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**Rotman  
Commerce**

# Preparing for interviews



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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

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Interviews are designed to evaluate competency, personality, and potential. Interviews put your presentation and competency skills to the test. But what are employers looking for? Employers will be evaluating you throughout the interview on:

- Career goals: type of entry-level job you desire, training program desired, and long-term career goals.
- Self-awareness: strengths, weaknesses, academic performance, skills, and experience.
- Qualifications: do you have the technical skills required to execute the work.

## Before the interview

- Plan your attire - will you be comfortable and professional sitting in it?
- Refer to the job posting for the qualifications required for the job.
- Identify your personal examples of the qualifications (most of which are skills).
- Prepare answers for potential questions using the S.T.A.R. method (more on page 3).
- Learn more about the organization and industry, e.g., trends and context of current events.
- Be timely, courteous, flexible, and professional when scheduling your interviews
- Practice, practice, practice!

## During the interview

- See page 3 for interview stages.
- There are five types of questions you will be asked in an interview: motivational, behavioural, situational, technical, and case-based.
- Non-verbal cues: It's important that you're aware of your body language, gestures, and reactions during your interview that can provide nuanced information to the interviewers.

## After the interview

- Thank the interviewer(s) with a smile and handshake. Be sure to maintain eye contact.
- After leaving the meeting space, and in an appropriate location, write down all the questions and answers from the interview that you can remember.
- In a few hours, reflect on these questions and answers and consider how to improve in the future.
- Send a follow-up thank you to interviewers within 24 hours.

## Interview stages

### Welcome and introduction (2-3 mins)

- Establishes rapport and first impressions.
- The interviewer often outlines what will take place during the interview.

### Employer questions (20-35 mins)

- 5 types of questions (see below).
- Bulk of interview questions asked are evaluative.
- Use real-life examples when you answer.

### Your questions (5-6 mins)

- Prepare questions from your research.
- Identify questions you have during the interview.
- Gauge how many to ask based on time remaining.

### Close (2-3 mins)

- Final questions.
- Clarify what next steps will be taken by interviewer.
- End on a strong note emphasizing your interest.

### Follow up

- Thank you email.
- Reflection: take time to write questions and answers from the interview and reflect on it later.

## The S.T.A.R. method

As you answer the interview questions, use the S.T.A.R. method to keep you on track, especially when you're answering behavioural questions.

Articulate the situation of your experience, the task of the challenge or expectation, action(s) that you took to solve it and the result of what you accomplished.

## Types of interview questions

- Motivational questions seek why you're on the path that you're on.
- Behavioural questions connect previous experiences as an indicator of future performance.
- Situational questions are to predict your responses.
- Technical questions seek your knowledge and capability.
- Case-based questions seek to understand your thought process.

## Metrics by which you're being evaluated

There are two questions the interviewers are trying to answer:

- Can you do the job?
- Will you connect with the team and the organizational culture?

## Tips

- Bring an extra copy of your resumé to the interview.
- Arrive on time - this means 10-15 minutes before your interview, not too early!
- Pay attention to names, and repeat names when appropriate.
- Prepare at least two questions to ask interviewers at the end based on your research.