



McGill CaPS

Career Planning Service
Service de planification de carrière



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Interviewing Guide



www.mcgill.ca/caps

INTRODUCTION

TIP

When you receive a call scheduling an interview, be sure to politely request the following information:

- Time, date and location of the interview
- Name(s) and position(s) of the interviewer(s)
- Detailed job description (if you do not already have one)
- Contact number in case you need to reschedule the interview or contact the employer

Once you accept the interview, be sure to follow through with the commitment. If you have to cancel or reschedule an interview, do so as quickly as possible and provide a brief explanation so the employer is not left wondering about your motives.

If you have to decline an interview because you have been offered a position elsewhere, let the employer know the situation and thank them for their consideration. In being professional, you can better keep your employment options open in the future.

The interview is the most important part of the job search: often it is the candidate most skilled at interviewing who will get the job, not necessarily the one with the best qualifications. Your C.V. and cover letter lay the groundwork of your job application, but an interview provides you with a forum to really shine. An interview is an exchange of information between you, the job seeker, and an employer; giving the employer an opportunity to gauge your suitability for the position and vice-versa.

Because the interview is so important, it is essential you take the time to properly prepare. You want to sell your strengths, achievements and qualifications in a way that leaves a lasting, unique impression on the employer. Your job is to convey who you are, how you would contribute to the organization and why you are the best candidate for the position. For the employer, it is an opportunity to:

- Collect data about your background, skills and qualifications
- Determine whether your qualifications are consistent with the requirements of the position
- Evaluate your personality, your motivation for the job and your communication skills
- Assess your potential for growth, development and future advancement

The interview is also an opportunity for you to discover if the job meshes with your values and interests and is the one you really want. In a sense, you are interviewing the employer as well.

The following guide is designed to help you prepare for an interview so that you present a polished and poised image. CaPS can also help you by giving you a mock interview before your “real” interview.

INTERVIEW FORMATS

There are different settings and styles of interviews that can take place, depending on the employer’s preference as well as what needs to be discussed. The setting of an interview could be: one-to-one, with a panel of interviewers, in a group with other applicants present, during a meal, over the phone, at a job fair, or even while being given a company tour. The format of the interview could be behavioral (where the questions are mainly based upon past experiences), case style, technical (where the questions are more specific to the position and the skills required), testing based (where there are no actual questions asked; instead a test is administered to assess your knowledge and to determine your overall suitability) or a mixture of several formats.

This book will focus primarily on the behavioural type interview as it is the most commonly used format during the hiring process. Case, technical or testing interviews are often used following the behavioural interview as the next step in selecting and determining the most appropriate applicant.

Traditional and Behavioural-Based Interviews

Traditional interviews ask you about your goals, experiences and background. The behavioural-based component is predicated on the premise that past performance is the best indicator of future performance. **They require you to draw on your past experiences to showcase the skills in question.** There is a list of sample questions in the following pages.

When answering questions, make sure you understand the question being asked. If you do not, ask for clarification. If you are still having difficulty answering the question and find you do not have any experience on which to base your answer, admit you have never experienced such a situation, but hypothetically explain how you would handle it.

Case Interviews

Case interviews are most commonly used by consulting firms, but other industries sometimes use them as well. **The case interview format allows interviewers to see how you solve problems and how you might respond to certain situations that may arise.** Case questions may be specific or broad. For example, some may ask you to formulate a long-term policy while others may require you to perform a specific task, such as developing promotional pricing for a product.

Critical thinking, analytical ability, creativity and presentation are often more important in a case interview than arriving at the “right answer.” Interviewers are looking at your ability to analyze, synthesize information, handle pressure, and be creative.

TIP

CaPS offers workshops and mock interviews to help you prepare for a case interview.

STEP 1: KNOW YOURSELF

In preparing your C.V. and cover letter, you should have considered what **interests/experiences, skills, achievements and values** you want to showcase to a potential employer. This is known as self-assessment and the work you have already done for your C.V. should be helpful as you begin to prepare for an interview.

Review the self-assessment exercises you completed when writing your C.V. and cover letter. Consider how you want to verbalize and convey this information to the employer in an interview setting.

- Which of your skills are most relevant for the position for which you are applying?
- How can you best highlight these skills based on your past experiences and achievements?

You may wish to make a chart that lists specific examples of how you have used your skills to achieve tangible goals and how those relate to the job description.

