

# **Welcome! Please introduce yourself in the chat.**

Name, Program/Faculty, and something you are enjoying this Winter term!

(e.g. hobby, TV show you love, extracurricular activity, food dish, etc.)

# How To Interview Effectively

# Your Facilitator

- MA in Immigration & Settlement Studies from TMU, BA in Global Studies from WLU
- Background in community development and nonprofit sector
- Cannot count the number of job interviews I've had (A LOT!)



# Your Facilitator

- PhD in Psychology from McMaster University, MSc in Educational Psychology from Chinese Academy of Sciences
- Background in supporting graduate students and postdocs
- Strong believer that "interview skills could be developed, and everyone will land on a job sooner or later!"



# Territorial Acknowledgement

The University of Waterloo acknowledges that much of our work takes place on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron, Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples. 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.



# Territorial Acknowledgement



- [O:se Kenhionhata:tie Land Back Camp: Facebook, Instagram & Patreon](#)
- [Community group calling for Victoria Park name change: "The cities in the region need to stop celebrating colonialism and start celebrating Indigenous peoples...we're calling upon the community to start referring to it as Willow River Park."](#) Bangishimo, Co-Founder
- Buy Willow River Park Stickers [here](#) designed by [Western Sky Designs](#)

# Let's make this a safer space

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Listen and learn from each other with respect

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Participate in a way that works for you!

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Make no assumptions

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Remain respectful of others – we do not tolerate harmful behaviour in this space

# HOW THIS WORKSHOP WILL WORK

- ✓ Use the chat at anytime to ask questions or make an observation.
- ✓ The chat will be used for some optional participation/sharing
- ✓ A worksheet is shared with you for an activity and for you to practice on your own time. The one activity will ask you to write some things. Use whatever works for you: pen/paper, Word doc, Google doc, Notes App, etc.
- ✓ Q&A is at the end but always feel free to ask questions at any time.
- ✓ This workshop is NOT being recorded, but you will receive the slides within a week
- ✓ If you need any support, message (CCA Support)



# LEARNING GOALS

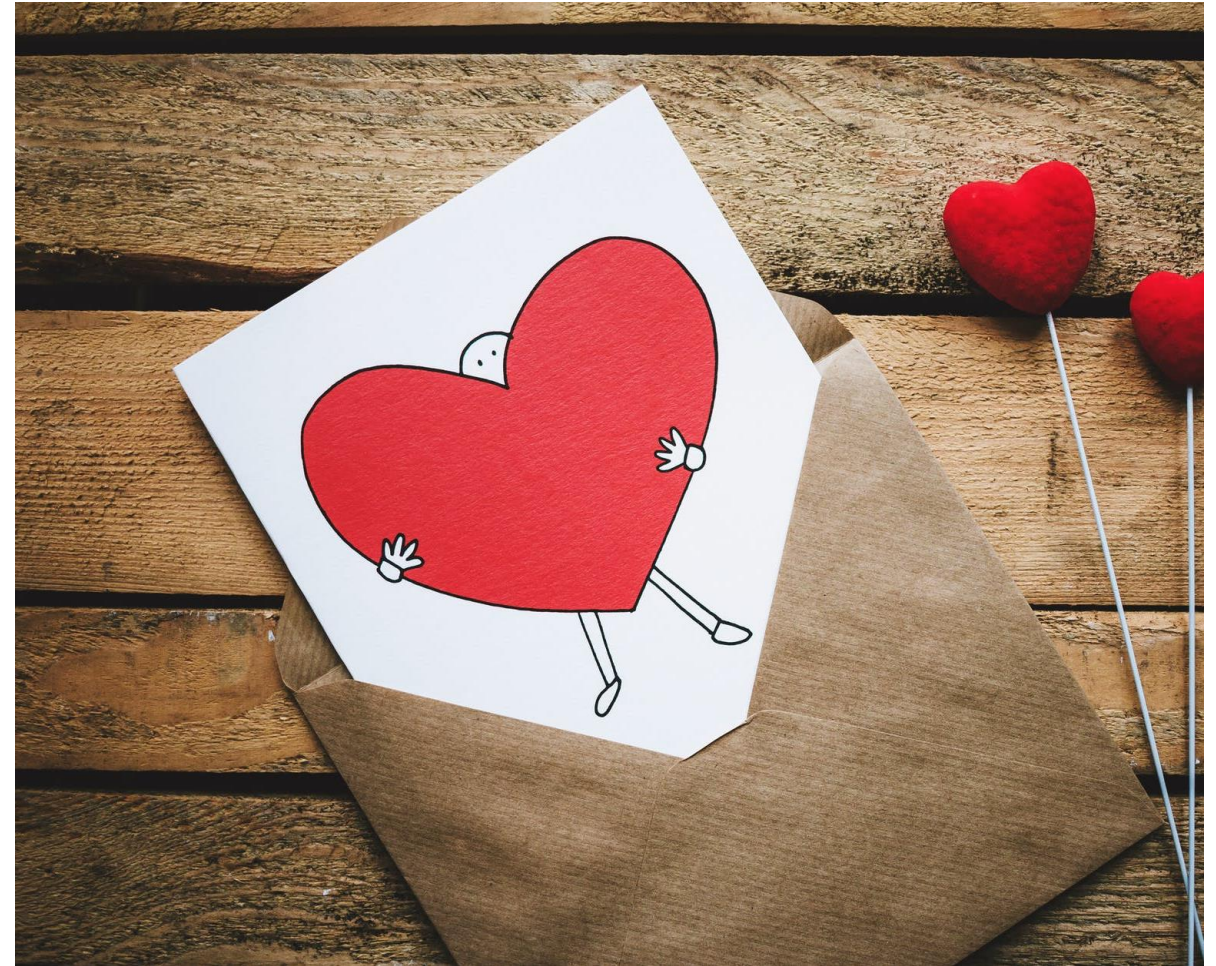
By the end of this workshop, we will cover:

1. How to prepare for an interview, including self-care practices to manage stress and anxiety
2. Translate academic language to industry language.
3. Apply strategies for answering interview questions.
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of responses to interview questions.

# **MANAGING INTERVIEW ANXIETY & PRACTICING SELF-CARE**

# PRACTICE SELF-CARE (before the interview)

- Resist comparing yourself to others; create a community of support
- Talk to people and practice with others
- Listen to music and dance or go for a stroll outside (move the body!)
- Breathing Exercises (using an app like Headspace)



# DURING THE INTERVIEW

- A perfect interview doesn't exist!
- It's ok to ask for a question to be repeated
- It's ok to stop and take a sip of water or deep breathe to ground yourself
- Be kind to yourself if you stumbled on one question
- Get up and do something between the interviews/talks: snack, dance, step outside
- You can follow up with a thank you email and re-word something or mention something you didn't express the way you wanted \*not relevant for co-op

# Mental Health Resources and Support

Empower Me, Mental Health Resources - 1-844-741-6389  
Available 24/7 from Canada and 23 international countries.

Counselling Services - 519-888-4567 ext. 32655  
Offers same-day appointments for emergencies and can be found in the Needles Hall addition on the 2nd Floor.

24/7 services:

Here 24/7 - 1-844-437-3247

Good2Talk - 1-866-925-5454

Grand River Hospital - 519-749-4300

St. Mary's Hospital - 519-744-3311

# PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

# Know Yourself

Reflect on what you want them to know about you + your resume:

- ❖ What kinds of problems are you good at solving?
- ❖ What personal strengths & skills are most relevant to the work you want?
- ❖ Which of your experiences **SHOW** you can do the job?
- ❖ What values are you committed to in your current and future work?



# Preparing for the interview

1. Based on your reflection of your values, experiences, skills, and career goals, go into the interview with **5 things you want them to know about you**



# 2 MINUTE ACTIVITY

Write 5 things you want employers to know about you.

