

Part 1. The Job Hunt

csc2701HY

Communication for Computer Scientists

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Aug. 28, 2025

**What do you find
most intimidating
about the job
search?**

Go to menti.com and use the code **9680 6332**

What do you find most intimidating about the job search? 73

Creating a resume

5

Writing a cover letter

15

Describing your skills and experience

13

Self-assessing your skillset

12

Knowing where to look for jobs

16

Building a job search plan

19

Networking and interviews

58

20%

40%

60%

80%

100%

The Job Hunt

Class outline

Class duration: 2–2.5 hours

Today's class contents:

- **Building Your Personal Brand**
- **Conducting Your Job Search**
- **About the MScAC Internships**

General Rules

- Show up and be on time.
- For anything internship- or industry-related, come and speak with the MScAC Partnerships team sooner than later.
- Listen to advice.
- Be proactive.

Building Your Personal Brand

Résumé



Résumé

What is the purpose of a résumé?

Clearly, concisely, and strategically present your qualifications to get a recruiter or a hiring committee interested in meeting you.

A résumé should convey your skills, work experience, and assets.

Describe what you can accomplish professionally, in a manner that also illustrates what you can do for a specific prospective employer.

- ➡ How to write a good résumé (Canada Job Bank, <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/findajob/resources/write-good-résumé>)

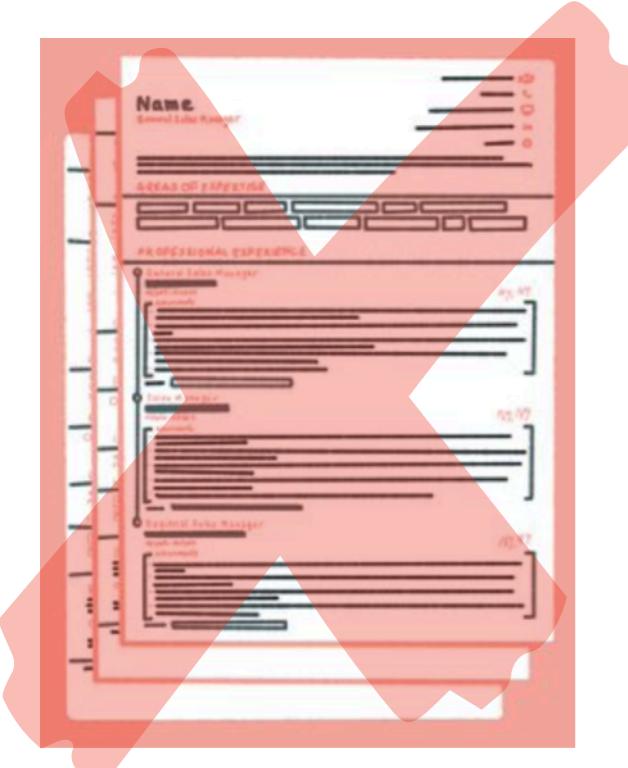
Résumé

How to write a good résumé

- Include your contact information.
- Keep your résumé clear and concise.
- Be honest.
- Highlight what you have accomplished.
- Quantify your achievements.
- Use simple words and action verbs.
- Include unpaid work that demonstrates your skills.
- Limit your résumé to two pages.
- Proofread your résumé numerous times.
- Use a simple, easy to read font style, 10–14 point.
- Tailor your résumé to suit the position you are applying for.

Résumé

Limit your résumé to two pages



A **curriculum vitæ (CV)** is a comprehensive list of one's education, certifications, research experience, and professional affiliations and memberships.

- Comprehensive history of work and education.
- Detailed listing of academic and professional experience.
- No restrictions on length.



A **résumé** is a one page summary of your work experience and background relevant to the job you are applying to.

- Meant to catch the eye of hiring manager or recruiter.
- Summary of experience and skills relevant to the position.
- Typically 1–2 pages, depending on experience.

Résumé

Why should I tailor my résumé?

 Curriculum Vitae

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Betty Smith
32 Reading rd, Birmingham B26 3QJ United Kingdom
+44 2012345679  +44 7123456789
 smth@kolmail.com
 AOL Instant Messenger (AIM) betty.smith
Sex Female | Date of birth 01 March 1975

JOB APPLIED FOR European project manager

WORK EXPERIENCE

August 2002 – Present Independent consultant
British Council
123, Bd Ney, 75023 Paris (France)
Evaluation of European Commission youth training support measures for youth national agencies and young people

March 2002 – July 2002 Internship
European Commission, Youth Unit, DG Education and Culture
200, Rue de la Loi, 1049 Brussels (Belgium)
- evaluating youth training programmes for SALTO UK and the partnership between the Council of Europe and European Commission
- organizing and running a 2 day workshop on non-formal education for Action 5 large scale projects focusing on quality, assessment and recognition
- contributing to the steering committee and developing action plans on training for the next 3 years. Working on the User's Guide for training and the support measures
Business or sector European institution

October 2001 – February 2002 Researcher / Independent Consultant
Council of Europe, Budapest (Hungary)
Working in a research team carrying out in-depth qualitative evaluation of the 2 year Advanced Training of Trainers in Europe using participant observations, in-depth interviews and focus groups. Work carried out in training courses in Strasbourg, Slovenia and Budapest.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

1997 – 2001 PhD - Thesis Title: "Young People in the Construction of the Virtual University", Empirical research on e-learning
Brunel University, London United Kingdom

1993 – 1997 Bachelor of Science in Sociology and Psychology
Brunel University, London United Kingdom
- sociology of risk
- sociology of scientific knowledge / information society
- anthropology
E-learning and Psychology
- research methods

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Standard Europass CV

履歴書 2014年2月6日現在

名前 山田 太郎
性別 男
誕生日 1989年11月7日生（満24歳）
年齢 24歳
性別 男
電話番号 03-3123-4567
郵便番号 090-1234-5678
年月 学歴・職歴（別紙にまとめて書く）

年	月	学歴
2006	3	私立ウィキペ中学校 卒業
2006	4	私立ウィキペ高等学校 入学
2009	3	私立ウィキペ高等学校 卒業
2009	4	私立ウィキペ大学 情報工学部 入学
2013	3	私立ウィキペ大学 情報工学部 卒業

職歴

年	月	職歴
2013	4	ウィキペ株式会社 入社 東京支社 技術部に配属

以上

免許・資格

年	月	免許・資格
2013	1	普通自動車第一種免許取得

自己PR

経験スキル

希望の職場、特技、好きな学科など

活動時間 約1時間0分
性別 女性
年齢 0人
配偶者 有無
配偶者の性別 有無

本人希望記入欄（特に給料・階級・勤務時間・勤務地・その他についての希望などがあれば記入）

Japanese standard résumé

Résumé

Tailoring your résumé to a job posting

- Even with a standardized résumé/CV format, even simply having a relevant skill up at the top of the page can make the difference.
- The HR department of prospective employers acts as a sort of gatekeeper: they have limited resources, and lots of job applications to handle. It's your job to stand out.
- **Tailor your résumé is to emphasize things that make you a more desirable candidate.**
- Prospective employers, when faced with two equally qualified candidates, will likely interview whoever put more effort into making themselves look better in their résumé and get more attention.