Skills Needed for this Job	Examples
Leadership, initiative, problem-solving, communication	As a new camp counsellor, proposed and led weekly meetings with the other counsellors to discuss particular issues faced by the campers.

Alternatively, you can approach the problem from the other way by choosing an experience and thinking about what skills you acquired from it.

Experience	Skills
Served as President of the History Students' Association	Learned to effectively chair and facilitate Association meetings etc.

One technique you may want to use in helping you prepare strong answers to behavioural interview questions is the S.T.A.R. technique:

<p>Situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a brief overview of the situation. <p>Task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outline the specific task you were assigned to do, responsibility you undertook or problem you faced. <p>Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain the action you took and why - step by step. <p>Result</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the positive result or outcome of your actions using numbers or percentages if possible.

The purpose of using the S.T.A.R. technique is to draw parallels between your past experiences and the skill you are being asked about. Therefore, choosing an appropriate example is important. Do not pick something irrelevant or something that showcases poor judgement. On the other hand, do not be modest in your interview. Talk honestly about what you accomplished and sell yourself, but be careful not to lie or stretch the truth. Interviewers are adept at exposing dishonesty.

Here is an example of the S.T.A.R. technique:

<p>Situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The window display at the bakery where I worked last summer was not very creative and was not changed very often. <p>Task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• After getting permission from the manager, I took it upon myself to change the display every week, featuring the special of the week. <p>Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I made a backdrop, put some baskets in the display and filled them with bread and buns. I put the cakes on a slant so that the customer would have a better view of them. I changed the display weekly in order to feature the weekly special. <p>Result</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many customers commented on the attractive display and sales of the weekly special increased by 20%.
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STEP 2: RESEARCH, RESEARCH, RESEARCH!

Researching the industry, the employer and the position for which you are applying before your interview is important. **Being well prepared and knowledgeable shows your enthusiasm and professionalism.** Most importantly, it shows the employer that you are taking your application seriously.

RESEARCH THE INDUSTRY

Researching your desired field is as important as knowing yourself and what you have to offer. Before you research the specific organization, acquaint yourself with the larger industry. You may wish to consult the literature of professional organizations, business councils and other relevant websites to find out about salary scales, working conditions and current market trends.

Another excellent way to gather information on an industry is to conduct informational interviews with individuals currently working in that sector. Informational interviews provide you with a chance to informally ask questions about the work and market conditions of a particular industry.

RESEARCH THE EMPLOYER

Doing research on the organization before your interview is an important step of the interview process. The better you know the organization, its values and its services, the better you will be able to show how you will “fit” in. **Communicating how you can contribute and add value to the particular organization or company should be the main goal of any interview.**

Most companies and organizations now offer a wealth of information on their websites and you are expected to consult them in depth. When researching, keep the following questions in mind:

- What are the major products or services provided by the organization?
- What are the organization’s goals and values?
- What is the history of the organization?
- What are the organization’s community interests and involvement?
- Who are the organization’s major competitors?
- How large is the organization? Where is it located?
- What is the staff turnover rate?
- What opportunities are there for advancement?

When researching the organization, consider how your skills and values fit with the stated goals and structure of the organization. This will help you respond to interview questions and help you formulate questions for the interviewers. Be aware that you may be evaluated as much by the quality of the questions you ask, as by your responses.

RESEARCH THE POSITION

Researching the position for which you are applying can help you anticipate the type of questions you will be asked in your interview. **You should be able to communicate your interest in the job and its impact on your career goals.** In preparation:

- Research the general tasks and responsibilities of the position
- Research other aspects of the job that will have an impact on your decision (travel, overtime, shift work, etc.)
- Research salary ranges and other benefits

STEP 3: PREPARE, PRACTICE AND POLISH

According to polls, most job candidates spend less than an hour preparing for their interviews. Not unsurprisingly, unprepared candidates often give poor interviews. Thorough preparation in the lead-up to your interview will improve your performance and reduce your anxiety on the day of your interview.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

Spend some time preparing answers to possible interview questions. This will help you feel more confident, keep you organized and focused, and reduce your stress leading up to the interview. **You should be able to communicate your knowledge and experiences clearly, concisely and cogently.**

TIP

When researching an industry or organization, you may wish to consult:

- Annual reports or stockholder reports
- Prospectuses
- Trade magazines
- Websites

Consider asking a friend or a Career Advisor to conduct a mock interview with you. This will help you practice your answers, voice projection and eye contact.

