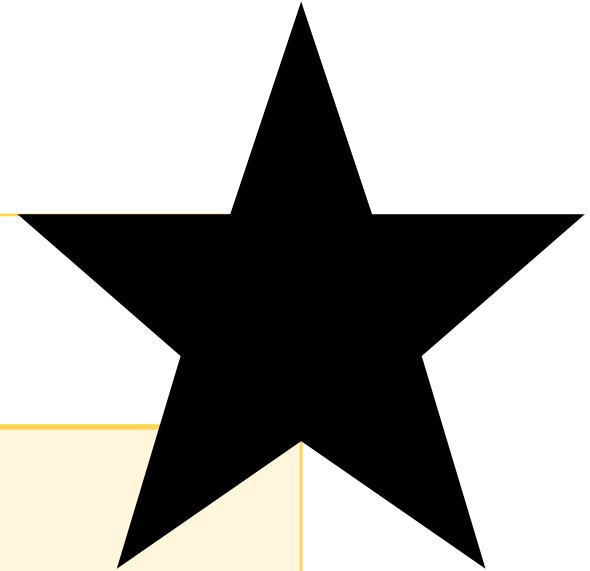
Typical behavioural questions begin with:

- 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   |





# SITUATIONAL QUESTIONS

# SITUATIONAL/HYPOTHETICAL QUESTIONS

- Actual (hypothetical) situation from job
- Can be very general but also can be very specific
- Typical questions begin with:
  - What would you do if...
  - Describe how you would...
  - What approach would you take...
  - Say you were faced with...



# SITUATIONAL/HYPOTHETICAL QUESTIONS

What would you do if you were almost finished working on a project that had a tight deadline but upon review you realized you'd made a mistake at the beginning that would require you to start over?

How would you resolve conflict with a co-worker?



The background features several thick, overlapping lines in yellow, green, blue, and pink. A yellow line runs horizontally across the top. A green line forms a large L-shape on the left side. A blue line runs horizontally across the bottom, partially overlapping the green line. A pink line curves from the bottom right towards the top right. The text is centered in the white space between these lines.

# **SKILL TESTING AND PROBLEM-SOLVING QUESTIONS**

# SKILL TESTING/PROBLEM SOLVING QUESTIONS

## Skill testing

- Technical questions
- Hands-on

## Problem Solving

- Written or spoken
- Demonstrate structured thinking
- Show your process (the right answer may not matter)

The page features a white background with several thick, colorful lines. A red line starts at the top left, goes down, then right. A teal line starts at the bottom left, goes right, then up, then right. A blue line starts at the bottom left, goes right. A yellow line starts at the bottom right, goes left, then up, then right, then down. The text 'TRICKY SITUATIONS' is centered in the middle of the page.

# TRICKY SITUATIONS



# WHAT DO I DO ABOUT...?



Photo by JESHOOOTS.COM on Unsplash

- Feeling nervous or anxious
- Silence
- Stumped

# WRAPPING UP AN INTERVIEW

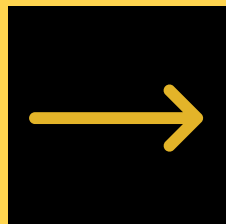
How do you best answer the following:

- Is there anything else that you'd like to add?
- Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about yourself?
- Do you have any questions for us?



# QUESTIONS TO ASK AT THE END OF AN INTERVIEW

- What do you expect a co-op student to have accomplished in the first month?
- What aspects of the role do you believe to be the most rewarding or the most challenging?
- What are the key priorities for someone in this role?
- Can you give me an example of the types of projects the previous co-op student was involved in?
- What type of training would there be for the successful candidate?
- In what ways can I prepare for this job, if I am the successful candidate?
- For jobs on WaterlooWorks Co-op job board only, you can ask about salary



# **AFTER THE INTERVIEW**

# AFTER YOUR INTERVIEW YOU CAN...

- Send thank you notes (emails)
- Connect on LinkedIn
- Follow up on questions, application timeline, etc.



# PRO TIPS

1. Based on your analysis of the role, the organization, and your own experiences, go into the interview with 5 things you want them to know about you
2. Treat the interview like a conversation, not like an exam
3. Demonstrate your enthusiasm for the role/organization
4. Make sure you have a list of questions to ask
5. Send a thank you/follow up email



# **CCD SUPPORTS AND RESOURCES**

# RESOURCES: CCD Appointments and Workshops/Events



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



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

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





**QUESTIONS?**

# UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO



## Centre for Career Development

**YOU+WATERLOO**

*Our greatest impact happens together.*