Résumé

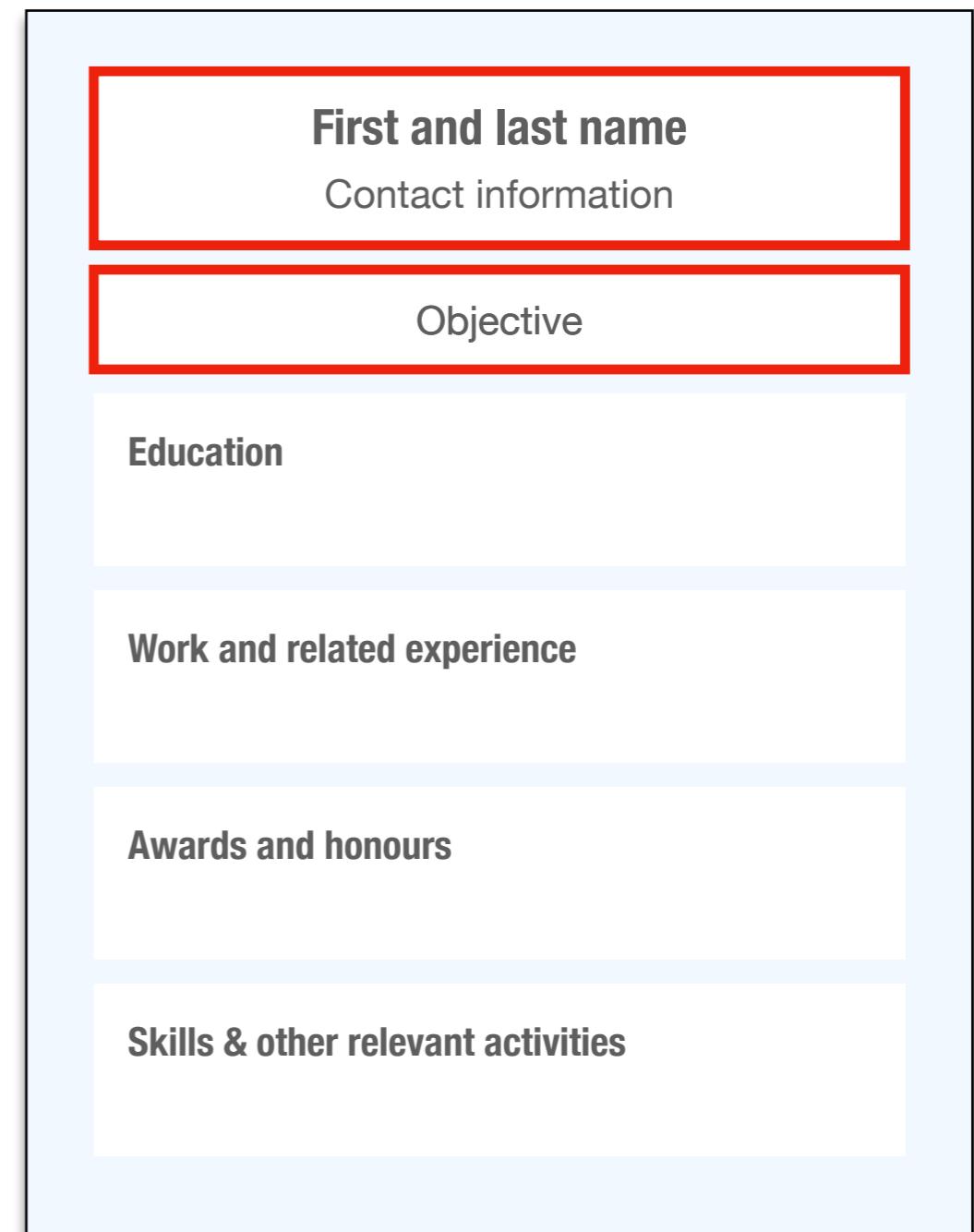
What not to do

- Don't include unnecessary personal information.
- Don't use an inappropriate email address.
- Don't include a picture of yourself.
- Don't use too many bullets.
- Don't write your résumé in the first person.
- Don't simply list job responsibilities.
- Don't make general statements.
- Don't include reasons for leaving previous jobs.
- Don't include references.
- Don't include hobbies or interests (in most cases).

Résumé

Major sections of a résumé

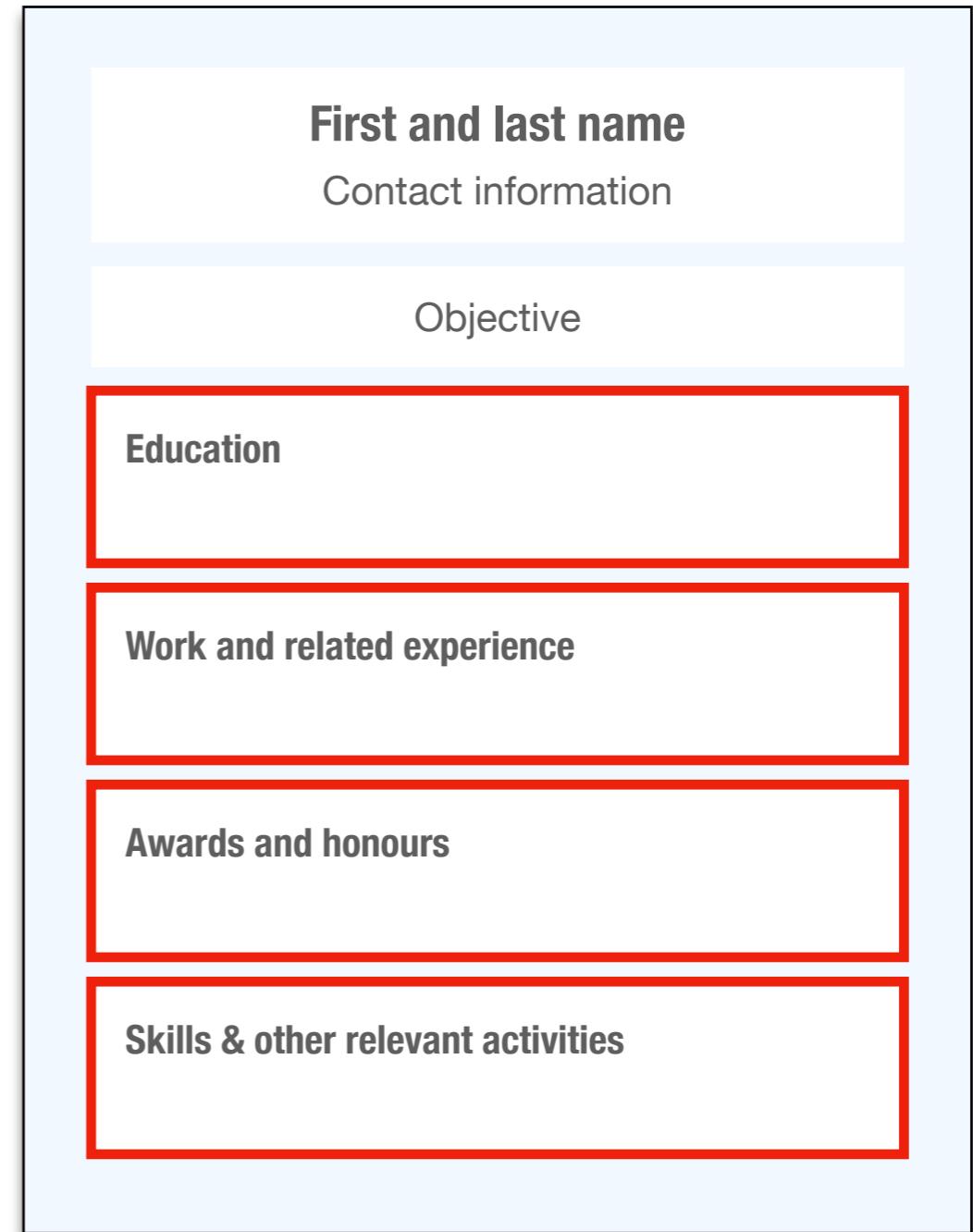
- Personal information
- Objective or opening statement
 - Tailor it to the position.
 - Keep it concise.
 - Lead with your strongest qualities.
 - Describe how you will add value as an employee.



Résumé

Major sections of a résumé

- Education
- Work and related experience
- Awards and honours
- Skills
- Other relevant activities



Résumé

Résumé styles and templates

- **Chronological:** Lists one's work history, with the most recent position listed first. Good for candidates with lots of experience in their field.
- **Functional:** Focuses on your skills and experience developed over the years. Highlights what makes you the best fit for the job.
- **Mix of chronological and functional:** Lists one's skills and qualifications, followed by a chronological work history (even if this history is not very extensive). Good to highlight transferable skills.