TIP

It is always best to pause and collect your thoughts than to ramble a muddled answer.

Your answers should be complete, truthful and concise. Avoid rambling and getting off topic. Answer the question you have been asked. When confronted with a question, ask yourself why the interviewers have chosen that question so you can provide the best answer possible.

Interviews are essentially about communicating your skills and qualifications for the position. In order to be successful, you need to be both a good listener as well as a good speaker. Do not try to guess what the next question will be and listen to the entire question before answering.

Your syntax and grammar are important. You should use full sentences and avoid using slang and unnecessary “ums” and “ahs.” If you think this is an area you need to improve on, spend some time practicing your answers in a mock interview.

As the interview progresses, you should feel that a dialogue is developing between you and the interviewers. You may be asked to provide further details and the interviewers may give you the opportunity to ask questions.

It is natural to be a little nervous in an interview; in fact, it is healthy. It shows you care about the position. However, being too nervous, jittery, shy and tense may impede your success. Doing a mock interview beforehand is a great way to reduce your stress levels in a real interview: it gives you a sense of the format and questions you can anticipate. It may also be helpful to think of an interview as a conversation or dialogue, and this is your chance to find out more information about the organization and whether you really want the job.

Your overall attitude should be positive and attentive. Good posture and presentation is essential to conveying confidence and optimism. Always be conscious of non-verbal communication and the impression you are giving through your body language. You should:

- Sit up straight
- Make good eye contact
- Speak clearly
- Avoid nervous mannerisms and ticks

QUESTIONS TO EXPECT

The questions you can expect in an interview will depend largely on the position for which you are applying, the industry and the skill set the employer is looking for. Take the time to anticipate the kind of questions you might be asked and how you will answer them.

Typically, you will receive two phases of questions. Firstly, the interviewers will ask you general questions pertaining to your experiences, background and work habits. These general questions are followed by questions relating to specific qualifications.

General Information

There are some common questions that will invariably arise in every interview.

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your greatest strengths/weaknesses?
- Why do you want to work for us?
- Why should we hire you?
- What are your long-term career goals?
- What do you know about our organization?
- Have you worked in this field before?

Work History and Experiences

Remember that behavioural-based interviews are designed on the premise that your past actions are the clearest indications of what you will do in the future. Therefore, employers are keen to learn about your work history and experiences. Be honest and portray yourself in a positive manner with a string of successes.

- Describe your duties in [this particular position].
- Of which of your past accomplishments are you most proud?
- Tell us about a difficult problem you encountered in one of your previous jobs and how you handled it.
- What skills have you learned in your previous jobs and how will they be applicable in this position?
- In your experience, what are your ideal working conditions?
- What lessons have you learned from your past experiences?
- Explain the transitions between the items on your C.V.
- If I were to call your last employer, what would they tell me about you?

Interest in the Position

You should be enthusiastic and excited about the organization and the position to which you are applying. It is extremely important that you convey your interest throughout the interview. Doing your background research is the first step in being successfully.

- What interests you about the position, organization and industry?
- What are your long-term career goals? Where do you see yourself in a year, five years, ten years?
- What are your best and worst qualities? How will they affect your performance in the position?
- How important is this job to you?

Handling and Responding to Stress

Most interviewers will want to know how you react to stressful situations. This is particularly true for organizations that work with the public or in fast-paced environments. Interviews are inherently stressful, so treat it as your first test. Interviewers are watching how you respond to the stress of the interview and your ability to remain calm and composed throughout.

- How would you deal with a customer that is complaining bitterly about a product or service offered by the organization?
- You have been given multiple tasks and there is not enough time to complete all of them. What do you do?

- How would you respond if you knew you were right in a particular situation but all your co-workers disagreed with you?
- Tell us about situations that really bother you. How do you deal with them?
- How do you handle stress and pressure in the workplace?

Writing and Communication Skills

It does not matter what job you are applying to: communication skills are the foundation of any position. Interviewers are sizing up your ability to effectively communicate, both orally and in writing. Your oral communication skills will be on display from the moment you enter the interview room. Be eloquent, concise, polite and thorough.

