

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

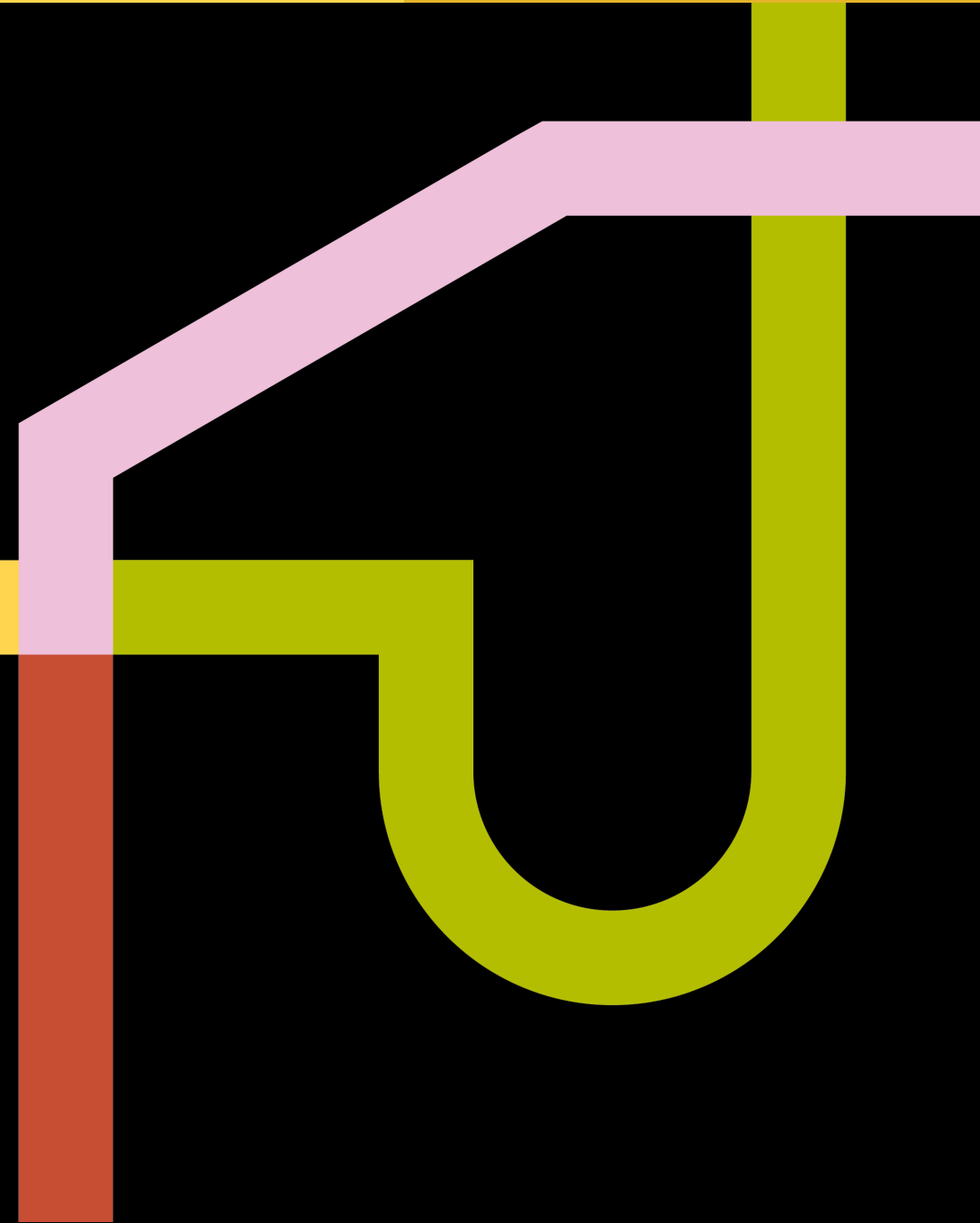
Note: This session will not be recorded, but attendees will be sent the slide deck after the fact.