Résumé

Sample experience headings

- Highlight your **experience** and **skills**.
- Choose **appropriate, informative, and impactful** headings in the each of the sections of a functional or modified chronological résumé.
- Avoid generic headings (e.g. “Work Experience”): complement job titles with a description the clarifies the type of experience. If you are applying for a technical job, use the appropriate technical terms. For example:
 - Research Intern → Data Science Research Intern, Information Security Research Intern, etc.
 - Teaching Assistant → Undergraduate Teaching Assistant in Machine Learning, etc.
 - Software Developer → Full-Stack Developer, Back-End Developer, Actuarial Modelling Software Development Intern, etc.
 - Researcher → Undergraduate Research Assistant, Summer Research Assistant, Student Researcher, etc.

Résumé

Sample experience headings

The following are some sample experience headings you will often find in résumé writing guides. You **don't** have to pick from this list, and make sure to tailor the way you present your experience to the actual job posting:

- Administration
- Advising
- Analysis and Evaluation
- Business Development
Business Management
- Childcare
- Client Relations
Communications
- Community Liaison
- Computer Experience
- Conflict Resolution
- Consulting
- Counseling and
Development Creativity and
Design
- Crisis Evaluation and
Response Customer
Relations
- Customer Service
- Data Collection/Entry
Design and Development
- Electronics Knowledge
Equipment Operation
Evaluation/Analysis
- Financial Analysis Food
Preparation Fundraising
- Health and Safety
- Human Resources
Management
- International Experience
Leadership
- Management Mentoring
- Office Administration
Organizational Development
- Planning
- Presentation Skills
- Problem Solving
- Product Development
- Program Development
- Program Planning
- Programming and Special
Events Project Management
- Public Relations
- Public Speaking
- Quality Control Research
- Sales and Marketing
- Special Events Coordination
Strategic Planning
Supervision and Training
Systems Development
- Teaching
- Team Work
- Technical Skills
- Training and Development
Trouble Shooting
- Warehouse/Inventory
Writing and Editing Writing
and Presentation

Résumé

Writing effective bullet points using the STAR method

- **Situation:** Write briefly about your previous job/position/role. Explain the situation that will serve as the basis for the rest of your example.
- **Task:** Discuss the problem you had to solve or a goal you worked towards. Explain any specific tasks you completed using your unique skills and attributes.
- **Action:** Outline the steps you took to complete a task or achieve a goal.
- **Results:** Explain how solving the problem or meeting your goal contributed to your workplace. Quantify if possible your contribution or achievements. List any important lessons learned or skills gained through the outcome.

Résumé

Writing effective bullet points using the STAR method

STAR item	✗ Generic	✓ Specific
Situation	Worked on ensuring website availability.	"When I worked in a university lab, I was part of a team that handled web services."
Task	Carried out survey of current infrastructure.	"After working in this position for four months, I noticed poor website performance during peak study hours. I asked my coworkers who had been with the lab longer than me and they had never been able to identify a clear reason."
Activity	Evaluated technical solutions to ensure website availability.	"I developed a plan to migrate the existing website's database to a better noSQL solution. I advocated for this plan with my team."
Result	Improved website uptime.	"After talking with my team and advocating for my plan, I implemented the migration, achieved 100% website uptime during peak study hours, and developed a cross-platform app to enable remote access to the lab database."

Résumé

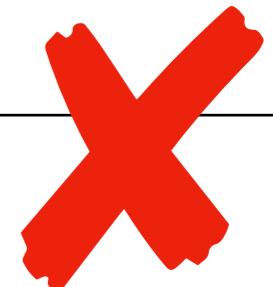
Writing effective bullet points using the STAR method

Work and related experience

Technical Assistant

University Lab, 02/2021 – 07/2021 • Toronto, Canada

- Performed activities to ensure website's availability.
- Carried out survey of current infrastructure.
- Improved website uptime.



Work and related experience

Senior Student Developer

University of Toronto, Student Engagement Lab, 02/2021 – 07/2021 • Toronto, Canada

- As a lead developer for university lab website, reduced its loading time by 80% migrating the existing Angular framework to Vue.js.
- Increased the website availability during peak study hours from 35% to 100%.
- Developed a cross-platform mobile app to enable students mobile access to the lab databases
- Redesigned an existing website for mobile-first environment to ensure all campus students can use the lab website via their mobile devices.



Résumé

Highlighting international experiences

- Include relevant hard skills (languages, technical expertise) and soft skills (learning in different classroom environments, bridging language and cultural barriers).
- Be selective when it comes to which international experience to include: only include experience that is actually relevant to the role you're applying for.
- Understand under which heading to include international experience.
- Include study abroad experience, work experience, and volunteer experience (as applicable).
- Mention international experience in your cover letter, if relevant. Identify how that learning is transferable to the position for which you are applying.
- During the interview, be prepared to highlight how skills attained abroad will add value to the employer and will enhance your job performance.

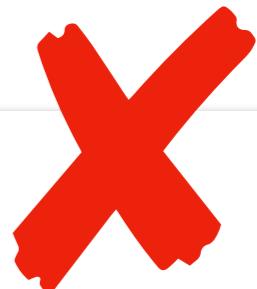
Examples of building a great résumé

Little or no work experience

- Pick the right résumé format.
- Write an impactful résumé objective statement.
- Build a meaningful education section.
- Focus on experience relevant to the position for which you are applying, *including any relevant projects*.
- Emphasize your key skills across the entire résumé.
- Include any relevant additional sections and skills to boost your chances.
- Write a powerful cover letter to tell your story.

Examples of building a great résumé

Little or no work experience



I am a master's student looking for a job in the software development sector. I am a dedicated and motivated person with strong work ethics and willingness to grow professionally. I am interested in joining your company to gain hands-on experience.



Motivated graduate student pursuing an MSc in Applied Computing (MScAC) at the University of Toronto (GPA 3.87). Eager to join XYZ Corp. as an Enterprise AI Specialist to assist in developing and implementing ML/NLP models for various use cases. Strong theoretical and practical background in machine learning, with two years hands-on project experience with enterprise-level AI solutions.

Examples of building a great résumé

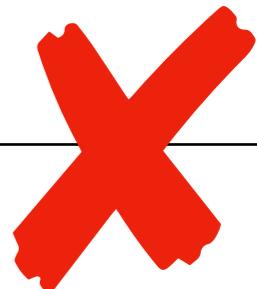
Little or no work experience

Education

BSc in Computer Science

McMaster University, 2019–2021

- GPA 3.85, graduated with honours.
- Improved website uptime.



Education

BSc (Hons) in Computer Science, GPA 3.85

McMaster University, 2019–2021

- Excelled in software engineering and programming coursework.
- Active member of the Students' Software Developers Association.
- Received Moulton College Entrance Scholarship, rewarding leadership experience and attributes, involvement in extra-curricular and volunteer activities in the community.



Examples of building a great résumé

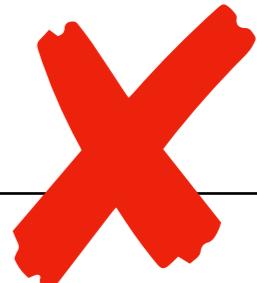
Little or no work experience

Achievements

Hackathon

2018 • Waterloo, Canada

Participated in Hack the North hackathon.



Achievements

Hack the North 2020 hackathon

2020 • Waterloo, Canada

As a part of a 4-developer team, ranked 2nd out of 80 teams in the annual Hack the North hackathon event.



Examples of building a great résumé

Some work experience

- In most cases, use a reverse-chronological layout. It shows your most recent achievements first.
- Focus on education bullet points that specifically fit the job you are applying for.
- Frame all of your experience in the context of the specific job description.
- Identify relevant experience and skills you have acquired in jobs, positions, and projects in unrelated fields.