- Do you have any experience speaking in public? In your opinion, what makes a successful public speaker?
- How do you ensure that your written work is error-free?
- Have you ever had a misunderstanding with one of your co-workers? How was it resolved? How could it have been avoided?
- How do you persuade someone you are right?

Responsibility, Judgement and Leadership

Interviewers are alert to indications that you are self-sufficient, creative, productive and that they can rely on you to carry out your duties and responsibilities. They also want to know that you are taking the application seriously and are going to stay in the position if hired.

- In what situations and in what circumstances have you been a leader?
- Do you prefer to have a lot of supervision or do you work better independently?
- How do you make important personal decisions? Work decisions?
- How do you deal with setbacks in your work?
- How do you motivate people?
- Name two management skills you think you have. What characteristics are most important to you in a leader? How have you displayed them?
- Give an example of a difficult decision you had to make. How did you handle it?
- What is the ideal working relationship between an employee and his/her supervisor?

Creativity and Flexibility

Most jobs in today's workplaces require individuals to be flexible and creative. Employers want to know that you can think outside of the box; that you are going to add value to the organization, regardless of the position. Chances are your new job will require you to undertake and complete a variety of tasks. Employers do not want to hire someone who is too rigid in their work habits. Being able to come up with a solution to a problem is an important part of any job.

- Tell me about a time when your ideas or suggestions helped improve some aspect of your workplace.
- Your job requires you to keep track of multiple tasks. Is this a problem?
- How do you feel about working extra hours on occasion?
- Sometimes our department offers support to [department x]. Would you be comfortable working with them?

Analytical Thinking

Employers are looking to hire someone who can think through a problem in a methodical manner. Interviewers may ask you questions designed to highlight your thinking process. Take the time to assess what they are asking you and do not rush into an answer. A carefully thought-out response is better than a hurried and muddled one.

- If you were hiring someone for this position, what attributes would you look for? Why?
- Tell me what your perfect job would be within this organization.
- What has been your greatest intellectual challenge so far? How did you overcome it?
- How do you define “success” in your personal life? How should an organization define “success”?

Planning and Organization

Planning and organization are paramount in any job. Employers want to ensure that you recognize the importance of details and well-thought-out plans. In answering these questions, remember to draw upon your past experiences and how you organized your approach to a specific problem or planned to achieve a certain goal.

- If you were in charge here, what would be your long-term goals for the organization?
- What does it mean to be “organized”?
- Your job involves keeping track of many details. How would you ensure that nothing is overlooked?
- What are your short-term career goals? What are your long-term career goals?
- Are you a naturally organized person? If not, how do you keep yourself organized?
- How do you see yourself growing in this position?

Interpersonal Skills

The degree of interpersonal skills required by a candidate will naturally depend on the job description. For positions where you deal with customers, the public or work closely with a team, employers will be looking for good interpersonal skills.

- What are you willing to do to make a client happy? Where do you draw the line?
- Have you ever encountered a really difficult client? How did you resolve the situation?
- What do you like most about working with others? What do you like least?
- Tell us about a time when you worked in a team. What was your role?

Work Ethic

Hardwork: all employers are looking for dedicated employees who are willing to get the job done.

- What do you consider your greatest achievement? How did you achieve it?
- How does it make you feel if you do not complete a task?
- What does “hard work” mean to you?

Teamwork and Cooperation

Teamwork and cooperation are essential in all entry-level positions where you will often be a cog in a larger machine. This means you will have to sacrifice some of your personal needs, desires and credit for the greater good of the team. Interviewers are probing to see whether you can be a team player.

- Do you work well with others?
- Tell us about a time you were a member of a team. Was it rewarding? Frustrating?
- Is personal recognition important to you?
- Tell us about a time you had to sacrifice your personal needs for the larger good of a team.
- What would you do if members of your team were not doing their fair share of the work?

Trustworthiness

Most organizations deal with delicate information in one form or another. Interviewers want to know that you can be trusted to keep information confidential.

- Have you ever been trusted with sensitive information?
- Tell us about a time that you were required to be loyal to someone even though it was difficult.
- Would your friends consider you someone who can be relied upon?

Skills and Qualifications

All jobs require specific skills and qualifications, whether it is being able to use a word processor or being a member of a particular professional association. Depending on what is required, the interviewers may want you to show a portfolio or examples of your past work. They may ask you about situations where you applied your skills.

