

From Stuck to Strategy: How To Get A Job in a Tough Economy

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Development

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WHOSE LAND ARE WE ON?

Our main campus is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land granted to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.

Our active work toward reconciliation takes place across our campuses through research, learning, teaching, and community building, and is co-ordinated within the Office of Indigenous Relations.

Learn more:

<https://native-land.ca/>

Office of Indigenous Relations



Artwork by local Indigenous artist Alanah Astehtsi Otisistohkwa (Morningstar) Jewell



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YOUR FACILITATORS



About Us

Paulina Cisneros (She/Her)

Sarah Badran (She/Her)

- Career Advisors supporting all students navigate co-op and career!
- Provide consultation via appointment on:
 - Job Search
 - Resume & Cover Letter Reviews
 - Interview Support
 - Career Planning and Further Education

WHAT THE JOB SEARCH CAN FEEL LIKE.....



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OUR ROADMAP FOR TODAY:



- Check in – what are you working towards?
- Focusing on what we can control
- Organizing your work search strategy
- Finding connections that lead to opportunities
- Refining your online search
- Questions



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WHAT IS YOUR ENTRY POINT?



- What are you preparing for right now?
 - 1) Volunteer job search
 - 2) Part-time job search
 - 3) Co-op job search
 - 4) Full-time job search
 - 5) Other!



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THE LABOUR MARKET



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- What is the connection between paddling down a river and the labour market?
 - The labour market can feel like a wild ride!!
 - There are elements of paddling that are in your control and many that are outside of it, and what can SEEM scary and intimidating at first glance (or first paddle) becomes a lot less so the more you learn about it and practice.



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HOW IT CAN FEEL TO ENGAGE IN THE WORK SEARCH

Out of our control:

Lay-offs

Government funding

Bias

Hiring timelines

Tariffs

How many jobs are
posted

Who is hiring



In our control:

Where we look for work

Applications

Interview answers

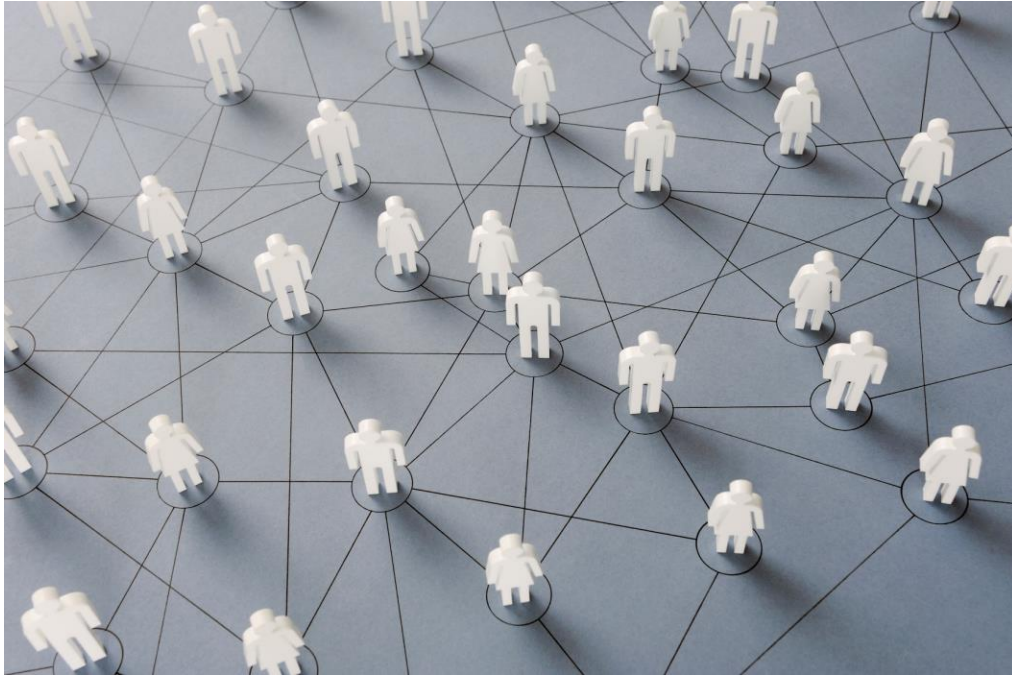
Networking/connections

Research

Time spent applying

**NETWORKING, JOB SEARCHING AND THE HIDDEN
JOB MARKET**

NETWORKING: “The #1 Job Search Strategy”



- Regardless of your degree program stream, your career journey is a chance to build your professional network
- You can utilize both your personal and professional networks to explore the world of work: family, relatives, friends, classmates, colleagues, professors, TAs, past employers, etc.
- Networking can take many forms! Use strategies that feel comfortable for you. Tip: ask for conversations, not jobs.