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



# PREPARING FOR INTERVIEWS

1/21/2025

Sarah Badran (She/Her)

Centre for Career Development



UNIVERSITY OF  
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# Whose land are we on?

The University of Waterloo acknowledges that we live and work on the traditional territory of the Neutral, 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. Our work toward reconciliation takes place across our campuses through research, learning, teaching, and community building, and is centralized within the Office of Indigenous Relations.

**Support:** O:se Kenhionhata:tie – [Land Back Camp](#), @ose.kenhionhatatie, Willow River Centre

**Some local community members:** Bangishimo Johnston @bangishimo, Amy Smoke @amysmoke, C. Elizabeth Best @lizbot5000

**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](http://native-land.ca)

**Learning:** INDG 201 The Indigenous Experience in Canada, Office of Indigenous Relations <https://uwaterloo.ca/indigenous/>



# 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

Virtual vs. in-  
person interviews

Behavioural vs.  
technical  
interviews

Next steps after  
your interview

Wrap up, Q&A





**WHAT TOPICS DO YOU HOPE THIS  
WORKSHOP WILL COVER?**



# **BEFORE THE INTERVIEW**

Preparation & Practice

# PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

What do you think students could do to get ready for an 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

# What is the employer looking for?

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



# Practice, practice, practice!

## How will you practice for your interview?

- **Behavioural interviews:** mock interviews (visit CCD!), sample questions, practicing with folks you trust
- **Technical interviews:** connecting with upper-year peers, online prep platforms
- **Networking?**



The background is a solid bright yellow. It features several abstract geometric elements: a red L-shaped bar in the top-left corner; a light purple L-shaped bar in the middle-left; a light purple horizontal bar at the bottom-left; a teal horizontal bar at the bottom-center; a blue curved bar on the right side; and a red vertical bar at the bottom-right. The text is centered horizontally and partially overlaid by these shapes.

# **VIRTUAL VS. IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS**

# Virtual Interview Considerations

- **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



# Setting the Stage

1. **Sound:** find a quiet space and a room
2. **Background:** have a clean, simple background
3. **Camera Angle:** ensure 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