- Tell me about a time when you used [technology x] to improve your communication skills.
- Describe your experience with [technology x].
- Why do you feel you are qualified for this job?

CASE QUESTIONS

Brain Teasers

Many consulting firms give their applicants brain teasers to test their creativity and analytical skills. You may be given a time limit so do not become bogged down.

- A company has ten machines that produce gold coins. One of the machines is producing coins that are a gram too light. How do you tell which machine is making the defective coins with only one weighing? [taken from *Vault Guide*]

Guesstimate

Firms that are looking for someone with good technical and mathematical abilities may ask you to answer a question like, “How many golf balls fit into a 747?” The right answer is not what is important, but rather your thought process. The interviewer is trying to see if you can think logically.

- How many new cars were purchased in Quebec last year?
- How many gallons of white housepaint are sold in Canada each year?

Project

These kinds of questions are designed to flex your creativity and ingenuity. Try to relate your answer to the position for which you are applying. In other words, if you are applying for an engineering position, talk about design or engineering aspects of the project.

- Design the ideal toaster.

World Issues and Global Awareness

Interviewers may ask you about current events to test your ability to think through complex socio-economic problems.

- What are the most pressing issues facing the Prime Minister today? What would you do, if you were Prime Minister, to address these issues?

TIP

CaPS has copies of the *Vault Guide* and the *WetFeet Insider Guide* on reserve. These publications can help you prepare and practice for a case interview.

Our office has resources in the Career Resource Centre to help you prepare for a case interview and you can book an appointment with a Career Advisor to have a mock case interview.

RESPONSES TO TOUGH QUESTIONS

One common challenge faced by all interviewees is addressing questions that deal with your shortcomings, such as “What are your weaknesses?” When responding, it is important to put a positive spin on your answer. Try to:

- Turn your weakness into a potential strength or explain how you have overcome or compensated for the weakness
- Avoid mentioning any personal qualities that may hamper job performance, such as bad temper, dishonesty or laziness
- Select an example where you can show that you are improving
- Avoid clichés (ex. “I work too hard.”)

Another difficult question concerns salary. A lot of embarrassment and awkwardness can be avoided if you do your research beforehand and are knowledgeable about typical salary ranges in the industry and profession. What is important is to give a foundation, or reason, for the salary you mention, and not to just blurt out a number. For instance, you could say:

- “After doing some research on average salaries for individuals in this profession, I am hoping for a starting salary somewhere between the range of [x] and [x].”
- “Ideally I am looking for something between the range of [x] and [x], but am flexible depending on the compensation and benefits package your organization offers.”

TIP

For other strategies on how to answer tough questions in a particular industry, you may want to ask for advice from your mentor or a working professional.

HANDLING ILLEGAL QUESTIONS

Various laws regulate the questions a prospective employer can ask you. **An interviewer's questions must be related to the job you are applying for.** By law, employers are not permitted to ask you about your citizenship, your age, your marital status, your affiliation with organizations, or your criminal record. If you are asked an illegal question you have three options:

- You can answer the question. However, if you choose to answer the question, you are giving information that is not directly related to the job. In fact, you might be giving the “wrong answer,” which could harm your chances of getting the job.
- You can refuse to answer the question, which is within your rights. If you choose this option, be careful how you phrase your refusal so you do not come across as confrontational and uncooperative.
- You can examine the question for its intent and respond with an answer as it might apply to the job. For example, the interviewer may ask you, “Are you a Canadian citizen?” You could reply, “I am authorized to work in Canada.”

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE EMPLOYER

All interviewers will provide you with the opportunity to ask them questions. Treat this as an excellent chance to demonstrate genuine interest in the position and the organization. Carefully crafted questions will show that you have been paying attention and can reinforce positive character traits. The best questions should:

- Make a positive impact on the interviewers
- Provide insight into your background and qualifications
- Help you determine if this is the job you want

POTENTIAL QUESTIONS TO ASK

About the Position

- What would be my primary duties initially? How will these change over time?
- What do you consider to be the most challenging aspects of the position?
- What are the expectations of the supervisor?
- What is a typical day like?
- Why did the previous person in this position leave?

About the Organization

- How does this position contribute to the larger organizational structure?
- What are the department's current projects?
- What are the company's values and how do you incorporate them into your business practice?
- What makes this organization unique?
- What are the areas of anticipated growth for the company?

About Education and Training

- Does the company have an orientation program for new employees?

