



Tips for Interviews

MSVU CAREER SERVICES
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What we'll cover

- Framing your approach
- Elevator pitch
- Difficult questions
- Transferrable skills
- Using the STAR technique to answer interview questions
- Tips for interviews

POLL: What's the best interview advice you've received?



*Framing
your
approach*

'Connect the dots' for the employer by answering questions that may be on their mind

- Can this applicant relate well to our team and customers/clients?
- Can this applicant problem solve, follow protocol, and take in feedback? Can we trust them?
- Can this applicant offer something extra that sets them apart from others?

Elevator pitch

- Remember: explain vs sell. ~~Competition~~ -> shining bright on your own terms
- Elevator pitch = 20-second summary of top things to know about you
- The Muse 15-minute method elevator pitch
 - What you do
 - Why it matters
 - Why/how you do it
 - What's next (immediate or future career goals)

POLL: If you had only two or three words to describe your professional identity, what would they be?

Elevator pitch

What you do:

I'm a third-year Gerontology student, and I also work part-time at a café.

Why it matters:

Balancing school and work has taught me how to manage my time, stay calm under pressure, and connect with lots of different people.

Why/how you do it:

I like noticing the little details that keep things running smoothly, whether that's during a busy shift or when helping with an event.

What's next:

This has contributed to my interest in the Career Services and Events Assistant role because it feels like a great way to use those strengths and grow in my skills in student engagement and event planning.



*Use your
current and
past
experiences
to explain...*

- Work and volunteer experiences
- Community or school activities
- Travel experiences
- School assignments and group projects
- Awards, certifications, special recognition
- Personal accomplishments

STAR Technique



(Prepare)

Listen to the question and think of an event.



Situation

Describe the event or situation that you were in.



Task

Explain the task you had to complete.



Action

Describe the actions you took to complete the task.



Result

Close with the result of your efforts.

STAR Technique

Situation

When I volunteered at a non-profit for older adults, I was in charge of promoting a daytime community event. We had a guest speaker come in to talk about wellness, a topic our members had mentioned was important to them.

Task

I needed to reach out to our members to create awareness about the event and encourage them to go.

Action

I started by emailing members, putting up posters around the centre, and posting on our social media.

Result

The attendance was good, but not what we hoped it would be. I realized I missed two details that could have better served our members and likely increased event attendance: making calls to members who were not handy on email and arranging transportation, on request, through the centre's vehicle.

What I learned

This taught me to really think about how I reached out to an audience and what accessibility needs needed to be addressed. This is something I carry forward in my work now.

Difficult questions

Why do you want this position?

Tell us about a time you dealt with conflict

Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

POLL: What's the most difficult interview question you or a friend have been asked? How did you/they deal with it?

Relate your answer to...

- the work position/how you would perform at work
- something you know or have learned about yourself
- something that has been resolved or represents logical steps in a progression

Resource: [60+ Most Common Interview Questions and Answers](#)

Pre-interview Tips

- Before your interview, **review your resume and job posting together**. Find where you match and what genuinely interests you in applying
- Know your nervous quirks, work with them, and breathe or find another way to lower stress that works for you. The goal is not to rid yourself of all anxiety, it's to make the anxiety manageable so you can give yourself room to show your potential to employers
- Prepare some small talk with questions and podcasts

Interview Tips

- Dress for success.
POLL: What does this mean?
- Consider how your engagement comes across: appropriate eye contact, posture (sitting up straight or slightly leaning in), smiling, and tone of voice all count
- Remember to connect the dots and **explain or demonstrate**

Interview Tips

'Classy closers' for your interview

- Have at least three questions prepared that relate to the job posting
- Avoid questions such as “What’s a typical day like?” and "What is the salary?" Ask instead:
 - “In your opinion, what makes someone in this position successful?”
 - “What are the most immediate priorities that need to be addressed?”
 - "What challenges are the team facing at the moment?"

Resource: [70 Smart Questions to Ask in an Interview in 2025](#)

Post-interview Tips

Follow up and self-reflect

- Follow up with a brief email of thanks. You can mention you look forward to hearing about next steps
- Be gentle with yourself and take a pause moment to reflect on how things went. In every interview, there are moments when we shine and moments we would do differently (make a note for next time!)

Career Services

Virtual and in-person appointments available in the summer! (Must be living in Canada)

Book online msvu.janeapp.com
counselling@msvu.ca or
902-457-6567 for appointments

- One-on-one interview coaching
- Career indecision
- Job search support
- Resume and cover letter feedback
- Graduate school applications

Drop-in Resume Review

Wednesdays until April 8

12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

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