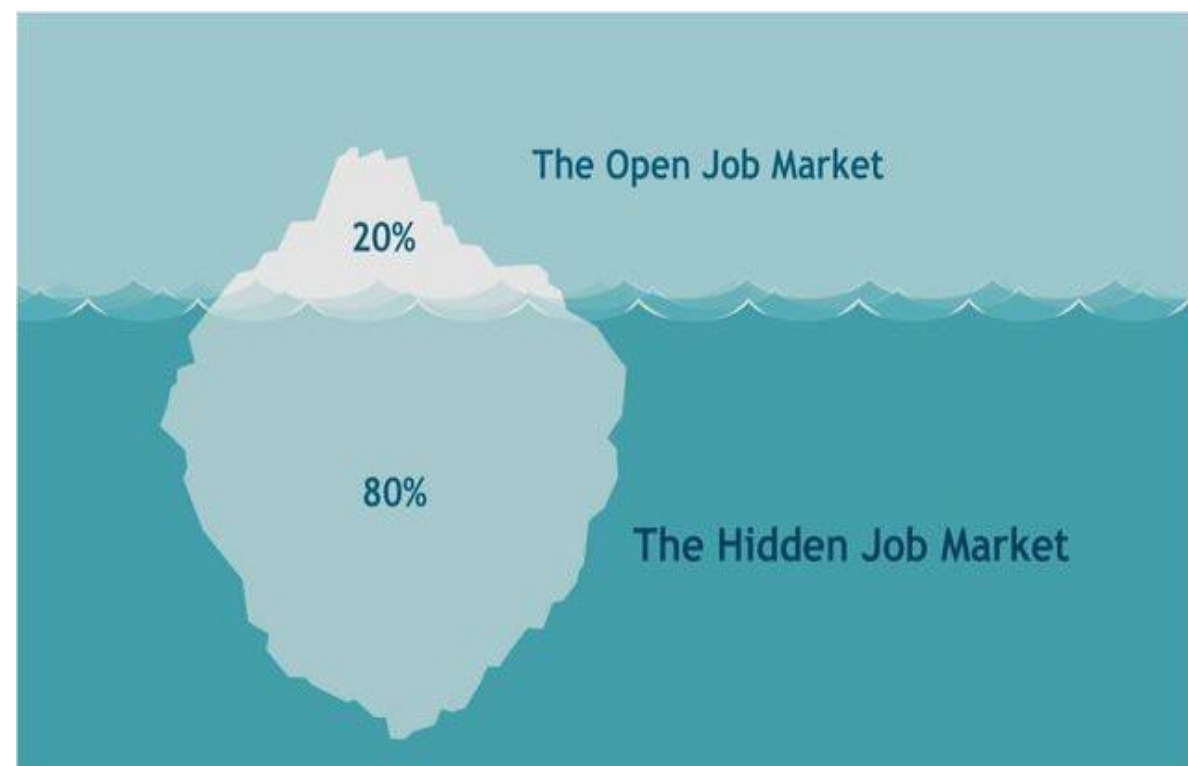
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Networking and The Hidden Job Market