TIP

Do not ask questions that have already been covered in your interview. Try to formulate questions based on the interviewer's statements. This shows you were actively listening throughout the interview.

- Are there opportunities for professional development and training?
- Are employees encouraged to be active in professional organizations?

About Evaluation and Advancement

- How will my performance be evaluated?
- How often are performance reviews given?
- What opportunities are there for advancement in the organization?
- Does the organization typically promote from within?

About the Hiring Process

- What would the next step of the hiring process entail?
- When will you be making your decision to fill this position?

TIP

Salary is best negotiated after the position has been offered to you.

TOUCH BASE WITH YOUR REFERENCES

It is a good idea to remind your references that they might be contacted preceding or following your interview. You may wish to provide them with a copy of the job description or discuss the specific details of the position with them so they can provide the interviewer with the most relevant information that supports your application.

STEP 4: THE INTERVIEW DAY

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

When you go to an interview, it is important to remember that you are selling an image. First impressions matter. You are not being evaluated solely on what you say, but also on how you present yourself. Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- Dress for the occupation
- Dress conservatively
- Pay close attention to personal grooming on the day of your interview (hair, nails, teeth, breath, etc.)
- Be certain all your clothes are clean, well pressed and tucked in
- Make sure your shoes are polished
- Avoid excessive make-up and heavy fragrances
- Bring a briefcase or portfolio
- Do not wear white socks

BE PREPARED

When you arrive at the interview, you should be prepared to provide the interviewers with any documents they have requested. If they have not requested anything, you may wish to bring:

- Extra copies of your C.V.
- List of references
- Career portfolio or samples of past work (if you have them)
- Letters of recommendation

- Pen and paper
- Copy of your transcript
- Business card

ARRIVAL

Be Punctual

Arrive at least 10-15 minutes prior to the interview. Being early reflects positively on you: it shows you are organized, interested in the position and prompt. If for some reason you cannot make the interview or become delayed, call as soon as possible and explain the situation. Apologize to the interviewer and see if he/she is willing to reschedule.

Be Friendly and Respectful

From the moment you walk into the organization's offices, the interview has started. Be friendly and respectful towards everyone you meet. Interviewers may ask receptionists and other employees their opinion based on their interactions with you.

INTERVIEW STRUCTURE

Greetings

An interview usually begins with a few minutes of small talk, giving you the chance to exchange pleasantries with the interviewers. This is a good opportunity to establish a rapport with them and show that you are confident and at ease.

Here are some tips:

- Greet the interviewers by their formal titles, until instructed otherwise
- Shake hands - firmly, not limply
- Make direct eye contact
- Smile
- Wait to be seated until asked to do so

Introduction

After you have exchanged pleasantries, interviewers will often provide you with an overview of the position and the organization. They may also indicate the structure of the interview. Pay attention and show an interest in what they are saying.

Interview Questions

This is the core of the interview where interviewers will ask you questions and will be evaluating your answers and suitability for the position. When answering, provide the information requested, demonstrating you have the skills and qualifications necessary for the job. If you have done a good job preparing, you should be comfortable and at ease.

Closing

Be sensitive to signs that the interview has drawn to a close. Stay positive even if you feel it has not gone well. The interviewers may simply be testing your reaction to adversity. At the end, the interviewers will usually explain the next steps in the hiring process and offer you one last chance to ask questions.

Before leaving, ensure you thank the interviewers for their time. **Above all else, it is important you leave the interviewers with a lasting impression that you are qualified for, and enthusiastic about, the position.**

STEP 5: FOLLOW-UP

One of the biggest mistakes made by candidates after an interview is failing to follow up with the organization. It is important to remind the interviewers of your interest in the position in the days and weeks following the interview.

THANK-YOU NOTE

Within a day or two, you should send a thank-you note to the interviewers thanking them for their time and indicating your continued interest in the position.

Continue to pay attention to detail: do not misspell words or make grammatical mistakes. Your communication skills will continue to be evaluated in your follow-up correspondence. Keep your thank-you note brief, but be aware that it can also serve as an effective tool for raising any points you forgot to mention in the interview.

Even if you do not get the position, your interviewers can be potentially valuable contacts. They may refer you to another opening in the organization or keep you in mind for a future openings. Never burn your bridges.