Examples of building a great résumé

Some work experience

Work and related experience



iOS Software Engineering Intern

ABC Inc. • Jul. 2020–Sep. 2020, Toronto, Canada

- Used Swift to develop a time tracking app for iOS to help independent consultants with task management and billing.
- Worked with the development team to refine the debugging process.
- Leveraged my knowledge of Java and Python to rewrite the backup log interfaces.
- Fixed bugs in existing apps, contributing to an overall 20% reduction in customer complaints.

Undergraduate Capstone Project – Visual Interface Design

Usercentric.io • Feb. 2020–May. 2020, Toronto, Canada

- Explored explores alternative design standards for enhancing interactions between visually impaired users and smart watches.
- Developed usable interactions and interfaces with the Apps Design team and Product Management team.
- Contributed to the drafting of a published report proposing revised accessibility design standard.

Reminder

First draft of your résumé due September 26th

- You will be receiving a request for your résumé.
- First draft due **September 26th.**
- You will receive instructions and templates after this session.

[First Name] [Last Name]

youremail@cs.toronto.edu (123) 456-7890

LinkedIn profile URL

Personal website address

- The formatting of this section is completely up to you – try out different fonts, logos etc. You can also include links to Github/Stack Overflow etc

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE/SKILLS SUMMARY/OBJECTIVE (Optional - choose one)

- This section should only be used to emphasise key things about yourself that may not have already come across in the résumé (technical skills, personal qualities, and/or your area of interest)
- Consider using bullet points, or write three or four continuous sentences, which are informative yet concise.

EDUCATION (Section should be in chronological order – most recent first)

MSc in Applied Computing

September 2019 – December 2020 (expected)

University of Toronto, Department of Computer Science
Courses (ongoing): Include only relevant courses – CSC2701H & CSC2702H do not need mentioned here.

Degree Title

Institution Name, Department
Major/minor

[Date started] – [Date completed]

EXPERIENCE (Work and/or volunteer)

Company Name/Organisation

Position Title

Summary of position:

OTHER EXPERIENCE (Optional - this may include extracurricular/course based projects)

Affiliated Organisation (if applicable)

Project Title

[Date started] – [Date completed]

Summary of the project:

- Limit this section to the past few years, and only include this section if you don't have much work experience, or you want to highlight something relevant from your past that could be of interest. Note – if you don't have any work experience, you can rename this 'Experience.'
- If you are listing projects, then rename this section with a more specific title i.e. 'Projects.'

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS/COURSES (Optional – should be relevant and substantial)

Qualification/Course Title

[Date started] – [Date completed]

Institution/Organisation Name

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- In this section, you could detail programming languages/tools you are competent in. However, also consider organizing this section around themes, and include related tools and frameworks e.g. Machine Learning: MATLAB, R, Hadoop, Spark.

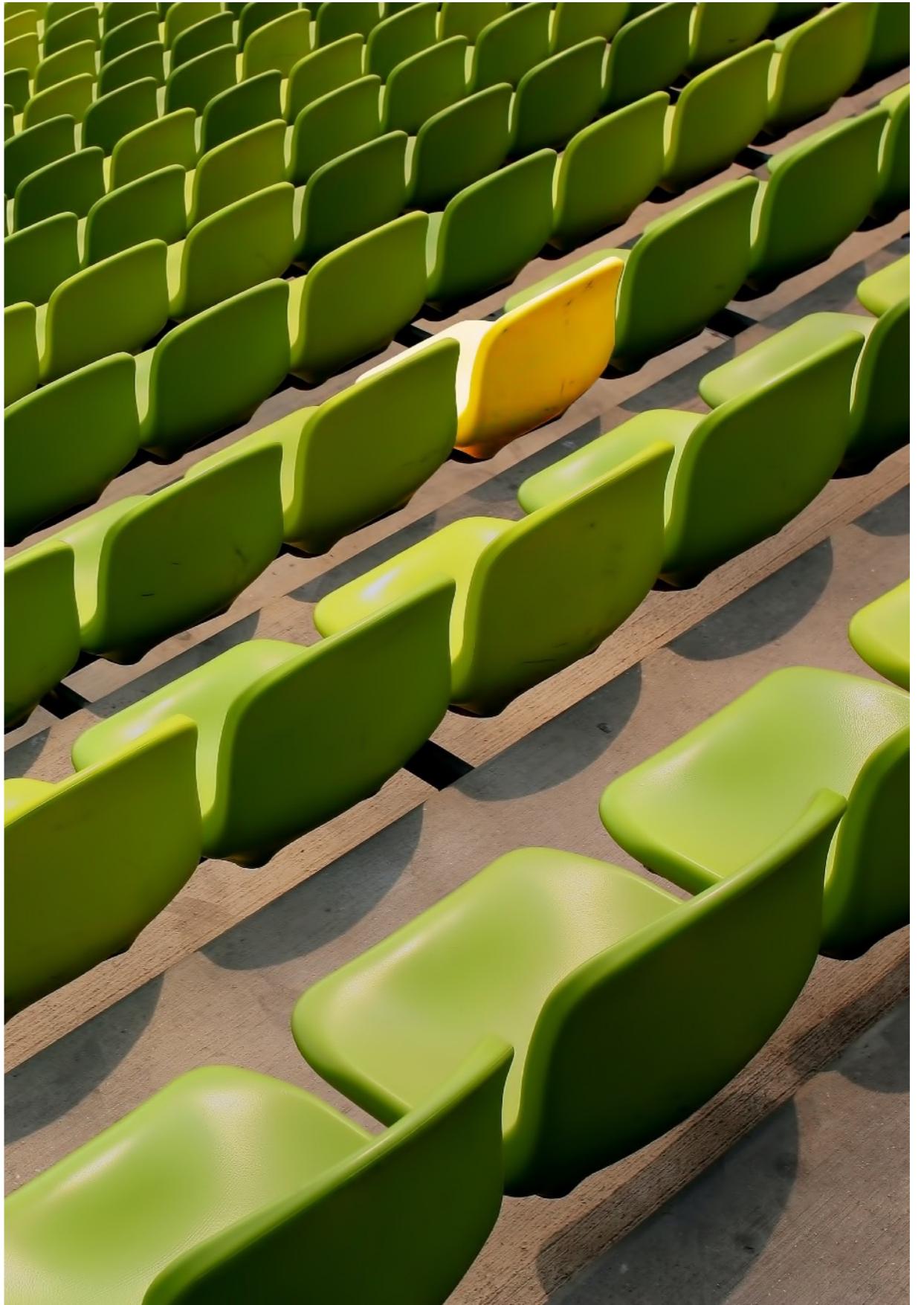
AWARDS/Achievements/PUBLICATIONS (Optional – edit as applicable)

Awards: Award Title, Awarding Organisation/Competition Title, year award was granted.

Publications: Author(s), "Title of publication," Place of publication (journal), edition, year, page numbers.

- You may consider using this section if you have space, and if you have received a prestigious award during your studies. Be wary of putting awards that everyone has, as they can undervalue the rest of your accomplishments.

Cover letters



Cover letters

Why do I even need a cover letter?

- In North America, and Canada specifically, job applications are highly personalized.
- Employers expect both a résumé and a cover letter. This is sort of a cultural norm.
- Including a tailored, well-thought-out cover letter will help you stand out among other candidates who are less or equally qualified.

Cover letters

Why do I even need a cover letter?

Your cover letter gives you the chance to:

- Speak directly to the recruiter or prospective employer.
- “Connect the dots” in your résumé and create a personal narrative.
- Explicitly relate your experience and qualifications to the requirements of the job posting (in full sentences, etc.).

Cover letters

Cover letters in practice

Many companies are moving away from lengthier, one-page cover letters.

For MScAC internships (and many other external jobs), **practice by writing a concise email that will accompany your résumé**. Aim for one/two paragraphs.

Unless you are connecting with a recruiter or a larger HR department, many of the people you are reaching out to don't have the time to read through a long letter: get to the point fast, and the résumé will cover the rest.