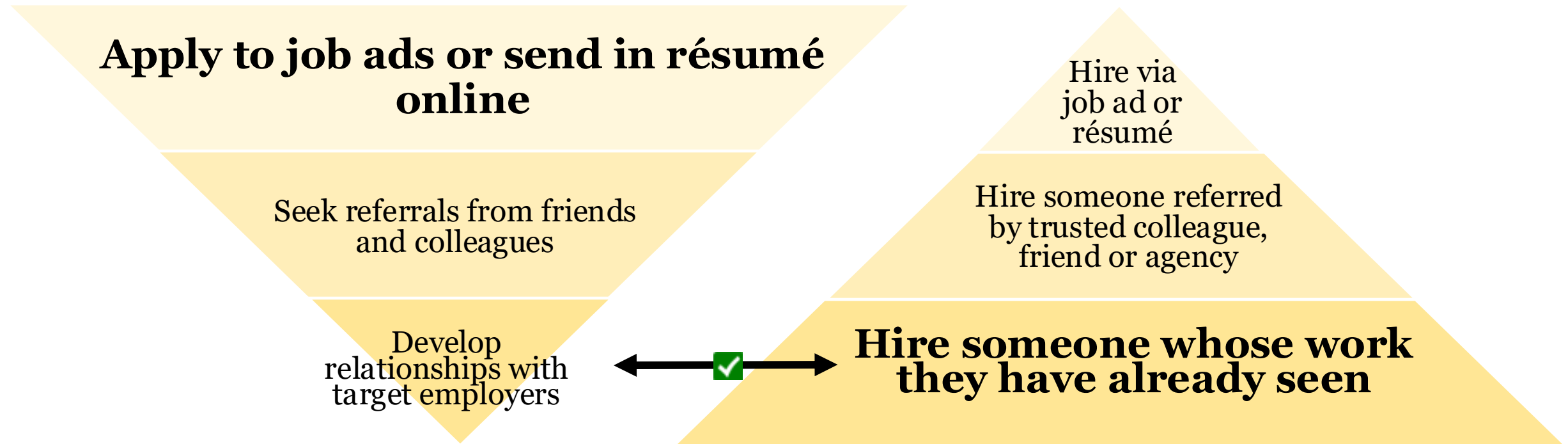
Networking = Making connections

The Hidden Job Market = Jobs that are not advertised



<https://myjobmentor.com.au/the-hidden-job-market/>

How job seekers prefer to job search



How hiring managers prefer to hire

THE FIVE CONTACT CHALLENGE

5 Contacts challenge

Who knows me, likes me and thinks I am competent?

Examples: teacher, family member, professor, coach, roommate, don, religious associate, gym buddy, recent grad...

Their name:

How I know them:

1)	
2)	
3)	
4)	
5)	



Connect with your contacts: a template

Greeting – Remind them who you are! “You taught my class...”

Goal – State what your short-term goals are. “I am looking for a job this summer in...”

Goods – Briefly summarize your key skills. “I have experience using Excel with strong attention to detail...”

Then ask a couple questions:

Get insight
*“What advice do
you have for me?”*

Gain new contacts
*“Do you know
anyone that I would
benefit from
connecting with?”*

Contact these 5 people by: _____

For more activities and tips, please visit careerhub.uwaterloo.ca

LINKEDIN ALUMNI SEARCH TOOL





University of Waterloo

Higher Education · Waterloo, Ontario · 366K followers · 193K alumni

 Kierra & 242 other connections work here

Message

Following

Home

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Posts

Jobs

Alumni

University of Waterloo

366,407 followers

University of Waterloo

366,407 followers

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We are proud to share that [University of Waterloo Alumni](#), staff and students are among the winners of the 2025 Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest Rogers Women of the Year awards. [more](#)

192,542 alumni

Search alumni by title, keyword or company

Start year1900End year2025

Where they work

5,585 | University of Waterloo

1,482 | Google

1,263 | TD

933 | RBC

923 | Amazon

889 | Microsoft

872 | Meta

862 | Scotiabank

830 | Apple

783 | Deloitte

664 | University of Toronto

Where they live

161,681 | Canada

144,440 | Ontario, Canada

82,222 | Greater Toronto Area, Canada

45,664 | Toronto, ON

44,060 | Greater Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterlo...

28,102 | Waterloo, ON

23,925 | United States

10,928 | Kitchener, ON

8,823 | British Columbia, Canada

8,040 | California, United States

6,460 | San Francisco Bay Area

Creating an EPIC Plan

Employer: Name an organization you'd like to learn more about.

People: Someone you know who works there, or someone who can connect you

Intention: Why do you want to connect with this person?

Conversation Plan: What topics and questions would you like to discuss?



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Organizing Your Information

Employer	People	Intention	Conv'n Plan	Notes
Acme Corporation	Mohamed Solyman	I took a class with Mohamed, and he currently works at ACME as a Business Analyst, a career I want to get into	I'd like to ask questions related to: His day-to-day, his experiences with the company, and how he leveraged his course projects to get the job. I'll plan to talk to him by the end of the month.	