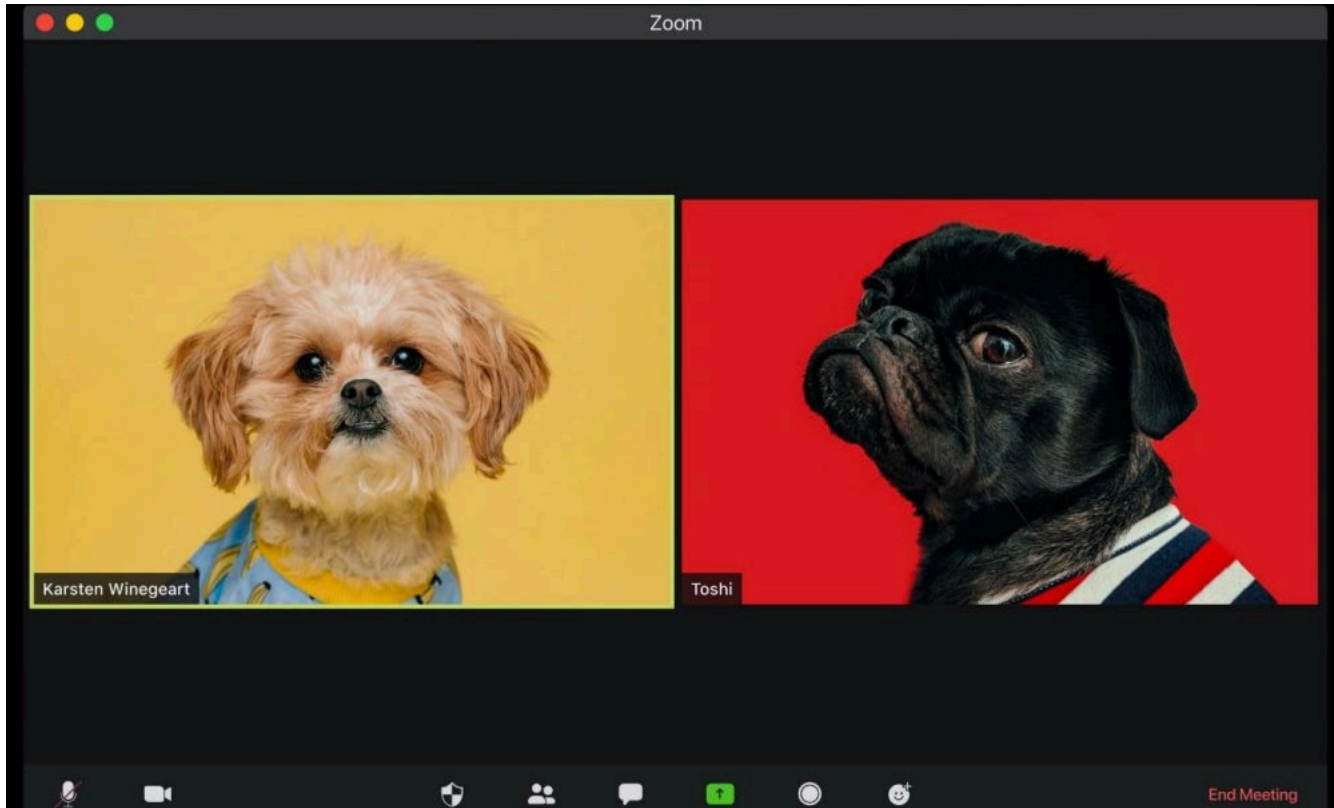


Photo by Christina @ wointechchat.com on Unsplash





# 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!**



# In-Person Interview Considerations

- **Know the way!** Where is the interview located? How long is the commute? Will there be traffic? Parking, etc.?
- **Be early**
- **Start with a strong introduction**
- **Be prepared for small talk**
- **Dress for the position**



The background is a solid yellow color. It features several thick, colorful geometric shapes: a red L-shaped bar in the top left, a light purple L-shaped bar below it, a light purple horizontal bar at the bottom left, a teal horizontal bar at the bottom center, a blue curved bar on the right side, and a red vertical bar at the bottom right.

# **BEHAVIOURAL VS. TECHNICAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

What's the difference?

# 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/role/opportunity?
- What knowledge, education, 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



A decorative graphic consisting of thick, solid-colored lines in red, teal, yellow, and blue. The lines are arranged in a complex, overlapping pattern that frames the central text. A red line forms an L-shape in the top-left corner. A teal line forms an L-shape in the bottom-left corner. A yellow line forms a U-shape on the right side. A blue line runs horizontally across the bottom, partially overlapping the teal and yellow lines.

# BEHAVIOURAL QUESTIONS

# BEHAVIOUR-BASED QUESTIONS

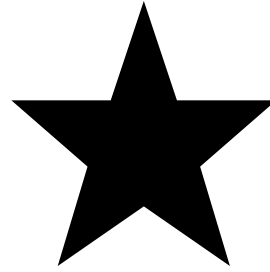
*\*\*Past behaviour is a good indicator of future behaviour.*

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>• Delivered 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 or 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 about work

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?





# **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)



# WHAT DO I DO ABOUT...?

- Feeling nervous or anxious
- Silence
- Stumped
- Salary



Photo by JESHOOOTS.COM on Unsplash

# WRAPPING UP AN INTERVIEW

**How do you best answer the following:**

1. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about yourself?
  - Think about what you didn't talk about that is important for them to know
2. Do you have any questions for us?
  - What do you genuinely want to know about? Initiatives, projects, training/PD, salary



# 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?
- 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 few questions to ask
5. Practice, practice, practice!
6. Send a thank you/follow up email





# Career Development Website



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## CENTRE FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT



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## Welcome to the Centre for Career Development



### Visit our website for:

- Booking appointments/drop-ins
- Job search resources
- Pre-recorded workshops
- And more!

<https://uwaterloo.ca/career-development/>



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# Thank you! Any Questions?



Don't hesitate to reach out!



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