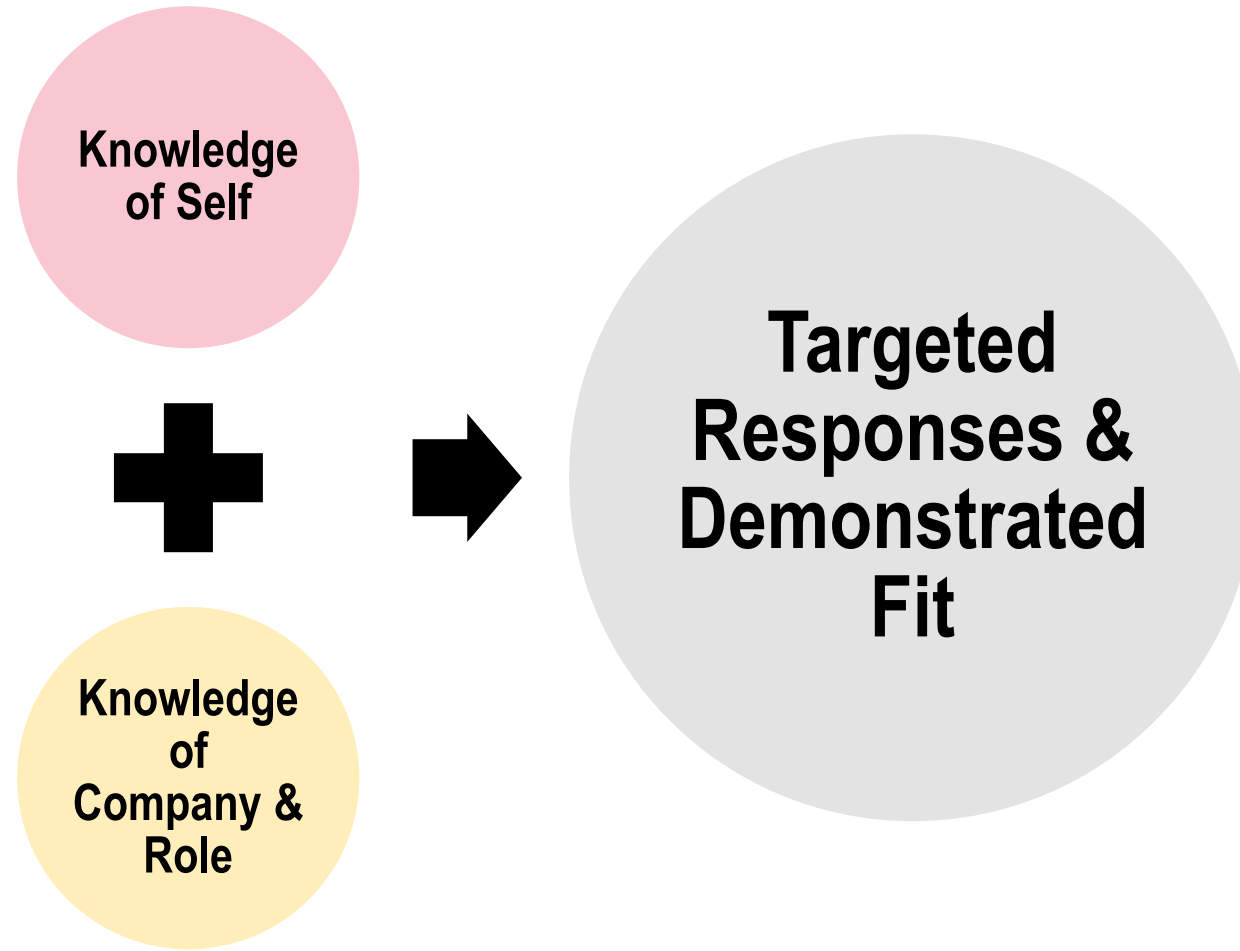
# Preparing for the Interview

1. Based on your reflection of your values, experiences, skills, and career goals, go into the interview with **5 things you want them to know about you**
2. Demonstrate your **enthusiasm** & knowledge for the role/employer

