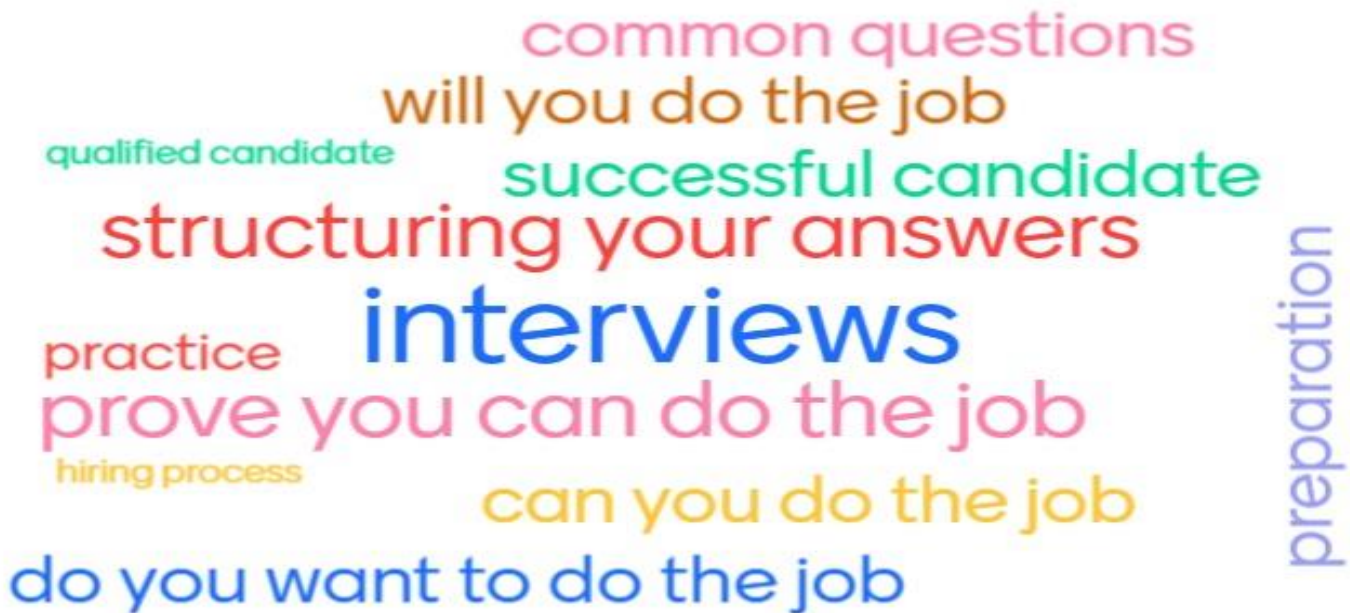




Career Resources

Interview Guide 2023



This material is designed as supplementary reading material for New Arrivals from Ireland.

New Arrivals have a broad range of qualifications, knowledge and experience in many functional disciplines. Certain guidelines may fit your profile, others may not. Ultimately, it is your choice to select the guidelines that best fit your situation and design interview answers that best represent you in the marketplace. Note that employment processes in Canada may be different than what you have experienced in the past.

Acknowledgements: This guide has been developed by Rhonda McDowell, I/CAN Career Resources. Questions for Newcomers section first developed by Gerry O'Connor, adapted and updated by Rhonda McDowell.

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JOB INTERVIEWS IN CANADA – OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

Interviews are a tried and tested way for employers to quickly learn more about who the qualified applicant is as a worker and as a person. It is also a chance for short-listed candidates to ask questions and seek clarifications in determining whether there is a match that could result in a successful employer-employee relationship. It is a key part of the hiring process.

Remember:

If you have been invited to the interview stage, your application has captured the employer's attention. They are interested in learning more about you. Great news and well done! That is a great position to start from.

Understanding the purpose and function of interviews in the hiring process can give you an advantage and support you with your preparation. Preparation is necessary if you are to successfully advance in the next round!

An interview (sometimes labelled as a screening call or chat), is the time and place for you to prove to the interviewer(s) that you can do the job. It's one thing to answer all the interview questions yet you need to be sure you explain how your skills, experience, work ethic, qualifications, knowledge, and attributes are relevant to the position you applied for.

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

In Canada, it is commonplace for employers to ask selected applicants to participate in one or more interview. They may include some or all of the following:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• pre-screening by phone call/video	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• virtual interviews/video call
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• in-person interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• panel interview
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• group interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• you may be asked to participate in practical, technical ability tests, and/or personality assessments.

Preparing for an interview, regardless of its format, will increase your chances of success.