Cover letters

Effective writing and strategies

1. Don't just repeat what's already on your résumé.
2. The letter/email should compel the reader to read (or re-read) your résumé and contact you for an initial interview.
3. Know your audience: you may not know the person to which you are sending your job application, but you should try to understand the role and function of the person most likely to read your cover letter.
4. Demonstrate that you know the organization you are applying to and understand their industry.
5. Tell a story.
6. Write a strong opening paragraph (for a letter) or sentence (for an email).
7. For a letter, include some career highlights (but see point 1).



The Key to Landing Your Next Job?
Storytelling (Harvard Business Review, <https://hbr.org/2021/05/the-key-to-landing-your-next-job-storytelling>)

Cover letters

Critically reading the posting

As with your résumé, **do not** write a generic or blanket cover letter.

- Tailor your cover letter and match your qualifications to the job posting.
- If your background is not a perfect match for the position at first sight, frame the experience presented in your résumé in a way that highlights its relevance to the job you are applying for.
- Include keywords from the job listing in the cover letter. Put emphasis on keywords that relate to your particular skills and qualifications.
- Always thoroughly copyedit your cover letters: make sure they are impactful, clearly written, and well polished. Mirror the words and phrases in the job description.

Cover letters

Writing your letter or email

- 
- **Contact information:** Start with a header that includes your contact information. You may use the same header as your résumé, for visual consistency.
 - **Greeting:** If you know who will receive or read your cover letter, use that person's name. If there is no contact listed on the job application, do your best to find the name of the individual who is most likely to receive the application. Otherwise, address it to the hiring manager ("Dear Hiring Manager").

Cover letters

Writing your letter or email

- 
- **Opening paragraph:** Depending on your experience, you may:
 - Provide the basic details about who you are and why you want the job. Include the job title, a general overview of why you would excel at the position, and the reasons you are excited about the job.
 - Identify why you would be a good match for that specific employer and position.
 - Start creating a personal narrative that highlights your skills and experience, your understanding of the position, and how one is a great match for the other.

Cover letters

Writing your letter or email

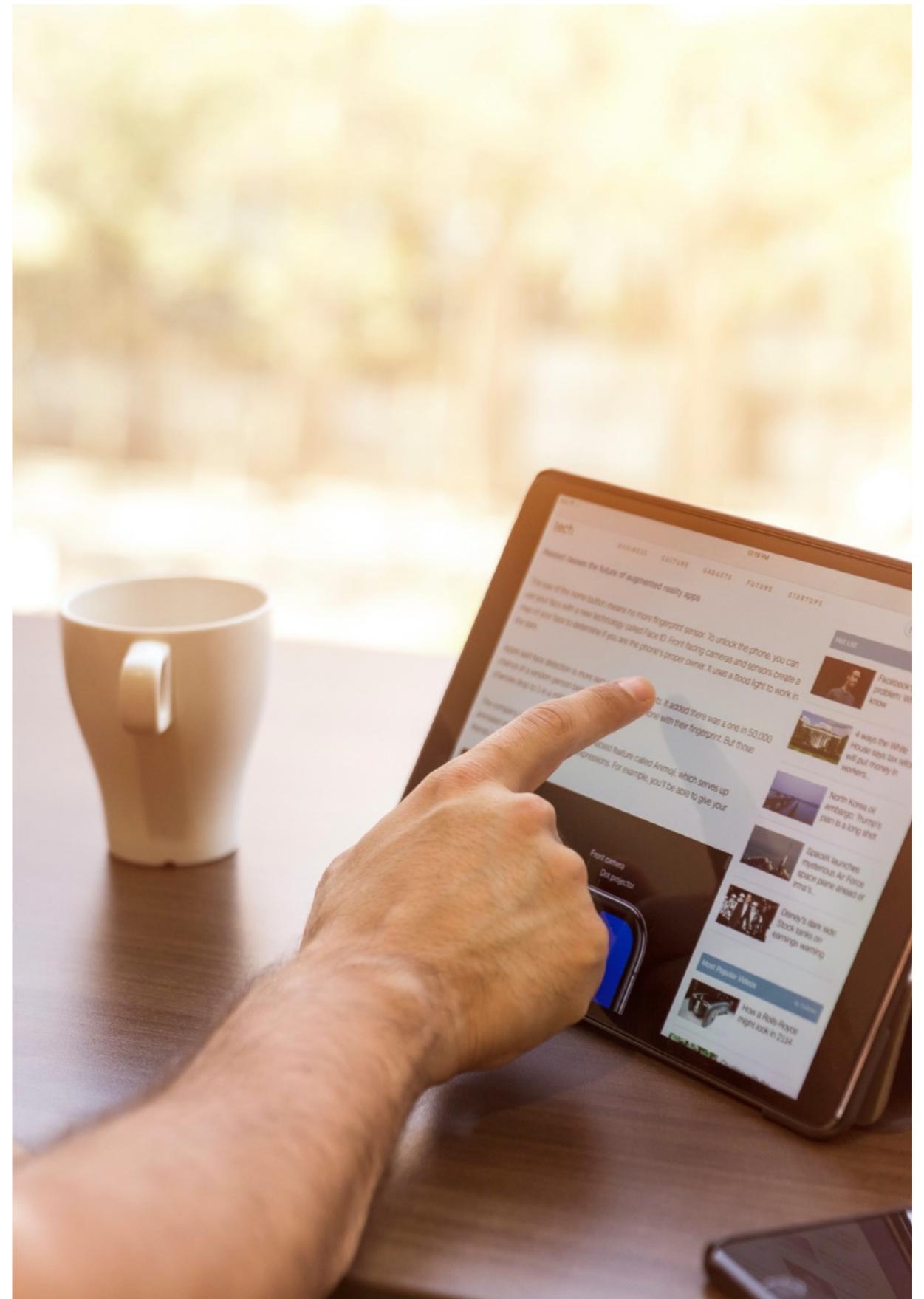
- 
- **Qualifications:** Focus on your history, providing more and/or different details than your résumé.
 - Focus on how your skills and experience apply to the job.
 - Include stories about relevant experience or situations that showcase how you solve problems and do your work well.
 - Explain your contributions and draw attention to their impact.
 - **Goals:** Demonstrate that you understand the scope of the position you are applying for and the mission of your prospective employer. This will show that you have done research on the position. Explain how your skills, experience, and interests can benefit both your future career and the recruitment needs of your prospective employer.

Cover letters

Writing your letter or email

- 
- **Closing paragraph:** Summarize your interest, thank the hiring manager for taking the time to review your application, and express interest in discussing your qualifications in more detail.
 - **Signature:** Sign off with a professional closing formula ("Sincerely", "Best regards", "Respectfully") and your signature or typed name. If you are emailing your cover letter, do not include an unnecessary email signature.

LinkedIn profiles and personal webpages



Establishing your online presence

Key advice

- Develop an online “elevator pitch” to be featured on your LinkedIn profile, personal webpage, etc.
- Carefully start building out your network on LinkedIn.
- Develop your online presence (more on that later).
- Show examples of past work on GitHub, LinkedIn, or a personal website.
- Set your other social media accounts to private.

Establishing your online presence

Setting up your LinkedIn profile

- Include a short but impactful summary section.
- Set a custom URL for your LinkedIn profile.
- Include a professional-looking headshot (do include a picture on LinkedIn).
- Set your profile to “open for work”.
- Include *any* past jobs, projects, and volunteer positions *if* they give you the opportunity to highlight relevant or transferable skills and only specifically addressing your responsibilities and accomplishments. If not, only include relevant positions.
- Use keywords relevant to the range of positions you may be applying to, but avoid buzzwords. As with your résumé, be specific, quantify, and highlight your contributions.
- Make sure to add a tailored note when connecting with prospective contacts.

Establishing your online presence

Building your online portfolio

- You can set up a GitHub profile, an online personal portfolio, or a personal webpage to showcase your work and experience (projects, code samples, etc.). If you are going to do this, make sure that it includes relevant projects and it looks professional.
- You may have written about technology, computer science, or other relevant topics in a blog or other online publication. If this is the case, and this has been an ongoing activity, you may choose to include this in your résumé and LinkedIn profile.
- **If you are going to do any of this, do it well or don't do it at all.** Showcase anything that may set you apart from the crowd, but make sure that you stand out for the right reasons.