# Know the Company & the Role



# Bringing it all together...



# Preparing for the Interview

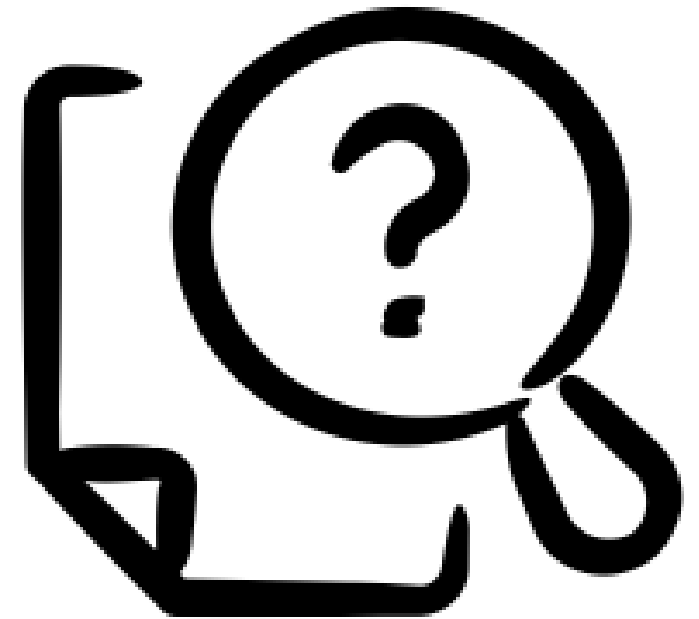
1. Based on your reflection of your values, experiences, skills, and career goals, go into the interview with **5 things you want them to know about you**
2. Demonstrate your **enthusiasm** & knowledge for the role/employer
3. Treat the interview like **a conversation**, not an exam

# Know Interview Details

If information is not provided, it's acceptable to ask about the format of the interview

- ❖ How many people will interview you? Who are they?
- ❖ Will the interview be 20 minutes or an hour?
- ❖ Will there be a technical component?

\*\*Knowing this information can help relieve anxiety and reduce surprises!\*\*



# **CONTROLLING WHAT YOU CAN**

# Controlling what you can

- ✓ Show up on time (even better - early)
- ✓ Dress for you & the role, and what makes you feel confident
- ✓ Engage with interviewer and show active listening
- ✓ Ask how are they are and if they can hear you
- ✓ Ensure a level camera angle
- ✓ Speak at a slow, even pace (especially online)
- ✓ Have relevant materials ready with you
- ✓ Be mindful of how you treat everyone you engage with



# Virtual Interviews: Controlling what you can



- **Test your tech:** test run the software with a peer to ensure a smooth experience
- **Be early:** set-up computer, close extra tabs, turn off notifications and open the program
- **Start with a strong introduction:** say hello, smile and look directly into the camera
  - “Thank you for taking the time to speak 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

# **TRANSLATING ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE TO INDUSTRY**



# Know Your Audience

**“If we take the degree as a job, then we need to learn how to articulate our time in the degree as time spent *working at a job.*”**

- Erin Wunker, “Articulating Academic Work Experience in a Non-Academic World,” *Hook & Eye*

# General Tips for Discussing Degree

- ❖ Avoid downplaying or hiding your graduate degree
- ❖ Know how to articulate your research and degree to employers, use it as leverage
- ❖ Frame your experience according to skills (but sometimes knowledge, if relevant)
- ❖ Do not underestimate roles such as teaching or grant writing



# Activities in this Section: Responding to Interview Scenarios

Throughout this section, I will be sharing scenarios of interviews. With each scenario, I would like you to:

1. Identify a problem within the scenario (there might be more than one, but focus on one problem)
2. Provide how you might change the scenario so that the interview goes better
3. Share your response in the chat

# THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Classic

Behavioural

Situational

Skill  
Testing/Problem  
Solving

# SCENARIO 1: INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

# Scenario 1: Answering Introductory Questions

Bel Kim (they/them) is being interviewed for a Customer Solutions role for a local start-up. The first question the interviewers ask Bel is “Tell us a little about yourself.” Bel shares that they are a MA student in X program, that they grew up in Winnipeg, they really enjoy playing role playing video games in their spare time. They conclude with “yeah, that’s me!”