Preparation includes:

Researching, Reviewing, Matching, Linking, Connecting

- Research the job, company, wider industry. Go beyond the job posting and company website so you can up-level your answers. For example, do you understand the challenges and opportunities of the industry? Do you know anything about the internal operations of the company?
- Review your application and the job posting. Make sure you have real life examples of how you meet the competencies and skills from the job posting. Providing generic/abstract examples could indicate you don't have concrete experience.
- Match your experience to the job posting criteria and be prepared to share more information from your application e.g. expand on accomplishment statements.
- Link your real experience and skills to this position. Previous experience and accomplishments are a great predictor of what you can bring to a future employer.
- Real examples can help you relax into the interview and bring out your personality.
- Bring to the interview a printed copy of your resume, cover letter, the job posting, and writing material so you can take notes. If attending an in-person interview, it is useful to bring extra copies of your application for interviewer(s).
- If it is not provided to you in advance of your interview, know it is reasonable to ask, how many people are on the interview panel? Who will be on the panel?
- Have questions ready to ask the interviewer(s). Examples may include questions such as:

How the role has become available?	What is the workplace culture?
What are the performance measures/KPIs for the role?	Is it a role that will grow?
Who is the direct supervisor and what is their leadership style?	How will the successful candidate be supported to onboard and grow within the role/company?
What are the next steps in the hiring process?	

- Be proactive in supporting yourself before, during, and after the interview.
- Connect with what is grounding for you and what brings joy to you. Self-care that works for you can help you bring out your best during the interview.

ANSWER STRUCTURE AND PRACTICE

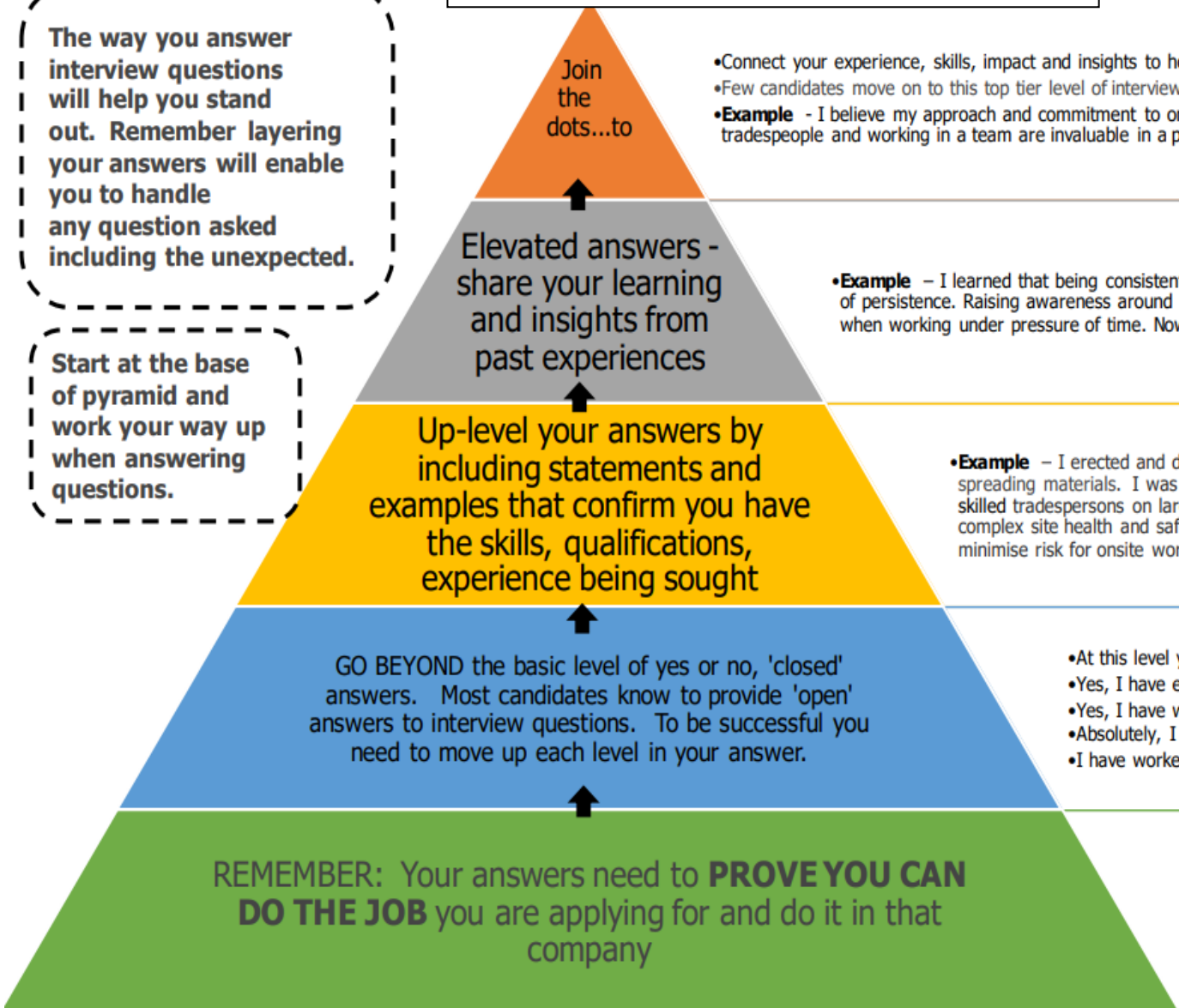
Practice your answers with another person in mock interview style so you can be confident in sharing and structuring your answers in the presence of another person. If helpful, use video software to record your answers.