Résumé, covers letters, and online profiles

To summarize

- Tailor your résumé and cover letter to the specific job you are applying to.
- Highlight the top skills, experiences, and qualifications that help you stand out.
- Build your online presence in a thoughtful and professional way.
- Proofread, proofread, and proofread once again.



Conducting Your Job Search

**Where do you
see yourself
working?**

Go to **menti.com** and use the code **9680 6332**



Where do you see yourself working?

88

Start-up



Small- or medium-sized enterprise (SMEs, fewer than 250 employees)



Larger company (250+ employees)



Multinational corporation



Hospital and healthcare



Not-for-profit



Government



20%

40%

60%

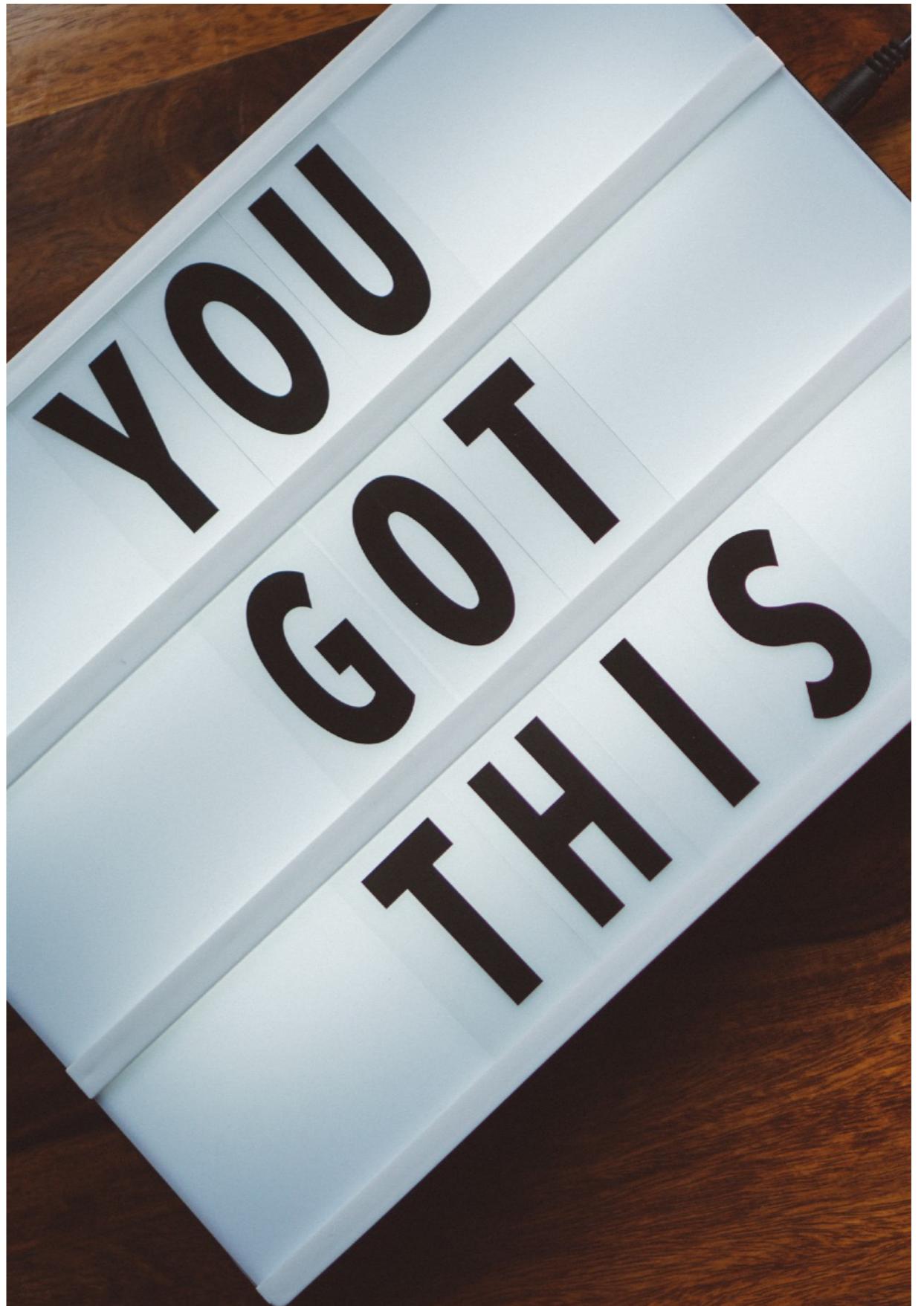
80%

100%

Conducting your job search

Self-assessment of skillset

- Have a clear plan to help you reach your job search goal(s).
- Understand what you have to offer, what you want to do, and where you want to work.
- Understand how you are going to explain to a prospective employer who you are, what you know, and what you can contribute.



Self-assessment of skillset

The basic questions

- What do you want to do? What can you do? (Include both hard skills and soft/transferable skills.)
- Who do you want to work for? What industries interest you? What type of employers?
- Where would you like to live and work?

Be as specific as necessary, but also consider contingencies and possible compromises.

Self-assessment of skillset

Interests and experience

Think of all activities you have taken part in during the last few years, including school, work, volunteering, and fun. Ask yourself the following questions and try to identify common themes:

- What have you liked and disliked about each activity?
- What did you learn from each activity?
- Which (if any) aspects of the activity would you like to remain involved with?

→ Test worksheets from *What Color Is Your Parachute?*

Self-assessment of skillset

Skills

- What do you most love to do, described in terms of the basic transferable skills you most love to use?
- Which skills best describe how you interact and communicate with other people? Examples include presentation skills, supervisory skills, writing skills, etc.
- Which functional skills best describe what you are capable of doing or achieving on the job?
- Which cognitive skills best describe your abilities and provide insight into your thought processes? Examples include problem-solving skills, interpersonal skills, creative skills, etc.

Self-assessment of skillset

Achievements

Consider anything that showcases your abilities and skills, and are indicative of your potential for taking initiative and solving problems:

- What accomplishments are you most proud of, and why?
- Have you made suggestions that were adopted by your classmates, team, or coworkers?
- Have you intervened in a situation that could have become a serious problem?
- Have you accomplished a task using fewer resources than usual?
- Have you worked with a particularly demanding manager, teammate, or client?
- Have you ever taken the initiative in a way that you are particularly proud of?
- Have you trained or taught people?
- Have you received some form of recognition (award, title, trophy, etc.)?