Identify a problem and offer a solution that would prevent or mitigate this problem



# Model for “Tell me about yourself?”

- ❖ P = profile
- ❖ A = academic
- ❖ W = work or volunteer
- ❖ S = skills



# SCENARIO 2: TELL ME ABOUT A TIME WHEN...

## Scenario 2: Tell me about a time when...

Halfway through the interview, Maria (she/her) is asked, “Tell me about a time you experienced a conflict with a colleague and how did you resolve the situation.”

Maria was caught off guard; despite knowing that she might be asked this question, she never really thought she experienced any *major* conflict. Sure, some disagreements here or there but nothing she would classify as “conflict.” So, she chooses to share this info:

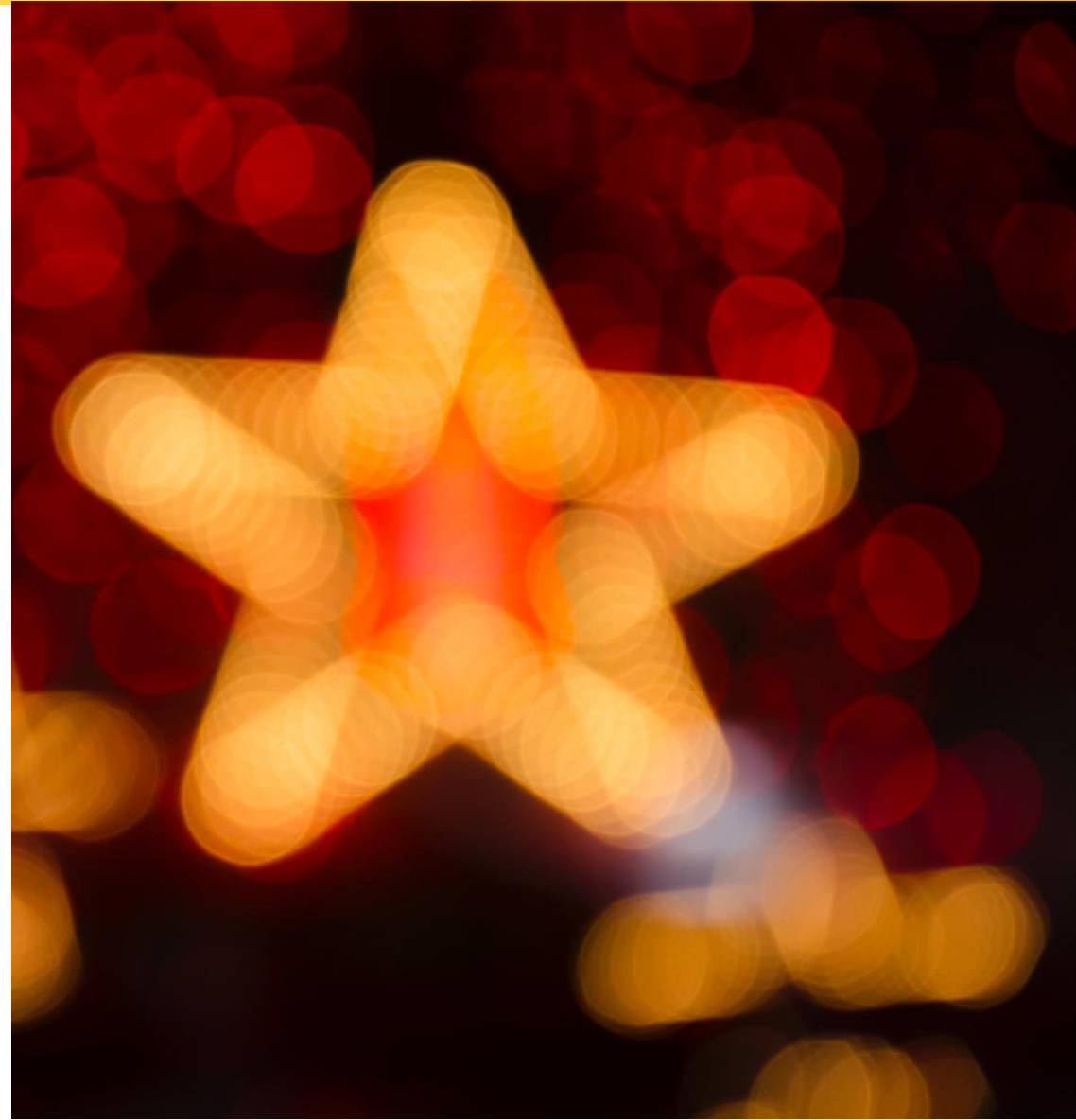
She tells the interviewer that she hasn’t had any major conflicts since she ensures that everything is clearly communicated and that any disagreements are handled amicably.