CONNECTING WITH SOMEONE YOU DO NOT KNOW

I hope this message finds you well. My name is [NAME], and I am currently in my second year studying [PROGRAM], which I see you are a graduate of. As I prepare for my next co-op work term, I have been thinking about my next job search more and your journey has truly inspired me.

How you know them

I can see from your profile that you have made an impact in the [XYZ] field. I hope I can do the same someday. As someone who once stood where I am now, I believe your insights and experiences would be helpful to learn from.

Why you want to connect

I would greatly appreciate any advice or tips you could offer about moving my way through the [XYZ industry]. Are you available for a 20-minute coffee chat in the next couple weeks?

Call to action & gratitude

Thank you so much for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.



SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR A COFFEE CHAT

Questions about their Career Path

- How would you say you apply your knowledge and skills from your education? (if you had a similar or the same educational background)
- (If you're an international student) What was the visa and process like for you, and how did you navigate applications that require a PR while still studying in school?
- I noticed you went from X field into Y field, similar to what I am planning on doing. How did you frame your previous experiences as relevant?
- What advice do you have for me for sharing the skills and knowledge I've gained from my thesis work or other academic projects?

Questions about their day-to-day experiences

- How often do you have to go into the office, and is there some flexibility for when you can go into the office or work from home?
- What kind of contributions are you most proud of in your work?
- What do you find most engaging or interesting about your job? What is the least engaging?
- Are there opportunities to request to work on certain projects, or are you typically assigned your tasks?
- How does the job stay interesting for you?

Questions about their Employer

- I've read a bit about what your employer says about workplace culture. How do you find the workplace culture there, and does it reflect what is shared on their website?
- Can you provide some insight into the hiring process, from application to interviews? Specifically, what type of interviews are conducted and how many should I expect if I get chosen for one?
- What opportunities are there for upskilling?
- Does the employer give you opportunities to contribute to major decisions around a project?



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KEEP PADDLING - MORE TIPS TO KEEP YOU AFLOAT



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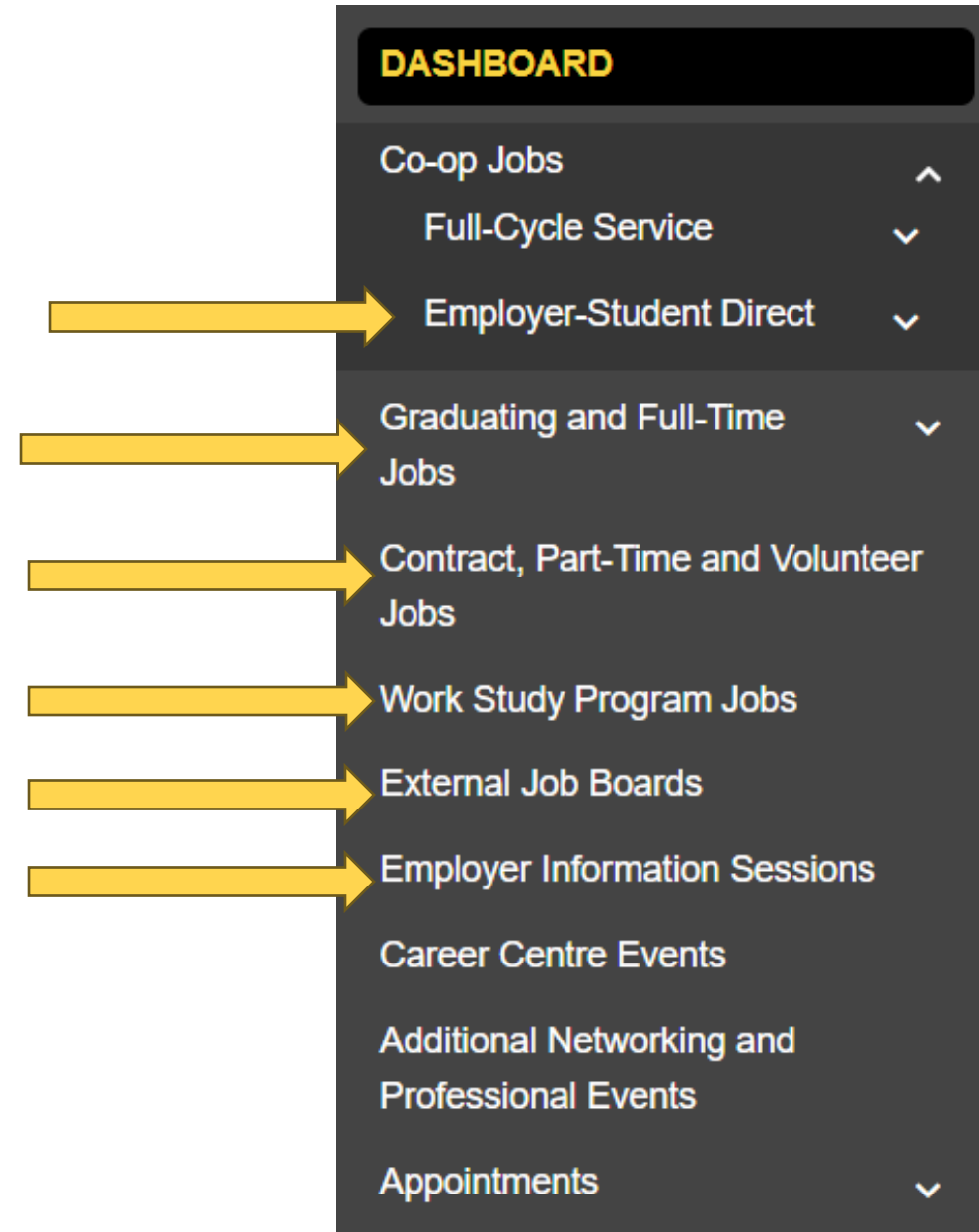
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USE DIFFERENT FEATURES ON WATERLOOWORKS