FOLLOW-UP

If you have not heard from the organization within the agreed-upon time frame, do not be afraid to follow up with the interviewers and inquire about the status of your application. If the employer still has not reached a decision, it is appropriate to ask when they think a decision will be made. You can inquire whether you should follow up again, but be sure not to pester the employer.

TIP

At the end of the interview, you may want to ask the interviewers for their business cards. This gives you their contact information so you can follow-up with them in the future.

TIP

Depending on the situation, your thank-you note can be in the form of a business letter, thank-you card or email. Use your judgement.

TIP

If you were not given a date on which to follow-up, a general guideline is to allow 8-10 working days after your thank-you note.

our services

Individual Appointments & Mock Interviews

Our qualified and experienced Career Advisors are available to assist you in your career choices, help you prepare for an interview, and look over your C.V. CaPS is here to make your job search and career planning less stressful.

Career Development Workshops

These workshops are offered throughout the academic year on many topics, including interviewing, C.V. writing and networking. They are designed to increase your employability and job search savviness.

Career Fairs

Career fairs are organized throughout the year in conjunction with student associations and provide excellent opportunities for you to meet company representatives from a variety of industries.

Campus Recruitment

Every year companies from Canada, the U.S. and abroad visit McGill to recruit students in September (for post-graduation opportunities) and in January (for summer opportunities).

Professionals on Campus

Professionals from all over come to campus to participate in panel discussions and deliver company info sessions. These networking events are a great resource for exploring your career options and increasing your knowledge and contacts in your field.

C.V./Advising Drop-In

You can drop by the CaPS office to have your C.V. reviewed or ask an advisor a question during a daily designated time.

Career Resource Centre

The Resource Centre offers a wide array of print and electronic resources on career planning, industry reports, scholarships, graduate programs and more.

Peer Educator Program

Become a Peer Educator and help publicize CaPS services throughout campus, as well as help students improve their CVs. To get involved, please email caps.cpe@mcgill.ca.

Job Finding Club

This two-week program for newly-graduated students is designed to teach job seekers the most effective means of finding work in the field in which they want to be employed. The program is offered in January, May and August every year.

McGill Mentor Program

The McGill Mentor Program connects students with working McGill alumni who can offer valuable advice about career alternatives, job requirements and career-life balance.

P.A.C.E. (Program for the Advancement of Career Education)

P.A.C.E. is an interactive program designed to help you explore career options and preferences, personal goals, values, interests and skills, as well as develop job search strategies.

online resources

CaPS Website - www.mcgill.ca/caps

Our website is the main gateway to services and information available at CaPS. It contains a comprehensive overview of the job search process; a listing of our services and programs; information for students applying to graduate studies or professional school; links to countless resources; and up-to-date announcements and events.

myFuture - caps.myfuture.mcgill.ca

myFuture is CaPS' job search and career tools suite. Using myFuture you can search hundreds of full-time, part-time and summer jobs/ internships; register for CaPS events and workshops; browse career resources, such as employment periodicals and weeklies; view announcements and alerts; and view employer profiles.

Career Cruising - www.careercruising.com

Career Cruising is an interactive career resource designed to help you explore different career options, plan future education and training, and find the right career. The site includes job descriptions, information on earnings, career paths and working conditions, interviews and more.

Username: mcgill
Password: careers

Going Global - <http://online.goinglobal.com>

Going Global has an extensive database of employer profiles and over 100,000 worldwide job and internship listings. In addition, Going Global provides country-specific and U.S. city-specific information for jobseekers. You must be connected to the McGill VPN in order to use Going Global.

Vault Guides - http://www.vault.com/cb/careerlib/careerlib_main.jsp?parrefer=7165

Vault Guides contain career and employer profiles, industry overviews, advice articles, an internship database, and much more. You must be connected to the McGill VPN in order to use Vault Guides.

What can I do with my major? - www.mcgill.ca/caps/students/job-search/explore/

CaPS has compiled a list of resources to assist you in thinking about what you can do with your major. By selecting your major, you will be provided with a list of handouts, recommended books and websites relating to your area of study.

General Job Listings - www.mcgill.ca/caps/students/job-search/jobs/

CaPS has compiled a list of online job listing sites. Employers who post on these sites are actively looking to fill positions and you may find an opportunity that seems just right for you.

Brown Student Services Building
3600 McTavish Street

Tel: 514-398-3304

Email: careers.caps@mcgill.ca