Identify a problem and offer a solution that would prevent or mitigate this problem

# BEHAVIOURAL QUESTIONS

# STAR Approach

- **S**ituation (provide brief background/context)
- **T**ask (describe what you needed to do)
- **A**ction (explain what you did and how, highlighting skills)
- **R**esult (describe positive outcome)



# An example of how to use the STAR model

**(Situation and Task)** When I worked at ABC Company, I was assigned a task to collaborate with a colleague in the marketing team to finish a web page design. Unfortunately, his deadline expectations were unrealistic for me.

**(Action)** So, I invited him to get together for lunch. I ask him about what his team's needs and their timeline. I repeated what I heard to make sure I understood what he said. Then, I walked him through the steps that I need to take to ensure the project was done accurately and how much time it takes me to complete each step.

**(Result)** Once we had the chance to learn about each other's processes, we had a much better understanding of the timeframes that were realistic. We agreed on a doable timeframe that would help us both meet our goals.

# SCENARIO 3: THE SALARY QUESTION

# Scenario 3: The Salary Question

Bugs (he/him) is in an interview for a Data Scientist position. The interview is going well, and he's feeling confident. Near the end of the interview, Bugs is asked, "What are your salary expectations?"

This catches Bugs off guard. The salary wasn't posted on the job ad, and he wasn't sure what a typical salary looks like for this role. He had an idea of what his preferred salary was, so he responded with a specific number. "Okay," says the employer. "That's much higher than we were expecting," and then continued with the next question.

A week later, Bugs heard back from the employer. He did not get the job, and one of the feedback mentioned that his salary expectations were too high, and they could not meet those expectations.

Identify a problem and offer a solution that would prevent or mitigate this problem



# OTHER QUESTIONS

# Situational/hypothetical questions



Actual (hypothetical) situation from job



Can be very general to very specific

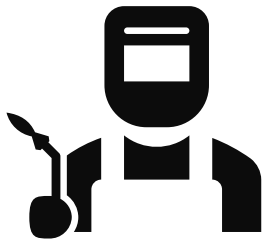


Typical questions begin with:

What would you do if...

Describe how you would...

What approach would you take...



## Skill testing

Technical questions  
Hands-on (e.g., Computer)



## Problem solving

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

# Illegal Questions Employer's Cannot Ask You

Illegal Questions in Canada for Employers to ask:

- age, sexual orientation, gender, religion, marital status and family status, financial situation, disability, race, place of origin, or ethnic origin

If asked, here are some options:

- Assess what the concern is, address the concern without answering the question: "Are you asking if X will affect my job performance? I assure you it will not."
- Or deflect: "X will not interfere with the job or affect job performance, could you explain how it is linked to job performance?"

# WRAPPING UP AN INTERVIEW: ADDING INFO & ASKING QUESTIONS

When asked if you have any questions, consider:

- ❖ What do you need to know to help you make an informed decision?
- ❖ What values are important to you and that you'd like to know the employer shares or is committed to?
- ❖ What gaps about the role or workplace have not yet been addressed?
- ❖ Any logistics you'd like to know about the role?



# PRACTICE SELF-CARE (After the interview)

- Take a moment and note the positives of your interview
- Plan to treat yourself after the interview
- Reflect on questions you had difficulty with
- Celebrate! 😊 YOU DID THE INTERVIEW! YAY!



# UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO



**Any Questions?**

**CENTRE FOR CAREER ACTION**