Useful tip: work with layers (see image below) and bullet points to prepare your answers and examples. This eases the pressure to memorize, parrot or over-rehearse long text which will not support you to be present or relaxed during the interview.

STUCTURING YOUR INTERVIEW ANSWERS

The way you answer interview questions will help you stand out. Remember layering your answers will enable you to handle any question asked including the unexpected.

Start at the base of pyramid and work your way up when answering questions.



- Connect your experience, skills, impact and insights to how it could be used to achieve success in this new position
- Few candidates move on to this top tier level of interview answer.
- Example** - I believe my approach and commitment to onsite safety, my ability to quickly pick up tasks in support of skilled tradespeople and working in a team are invaluable in a position like this one.

•**Example** – I learned that being consistent on large scale projects and keeping onsite workers safe took a lot of persistence. Raising awareness around health and safety standards was met with resistance, especially when working under pressure of time. Now I know how to handle team concerns and learned to get buy in.

•**Example** – I erected and dismantled concrete forms, scaffolding, ramps, mixing, pouring and spreading materials. I was lead operator of power vibrators to compact concrete and assisted skilled tradespersons on large scale projects. My ability to pick up tasks quickly and work with complex site health and safety standards as part of a team helped us complete on time and minimise risk for onsite workers.

- At this level your answers don't progress beyond:
- Yes, I have experience teaching.
- Yes, I have worked on construction sites.
- Absolutely, I have customer service skills.
- I have worked in an office environment using MS Office Suite including Teams.

- The employer will ask questions to find out **1. CAN you do the job? 2. WILL you do the job? 3. Do you WANT TO do the job?**
- 1 = Academic skills/qualifications/knowledge
- 2 = Self-management skills/tools i.e. situation, work history questions
- 3 = Team skills, adaptability, motivation i.e. behavioural questions

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ASKED

1. Tell me about your yourself?

This relates to the interviewer desire to know if you CAN do the job and often is the first question you will be asked. It is designed to help ease you into the interview. It's important to organize and clearly communicate your answer in a way that matches your skills to those required for the position/team.

Useful tip: as a guide you should aim to answer this question within 60-90 seconds.

Run too short and you may undersell your qualifications and miss the chance to tell interviewer(s) who you are.

If your answer goes long (i.e. beyond 2 minutes), you may move into answering questions that come later or convey information that is not relevant. This could signal you are unable to decide what is appropriate to the setting.

To help structure your answer to this question use the PAWS model:

Personal (attributes you can link to the position, work values, motivation)

Academic (education, training, qualifications)

Work (past relevant experience)

Skills (technical, others from application/posting)

It's good practice for the personal to make up a maximum of 20% of your answer. It's up to you whether you start with personal or finish there. Order PAWS according to what helps you answer most effectively.

2. What are your career objectives? Where do you see yourself in 5 years? What are your future plans?

The interviewer wants to know if you will stay with the company. To determine if your goals fit with those of the company and what they are offering. Ultimately, they want to learn if you will be content with the day to day or will become dissatisfied and look elsewhere.

Useful tip: focus on your work goals keeping the company in mind. Link your plans to how you believe the job you are applying for is a match while recognizing your commitment to growth, learning and development. Be prepared to give a learning/growth example.

3. What do you know about our company?

Your answer should demonstrate you are well researched beyond the base level of their website and the job posting, additional reading can impress the interviewer. What you

share will help the interviewer understand what motivates and impresses you as well as signaling you have the ability to communicate your research effectively.

