

PREPARING FOR CAMPUS HOUSING INTERVIEWS

2/05/2025

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ABOUT ME



Alicia Flatt (she/her)

– pronounced ah-LEESH-ah

Career Advisor

Past experience:

- Residence Life Director, Financial Aid Officer, hiring manager
- MA in Higher Education from U of T

Whose land are we on?

We respectfully acknowledge that we work on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (Neutral), Anishnaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, which includes ten kilometers on each side of the Grand River: land promised and never returned to the Six Nations.

Some incredible local community members on IG:

Bangishimo Johnston @bangishimo, Amy Smoke @amysmoke, C. Elizabeth Best @lizbot5000

Support: O:se Kenhionhata:tie – Land Back Camp, @ose.kenhionhatatie on IG

Reports: TRC Calls to Action, National Inquiry into MMIWG

Reading: The Inconvenient Indian, 21 Things You May Not Have Known About the Indian Act, This Place: 150 Years Retold

What land are you on? native-land.ca

Learning opportunity:

INDG 201 The Indigenous Experience in Canada



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 three things in mind:

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



How might we co-create this safe(r) space?

- Participate in a way that feels most comfortable for you!
- Please use the chat during presentation time. Ask me questions whenever! At the end of the workshop, you can go mic on or mic off during Q&A
 - Feel free to send us a direct message if you have a question or comment you would like to share privately
- Take what works for you and leave what doesn't



AGENDA

Before the
interview:
preparation and
practice

Preparing for
in person
interviews

Behavioural &
Situational Qs and
Role Plays

Next steps after
your interview

Wrap up, Q&A



What topics do you hope this workshop will cover?



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BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Preparation & Practice

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

What do you think students can do to help prepare to ace their 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!**



What is the employer looking for?

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



Know the Details

- How many people will interview you? Who are they?
- How long will the interview be?
- What components will it include?
 - Question and answer?
 - Technical?
 - Application?



Knowing this information can help relieve anxiety and reduce surprises!



Practice, practice, practice!

How will you practice for your interview?

- **Behavioural interviews:** mock interviews (visit CCD!), sample questions, practicing with folks you trust, GenAI tools (e.g., Microsoft Copilot), online prep platforms (e.g., [LinkedIn Interview Prep](#), [Google Interview Warmup](#))
- **Technical interviews:** connecting with upper-year peers, online prep platforms (e.g., [LeetCode](#), [HackerRank](#))
- Networking?



The background is a solid bright yellow. It features several abstract geometric elements: a red L-shaped bar in the top-left; a light purple L-shaped bar below it; a horizontal bar at the bottom composed of a light purple segment on the left and a teal segment on the right; a thick blue vertical bar on the right side that curves at the bottom; and a light purple diagonal bar crossing the teal segment and extending towards the top-right.

IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS

VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS

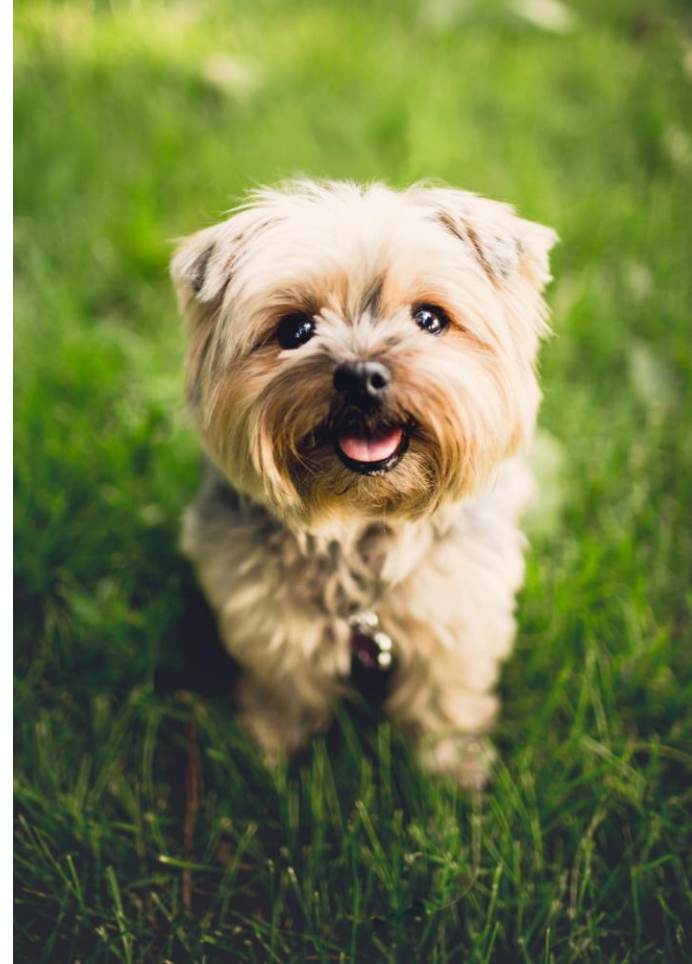
Interview Tips

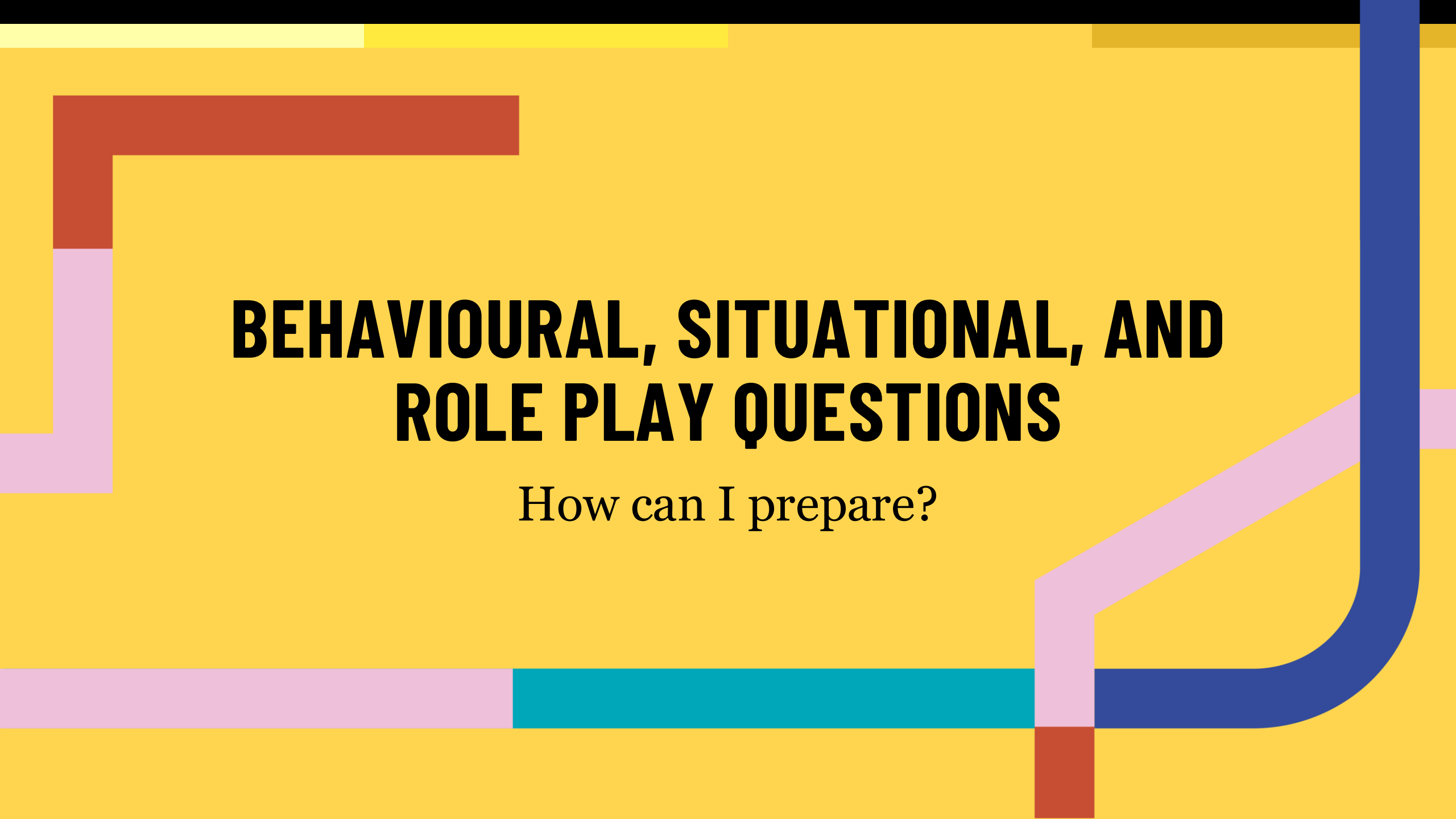
- **Be early** – ensure you know where the interview will be located and how to get there
- **Start with a strong introduction:** say hello, smile and start with -
 - “Thank you for taking the time to with me today.”
 - “I’ve been looking forward to our conversation”
 - ”It’s nice to meet you!”
- **Be prepared for small talk:** remain positive, find a common interest, avoid oversharing or controversial topics



Interview Considerations

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





BEHAVIOURAL, SITUATIONAL, AND ROLE PLAY QUESTIONS

How can I prepare?

The image features a white background with several thick, stylized lines in red, teal, blue, and yellow. These lines form various geometric shapes and paths, including L-shapes, horizontal bars, and curved segments, creating a modern, abstract frame around the central text.