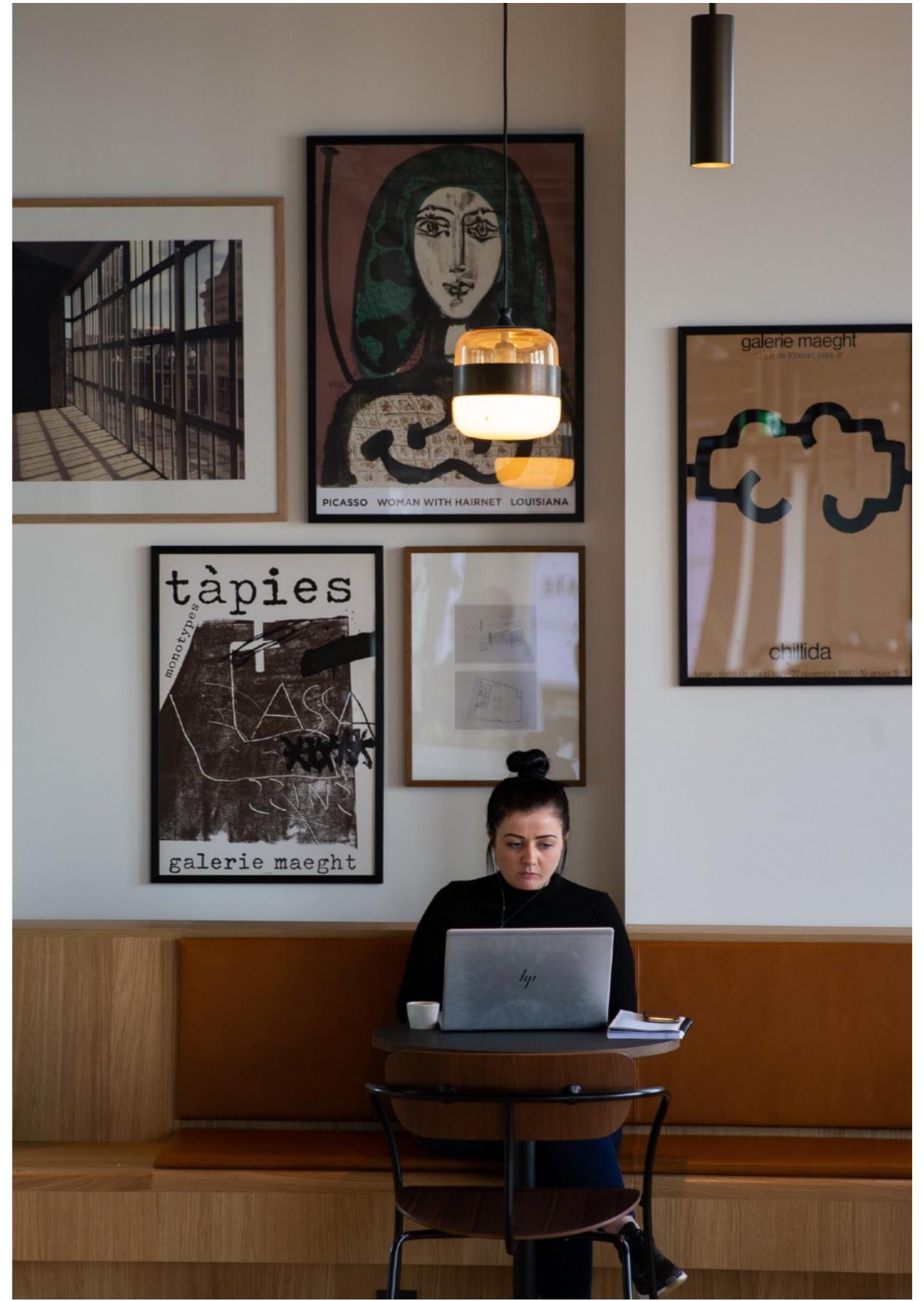
Self-assessment of skillset

Self-knowledge questions

Try to understand your personality type, to help you focus your job search and “pitch” yourself during interviews:

- Identify your general personality traits that provide insight into your overall personality, both inside and outside the workplace.
- Identify work-related personality traits that are more relevant to the workplace and on-the-job performance.
- What values are you looking for in the workplace? These are values that may be shaped by your family, culture, education, and other socialization processes.

How to build a job search plan

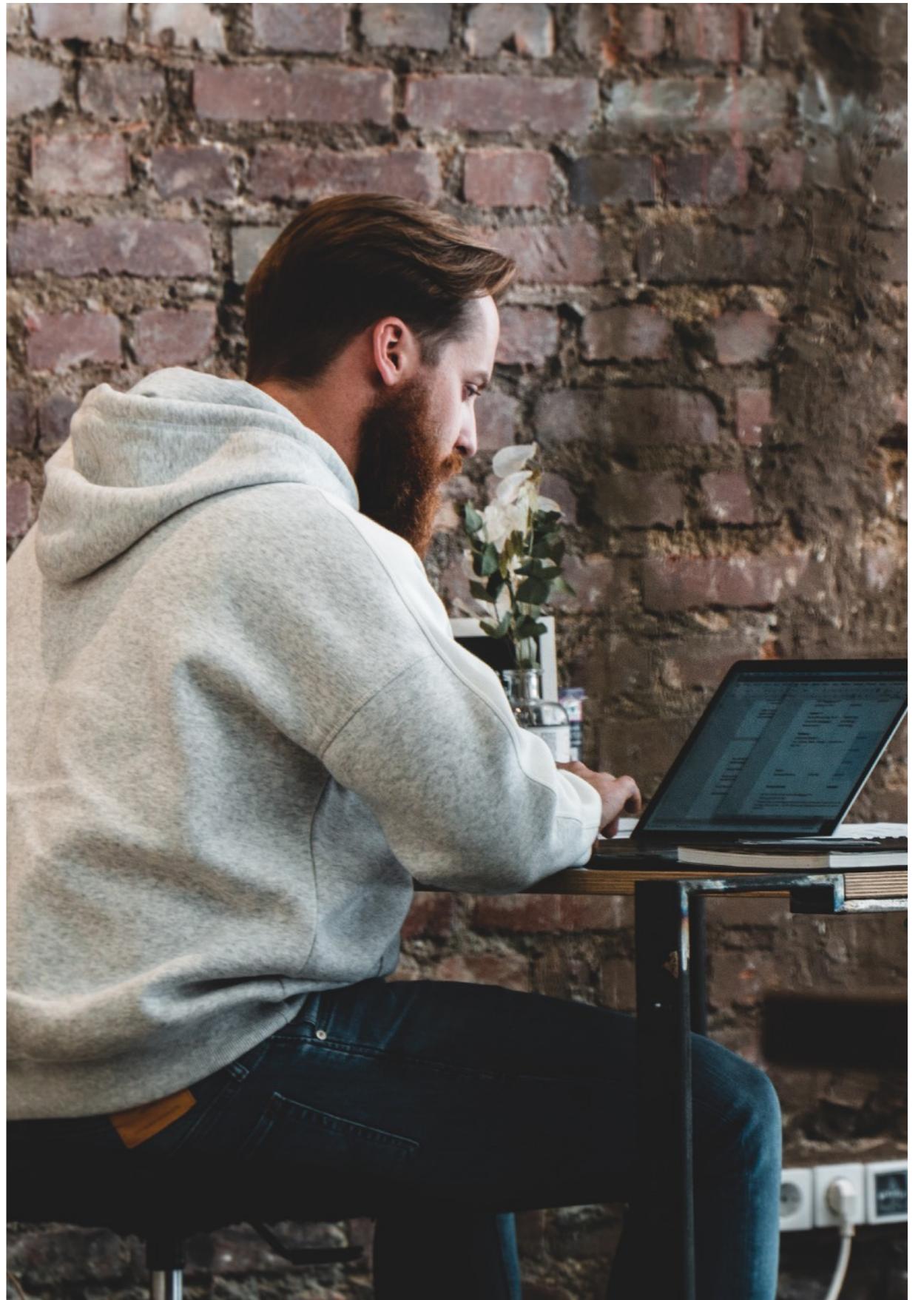


How to build a job search plan

Before starting your search

- Complete your skillset self-assessment.
- Clarify your job goals and write them down.
- Make sure you have a professional-looking email address.
- Have a well-written résumé and cover letter. Make sure your résumé and cover letter format is tailored for the industries you are targeting.
- Have an elevator pitch and a networking script ready. They will be useful to introduce yourself and answer the question "tell me about yourself."