Regardless of if you're in Co-op or not, WaterlooWorks has some great resources for you!

There may be job boards you have not yet explored or Employer Information Sessions where you can meet employers directly



ADVANCED SEARCH FUNCTIONS

Search by...

- Key words
- Application opening/closing date
- Organization and division
- Tag filters (e.g., Research)
- Work Term
- Job Title
- Number of Openings
- Job Category (NOC)
- Level (Intermediate, Junior, Senior)
- Region
- Job – City, Province/State, Postal Code, Country
- Job Summary, Responsibilities, Required Skills
- Transportation and Housing
- Additional Information (e.g., Security Clearance Required, Own Transportation Required)
- Targeted Degrees and Disciplines
- For My Program/All Postings

***you are not restricted to jobs in your program; feel free to apply broadly!**



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THE POWER OF USING YOUR SUPPORTS IN A CHANGING CURRENT



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BOOK AN APPOINTMENT IN WATERLOOWORKS

What kind of appointments could I book?

- Applying, Searching and Interviewing: Work/Volunteer
- Career Planning and Exploration
- Further Education



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CENTRE FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT STUDENT SERVICES



Career advising

One-on-one appointments for:

- Résumé & cover letter writing
- Interview practice
- Career exploration
- Work search strategies
- Further education support

Book via [WaterlooWorks](#)



Workshops and events

Topics include but not limited to:

- Résumé & cover letter writing
- Building a LinkedIn profile
- Job search strategies
- P4E Job Fair
- Further Education Fair

Register via [WaterlooWorks](#)
or [Portal](#)



Drop-in advising

Same day, peer-led 20-minute conversations for:

- Résumé review
- Cover letter review
- Quick interview prep

Registration on [WaterlooWorks](#)
daily at 8 a.m.



Online resources

- [CareerHub](#)
- [Recorded workshops](#)
for flexible learning

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

- Remember that you deserve to feel joy and engage in activities that are good for you
- Good2Talk
 - A phone and texting service that offers confidential support to **post-secondary students**. Call 1-866-925-5454
- BounceBack
 - A free, evidence-based cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) program that offers guided mental health self-help supports for **adults and youth 15+** using workbooks, online videos and phone coaching. Call 1-866-345-0224
- Wellness Together Canada
 - Mental health and substance abuse support. Visit ca.portal.gs or call 1-866-585-0445



KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- There are factors related to the job market we can control and many we cannot
- Five Contact Challenge is a tool to use to start networking
- Alumni search tool can connect you with new employers and connections
- EPIC activity can help you think broadly about where the jobs are & who you may connect with
- The Centre for Career Development is here to support you

Just remember, when the work search feels like this...