BEHAVIOURAL INTERVIEWS

THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Classic

Behavioural

Situational

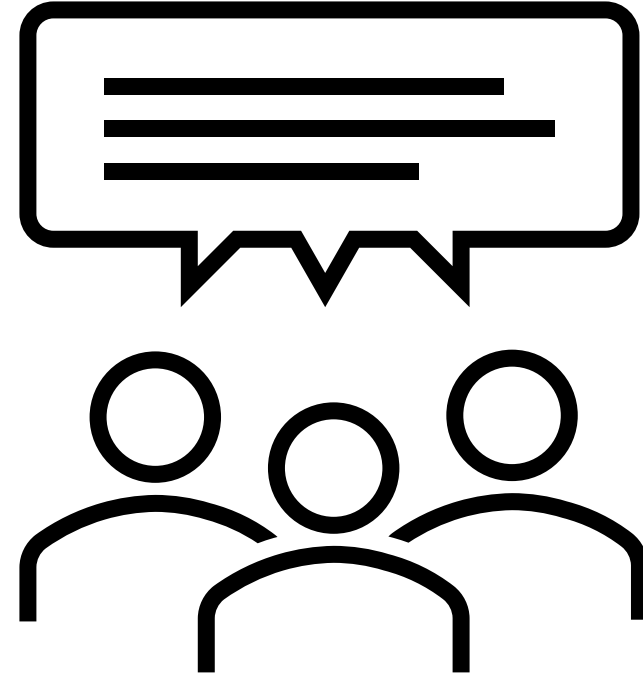
**Skill
Testing/Problem
Solving**



CLASSIC QUESTIONS

Common Questions

- Why did you apply?
- Why should we hire you?
- Organizational knowledge
- Strengths/weaknesses
- Tell me about yourself



“Tell Me About Yourself”: An Outline

- When/how did you become interested in working in the residence?
- What knowledge, skills and/or experience do you have?
- What are your short/long-term career goals?
- Can you tie this into the opportunity you’re pursuing?
- Anything else worth sharing? (interests, hobbies, fun facts about yourself?)
- Give yourself about 90 seconds (give or take) for this answer



BEHAVIOURAL QUESTIONS

Behaviour-Based Questions

Past behaviour is a good indicator of future behaviour.

Typical behavioural questions begin with:

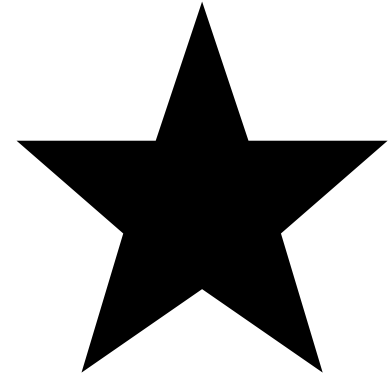
- Tell me about a time when...
- Describe a situation in which...
- Recall an instance when...
- Give me an example of...

The Job Description is a great interview prep tool

- For this position we're looking for:
 - Someone who is passionate about the residence experience, and is enthusiastic about promoting residence to prospective students
 - Someone who is excited by the chance to share their experiences and stories
 - **Someone who has strong time management and organization skills, can follow instructions, and is willing to adjust to feedback**
 - Someone who is an excellent and confident communicator
 - Someone who can effectively lead large groups
 - Someone who is a team player
 - Someone who can keep their room clean regularly
 - (Optional) Someone who is willing to record live footage and photography of their personal residence space and have the recorded content shown to parents, prospective, and incoming students
 - (Optional) Someone who is/wants to be a video content creator



STAR Approach



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



Q: Tell me about a time you participated in event planning. What was your role and what did you learn from the experience?

Situation	Fundraiser for cancer research
Task	Organized a craft and bake sale at my high school in a group of 7 people
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I was responsible for the advertising and marketing of the craft and bake sale• I created hard and soft copies of posters, had a social media campaign including filming short videos, and announced the event to the school
Result	We had 100 people attend our event, a 20% improvement from the previous year.



EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

Conflict is inevitable when you are working with people. Tell us about a time when you and someone you were working with experienced conflict or had a disagreement. Describe the perspectives of the conflict and what steps you took to resolve the situation

Campus Housing is passionate about creating communities that embrace equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism. Everyone deserves to feel like they belong in our residence community, and all have a responsibility to support an equitable living and learning environment.

- How have you embraced equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism (EDI-AR) in your personal life/on campus/in residence and how will you contribute to Campus Housing's efforts to create an equitable living and learning environment if you join the team?

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...



Examples of Situational Questions

What would you do if you noticed what one of the students on your floor did not leave their room often or engage in social events.

ROLE PLAYING QUESTION

Skill Testing vs. 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)



What do I do about...?



Photo by JESHOOOTS.COM on Unsplash

- Feeling nervous or anxious
- (Awkward) silence
- Feeling stumped/blanking



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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?



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Questions You Can Ask

- 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?
- What is the compensation for this position?*



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. Make practice work for you!
6. Send a thank you/follow up email *when appropriate



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RESOURCES & SUPPORTS

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- Job search resources
- Pre-recorded workshops
- And more!



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Thank you!