

From Apps to Interviews: Your Crash Course to Employment

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CENTRE FOR CAREER ACTION

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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/>
National Indigenous History Month at the University of Waterloo:
<https://uwaterloo.ca/indigenous/events-workshops/national-indigenous-history-month>

WE AIM FOR THIS TO BE A SAFE(R) SPACE

We are entering this space with the intention of creating as safe a space as possible for you. Safe space means something different for everyone, but we promise you that we will try our best!

- Participate in the way that feels most comfortable for you! Take what works for you, leave what doesn't.
- Ask questions whenever! Please use the chat during presentation time, but you can use your mic during the Q&A if comfortable.
- Feel free to send me a direct message to participate anonymously
- If having tech issues, feel free to message Sana/CCA Support. We appreciate patience if any tech problems arise on our end 😊
- Please be respectful of other participants and facilitators

AGENDA



What skills do I have?

A resume?
What's that!

Even more documents?
Cover letters

Interview time!

What's Next?

Going from 'Zero' to Hero – 5 Steps:



**Know yourself
& your goals**



**Presenting
Yourself**



**Gathering
Documents**



Interviewing



Next steps!

Step 1: Know yourself + your goals

The world is going through major changes; so are you and your career plans and aspirations.

Take time to reflect on these changes and how you can adapt.

Different Approaches:

- Brain Storm/Word Cloud
- Pros and Cons List
- Where you see yourself in 5 years!



SKILLS CAN COME FROM ANYWHERE



Image from: <https://blog.jobactive.gov.au/how-to-write-about-skills-experience-your-resume>

- Formal / informal training, courses, workshops
- Relevant skills/experience:
 - Paid jobs
 - Volunteering
 - Student club
 - Extracurricular activities
- Relevant projects/achievements
- Awards and recognitions

Reflect: Self-Assessment

Self-assessment does not have to be a solitary activity. There are many resources available to help you:

- Attend appointments/workshops
- Consult family, friends, and your network
- Assessments ([Decision-Making](#) on CareerHub)
- Journaling
- Reading articles and books on career development

STEP 2 : (Aspects) of BUILDING A GREAT RESUME



IDENTIFY your skills, interests, experience, values and work search goals.



ANALYZE job description(s) and **IDENTIFY** what employers are looking for in a successful candidate.



DESIGN & CREATE a document that showcases how you could contribute via your skills/experience.



REFINE your document to ensure it is making the right impression, highlighting your strengths, and speaking to employers.

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

“Imagine a doctor's résumé... do you want the doctor's résumé to say, **“has worked with patients”** or **“familiarity with medical practices”** or do you want her to say **“successfully performed 20 surgeries”** and leave all that other stuff off? [Use] the highest value points and leave the other stuff to be implied.”

Director of Product Management, Primal

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

What are employers looking for?

- Accomplishments and results – not duties performed
- Relevant knowledge/skills/education/experience
- Personality (and how it fits)

What problems do they notice?

- Vague, confusing or irrelevant content
- Poor written communication
- Lack of visual appeal/formatting consistency
- "Here's what you can do for me"

RESUME SECTIONS AND STYLING

Name

Location, Telephone, Email

LinkedIn, Website, Portfolio

Summary of Qualifications

Relevant Experience

Relevant Projects

Volunteer Experience

Education

Awards & Scholarships

Professional Memberships

Publications

Presentations

Activities and Interests

- Include any relevant experience.
- Prioritize/order/place your resume sections based on relevance.
- Maintain visual appeal and clarity to capture employer attention.
- Consider industry standards – 1 or 2 pages?

DESCRIBING YOUR SKILLS / EXPERIENCE



Sales Associate, Campus Bookstore | Ottawa, ON

- Helped customers at the store cash register.
- Used Microsoft Excel to enter data.
- Answered questions and provided customer service.

VS

QUALIFIERS & SPECIFIC WORDING



DESCRIBING YOUR SKILLS / EXPERIENCE



QUALIFIERS & SPECIFIC WORDING



VS

Sales Associate, Campus Bookstore | Ottawa, ON

- Helped customers at the store cash register.
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Sales Associate, Campus Bookstore | Ottawa, ON

- Communicated **effectively** with **customers in-person, over email, and on the phone** to ensure satisfaction when responding to inquiries.
- **Improved** inventory management and tracking by creating **data storage spreadsheets** using Excel.
- Commended on **2 occasions for outstanding** problem-solving and customer service by the store manager.

WHAT TO WRITE IN A COVER LETTER?