Useful tip: research where the company has been and where they are going. Be sure to research their current issues and who are the major players in the industry. Primary research including information interviews with those who know the company can be a great way to get insider knowledge that could help give a stand out answer.

4. Why do you want to work here?

This helps the interviewer find out what you know about the company i.e. are you well researched and what draws you to them. They will be listening for cues about whether you would stay with them and be satisfied in the daily tasks of the position. They want to understand how you would contribute overall, this requires you to be sincere.

Useful tip: answering this question is not simply about what you need from them. It's about what you can offer them. Structure your answer to include what added value you are offering to the position, team, company and this is the place you want to bring your skills/experience.

5. Tell me about a time when [the interviewer will likely insert competency from job posting here]?

This type of question is known as a situation/behavioural based question. These may also be posed as future, **what if scenarios**.

The purpose of asking this type of question is to learn if you CAN DO THE JOB. Have you got practical skills and experience that you've applied in the workplace or elsewhere? Concrete examples from your paid/unpaid experience is important. This is where your prepared accomplishment statements from your application and examples from your past experience can be shared.

Useful tip: make sure the examples you give are appropriate for the level of position you are applying for.

Your examples should focus on the challenge, your actions, and the result of steps you took. Use the **CAR model** to structure your answer i.e. Challenge, Actions, Result.

QUESTIONS FOR NEWCOMERS

As a newcomer there are specific questions to be prepared for. Some or all of the newcomer questions may come up during pre-screening, interview, information meetings or networking events. They may be asked exactly as shown below or may be phrased in a different way.

Below are four common questions and guidance for how you can answer them.

QUESTION	INCORRECT ANSWER	CORRECT ANSWER/APPROACH
<p>1. "TELL ME ABOUT YOUR VISA"</p>	<p>"I am here on a two-year IEC Working Holiday Visa which expires on [date]".</p>	<p>"I hold a valid Government of Canada work visa. I will be applying for Permanent Residency status at the earliest opportunity. My ultimate plan is to remain in Canada and become a Canadian citizen".</p>
<p>2. "TELL ME ABOUT YOUR CANADIAN WORK EXPERIENCE"</p>	<p>"I don't have Canadian work experience. I am a new arrival to Canada".</p> <p>or</p> <p>"I don't have a lot of Canadian work experience. I just got here and have been doing odd jobs until I find something else".</p>	<p>If your work experience in Canada or abroad is directly relevant to the duties and responsibilities, start selling and marketing your directly relevant past challenges and accomplishments, illustrated by specific examples.</p> <p>Promote your customer service experience which is very important in Canada. Use a prior case study to illustrate your knowledge and achievements.</p> <p>Show willingness to learn, build your knowledge, take courses, network and your commitment to your ongoing professional development.</p>
<p>3. "WHAT ARE YOUR SALARY/WAGE EXPECTATIONS"</p>	<p>Do not provide an absolute number e.g. "My salary/wage expectation is \$50,000".</p> <p>If your number is higher than the employer's target, you risk losing the position.</p> <p>If your number is too low, the employer may conclude that there is more money in the budget and therefore hire a more experienced candidate. What you earned in Ireland or converting Irish salary levels to Canada is irrelevant.</p>	<p>"I have moved to Canada to build my long-term career. I am looking for a salary/wage that is competitive in [City/Region].</p> <p>Try to leave it such that the employer proposes a number to you.</p> <p>If the employer aggressively seeks a number, quote a range e.g. \$45 – \$60k.</p> <p>The lowest number should reflect your absolute minimum. When applying online, you must indicate your salary expectations. Use a range rather than a fixed number.</p>

QUESTION	INCORRECT ANSWER	CORRECT ANSWER/APPROACH
<p>4. "HOW DO YOU LIKE LIVING IN CANADA?"</p>	<p>You list off things that you do not enjoy or find challenging, you give too much information about social aspects with little to no indication about how living in Canada is aligned to your professional aspirations and goals.</p> <p>You do not display as someone who intends on living and working in Canada beyond the summer season.</p>	<p>Consider why the employer is asking this question. Will you stay in Canada? Do you give appropriate disclosures and positively respond to the question? Are you a positive person?</p> <p>Your answer must clearly convey that it is your intention to remain in Canada and build your career here.</p> <p>Provide strong reasons why you like living and working in Canada. Examples could include:</p> <p>Excellent long-term career opportunities, Quality of Living, Canadians are very friendly, Great multi-cultural society with all the benefits of multi-culturalism, High standard of living, Canada's profile on the world stage.</p>

The above is not an exhaustive list of interview questions you could be asked, yet it provides a foundation to start from alongside the strategies and tips provided in this guide.