....focus on what you can control.

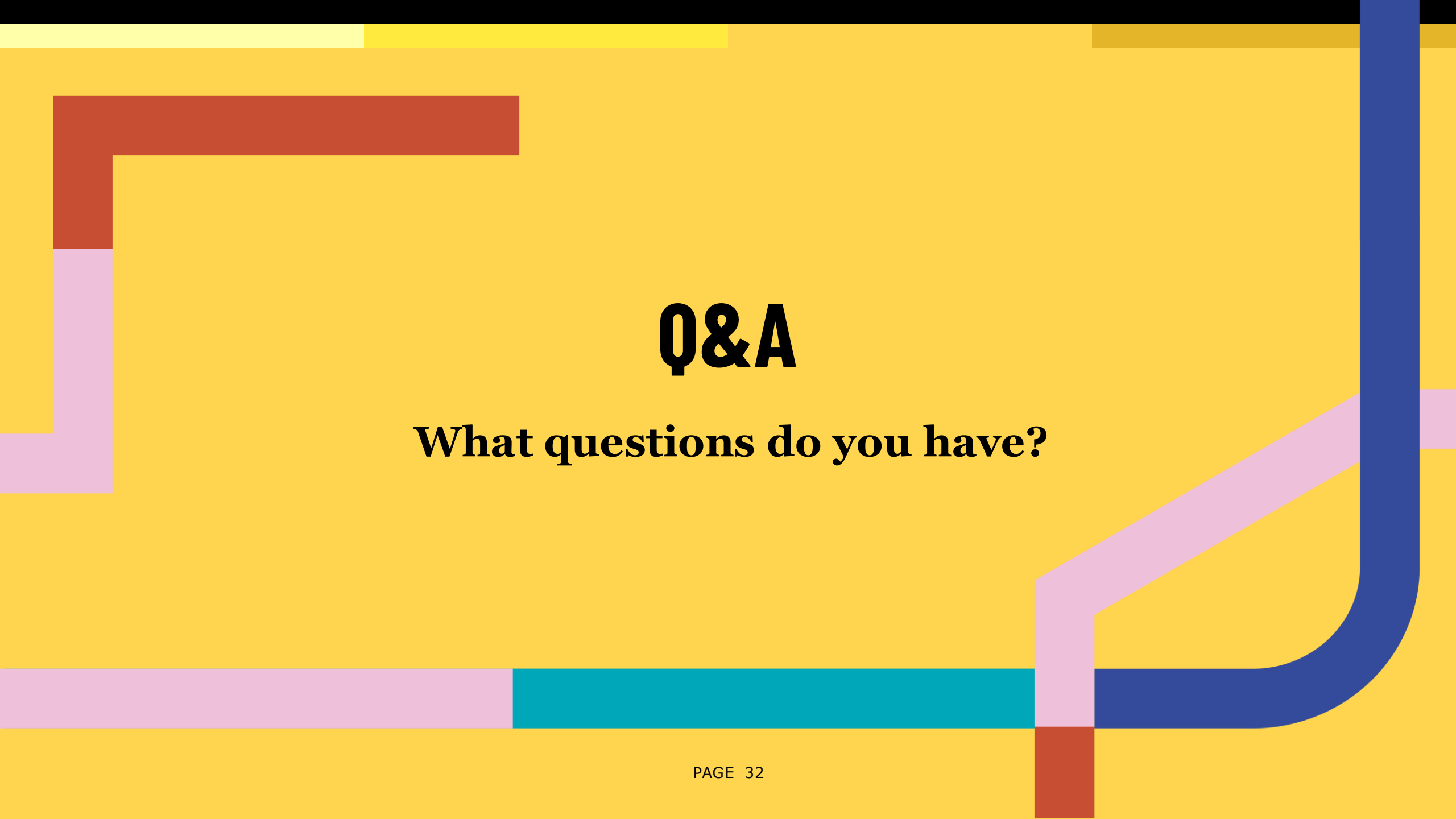


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WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!
Please fill out our survey.





Q&A

What questions do you have?

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