The function of a Cover Letter

- Bridging your experience and the employer's needs
- Demonstrate your **interest in this role**
- Add details
 - Technical Details, Quantitative Values
 - Awards, team-based qualities
- Explain things- if you want to



268 Phillip Street
Waterloo, ON 12345

4th September 2019

Humber College
205 Humber College Blvd
Toronto, Ontario

Dear Recruiter,

As a student who one day aspires to be a professor, coming across a job posting to be a Math Tutor at an esteemed establishment was like a dream come true. I would like to take this letter to illustrate how my experiences in science outreach and my passion for academia, have given me the necessary skills to be a perfect fit for this opportunity.

At the university of Waterloo, I am currently a member of the "Let's Talk Science" out reach program, wherein my main duty is to excite the next generation about the wonders the world of math, physics and engineering have to offer. I have guided classes of middle-schoolers through their first lab experiment and have also explained perplexing physics concepts to high-schoolers. The latter is particularly beneficial, as it has taught me to how to break down vague and non-intuitive topics, into easy to understand steps.

In addition to the above, I also have excellent leadership and teamwork abilities, developed through years of volunteer work in a range of areas. In math class, I am the go-to person for help with assignments, due to my policy that you do not completely understand a concept until you can explain it to someone else.

I firmly believe my skills, passion and creativity will be a great asset to this college and look forward to inspiring and educating the future batch of scientists and leaders. Thank you for your consideration

Sincerely,

Making a less generic Cover Letter

- Advantages & disadvantages of personalized Cover Letters
- Making a less generic cover letter the lazy way- finding patterns
- Ways to personalize it: name of recruiter, name of company, projects, specifying job applied to
- Re-using and up-cycling Cover Letters



PREPARING FOR THE 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

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!



THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Classic

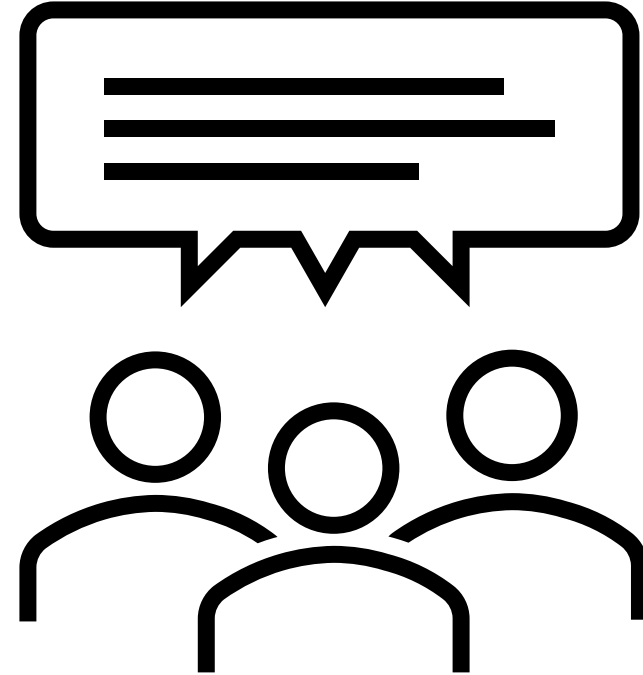
Behavioural

Situational

Skill Testing/Problem
Solving

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

- Why did you apply?
- Why should we hire you?
- Organizational knowledge
- Short/long-term career goals
- Strengths/weaknesses
- Tell me about yourself



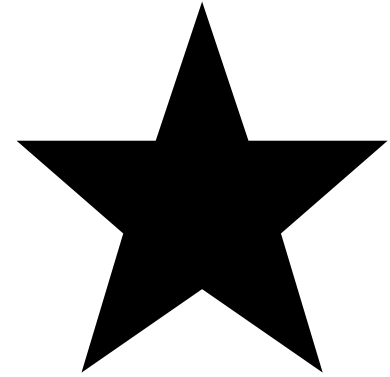
BEHAVIOUR-BASED QUESTIONS

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



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

What are my next steps!

LINKEDIN PROFILES



Azzam Bin Aamir (He/Him)

Data Science Analyst @ Purolator | ADCS Design Team @ UW
Orbital | Social Media Lead @ MealCareUW
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Phil Miletic

Career Advisor | Social Media
Communications | Tech Ethics |
Researcher in Digital Media and
Games | Coffee Lover

HOW DID WE DO?

We are always looking for ways to improve and your feedback is important. Complete the feedback survey delivered to your inbox at the end of this week.

Our mission is to educate and motivate all members of the University of Waterloo community to develop and take action to achieve current and future career goals.

Practice Self-care

- Make a list of 3 things you are grateful for (daily)
- Resist comparing yourself to others; create a sense of community
- Remember to take time to do things that you love
- [Embrace "radical acceptance" \(Aisha Ahmad\)](#)





**Regular
Co-op
Undergrad
Masters, PhD, Postdocs
Alumni
Employees**



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



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

uwaterloo.ca/career-action

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QUESTIONS?

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