Rotman Commerce

Virtual information sessions

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Virtual information sessions

Making the most of virtual platforms

Information sessions are still an important component of the campus recruitment process and now that they are offered virtually, we want to offer you some tips to ensure you make the most of these sessions. This means leaving a favourable impression with company recruiters, gathering more insights about the organization, and preparing a tailored application.

After your prep work or attending, you may realize the position may not resonate with your individual strengths, interests, and experiences. Nevertheless, participating in this information session is still a very good use of your time as you learn more about where you can make the greatest contribution. Let's focus on how to get the most of these sessions by exploring what to do - before, during, and after a virtual information session.

Before the session

Establish your goals

Give some thought to the skills you would describe as your strengths. Evaluate your values, interests, and experience and try to imagine how they may be transferable to various employment opportunities. This will help you identify the questions you need to ask to determine how qualified and interested you are in the position(s), such as:

- What do you want to gain from this session?
- Are you interested in learning about the different career opportunities?
- What skills and experience are required?
- Do you want to follow up with one of the presenters for an informational interview and have them share their career story with you?

Recruiters are impressed by authenticity as well as professionalism and will appreciate that you have given their session a lot of thought and preparation. If you need help with this step, book an appointment with a career educator through the Rotman Commerce portal.

Research the position, organization, and recruiters

STEP 1: Once you have identified your strengths, values, and interests, cross-reference this information with the qualifications listed on the job postings – do your skills line up with what they're looking for? Can you provide an example that would demonstrate you have this competency or experience?

STEP 2: Now review the company website – what is their brand? What message are they sending out to viewers? What is their vision/mission/client base? What services/products do they provide? Do you like what you're learning? Are the answers to these questions providing you with important information? Go beyond their website and do a search on the company. Have they been in the news lately and what is being said about them and by whom? All this will help you determine if the organization's values and activities are aligned with yours.

STEP 3: After all this research, are you still interested? And if so, why? Your answer to this question will help you stand out as it will be clear to the company representatives that you have done your homework.

STEP 4: Speaking of company representatives, if their names are provided in advance, review their LinkedIn profiles and learn what you can about them. Again, this will help you create more personalized questions to ask if the opportunity presents itself. (Most likely in a small group scenario such as breakout rooms).

STEP 5: After completing Steps 1-2, you should have a list of questions ready. Follow their prompts when the Q&A portion is open for questions. Add your questions to the comment section for the moderator's consideration. Some may be answered during the presentation and others will be sparked from information shared during the session. Don't forget to take notes!

Check your technical connections

- Make sure you have an updated browser (Chrome, Firefox, Safari), a strong internet connection, a working microphone, and a camera.
- If you are sent a link in advance, check it out in case you have additional set up on your end.
- Log into the session 5-10 mins before the event is scheduled to begin to ensure everything is working.
- Use a set of headphones or earbuds to block out background noise during the webinar.
- If using Zoom, check that your account has your full name as it's displayed on RC Portal. This will allow us to track attendance.

Camera on or camera off?

- Turning on your camera during the session can be beneficial for many reasons including allowing the host to see you and how you are engaging. With that said, if you feel uncomfortable keeping your camera on, putting a display picture up instead works completely fine!

- If you do decide to keep your camera on, here are some tips to keep in mind:
    - Make sure you have good lighting (preferably facing you so it brightens your face on camera), and a quiet, comfortable space free from distractions.
    - Try to keep the camera angle straight so you are displaying good posture.
    - This isn't the time to work on other projects, avoid checking your phone or email!
    - Make sure you're dressed professionally, well-groomed, and have good posture.
    - You can choose a background on Zoom but again, make sure it's appropriate for the occasion.
    - You should be visible during the entire session. If you must walk away, avoid distracting movements by turning your camera off but keep it brief.

During the session

Participate in the sessions

- Use hand-raising icons or post questions in the chat per the host's directions.
- Don't interrupt others.
- Ask your questions and make sure they are concise.
- If your questions are very specific and not of interest to the full group, save them for a small group discussion if they are offering breakout sessions. Alternatively, follow up with one of the representatives after the session by email or a coffee chat.
- Remain engaged and provide your input when asked questions, given a poll to participate in, and/or when put into a break-out room for small group discussion.
- Be respectful and considerate of everyone attending the webinar.
- Mute your microphone when you are not speaking to minimize background noise and feedback.

Have fun!

Remember these sessions are learning opportunities. Listen to your host and your fellow students. We hope these sessions provide valuable insights, help you make informed career decisions, and connect you with professionals in your field, including other students!

After the session

Reflect and follow-up

- Take some time to think about the session - what did you learn? How are you feeling about the position and company? Were you able to participate?
- What are a few things you feel you did well in the session? What would you like to improve for next time?
- What are the next steps for you to explore based on this?
- Was there an opportunity for you to collect the host's contact information? If so, decide if and how you'd like to follow-up with them, and what's your goal for following up?
- If you want to de-brief the session with your career educator, set up a follow-up appointment and learn how to gain the most from these sessions.