How to search for jobs



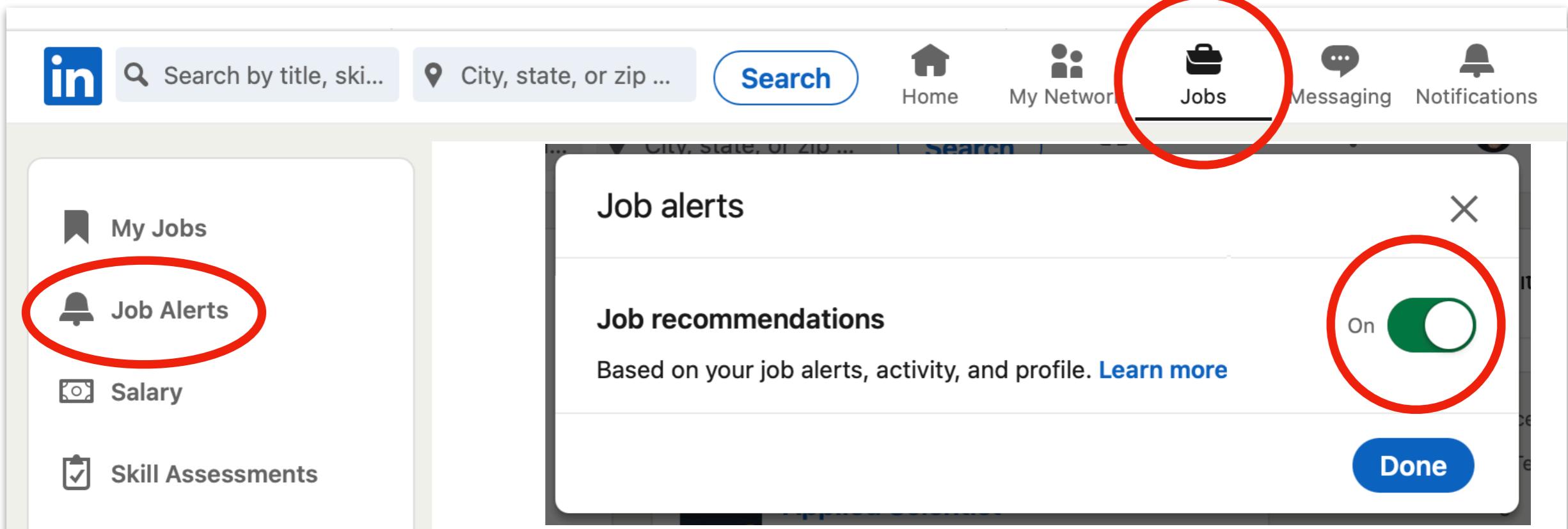
How to search for jobs

The basics

- Identify prospective employers, and sources of job leads and job postings (career pages on company websites, job boards, LinkedIn, Indeed, Glassdoor, etc.)
- Attend job fairs and networking events. Leverage any promising networking opportunity, offline and online.
- Leverage your alumni network and referrals.
- Don't stop at online applications during your job search:
 - Ask for informational interviews with prospective colleagues.
 - Approach internal recruiters and ask a few questions.

How to search for jobs

Make LinkedIn work for you



You may want to turn off your activity notifications.

Data privacy

How LinkedIn uses your data

Job seeking preferences

Other applications

Notify network

Turn on to notify your network. Job change updates can take up to 2 hours. [Learn more](#)

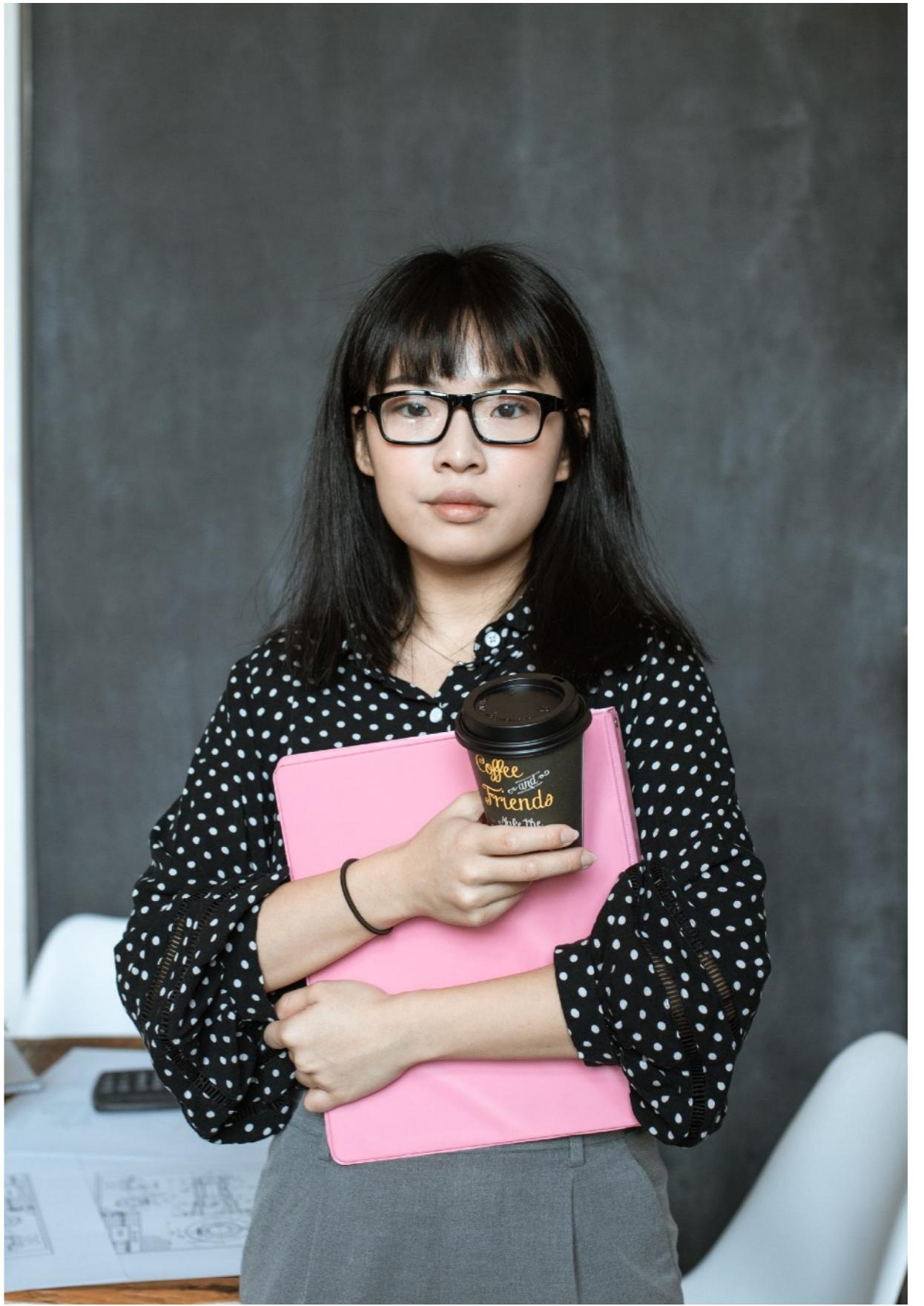
Off

How to search for jobs

Some tips

- If your job applications and social media profiles don't position you as a direct match for the particular roles you are targeting, don't be afraid to modify wording, switch around key terms, and swap bullet points in and out.
- Avoid looking staged and non-genuine in your communications and interviews.
- Send thoughtful, genuine thank you notes whenever appropriate.
- If you are looking to adopt any creative tactic in your job hunt, make sure that they are appropriate for the industry you are trying to break into.

Informational interviews and networking



Informational interviews and networking

Job networking tips

- Make a list of the people in your network: family, friends, neighbours, coworkers, colleagues, and even casual acquaintances.
- Do reach out to your network, but figure out exactly what you want and what to say before you start networking.
- Focus on building relationships: ask for advice, not for a job.
- Be specific: Are you asking for a reference? A personal opinion on a company or industry? A referral? An introduction to someone in the field?

Informational interviews and networking

What to expect in an informational interview

- An informational interview is not a job interview: it is closer to an informal conversation between a job seeker and a professional, in which the job seeker tries to learn as much as possible regarding someone's career, industry, roles, and company culture.
- Prepare and practice: do your background research. You will also come across as a more credible candidate if you are familiar with the right vocabulary and the prospective employer.
- Keep your introduction short, and clearly state your purpose.
- Prepare a list of informed, intelligent questions ahead of time, and listen to the answers carefully. Ask follow-up questions.
- Send a thank-you note after each informational interview.

Informational interviews and networking

What questions should I ask in an informational interview?

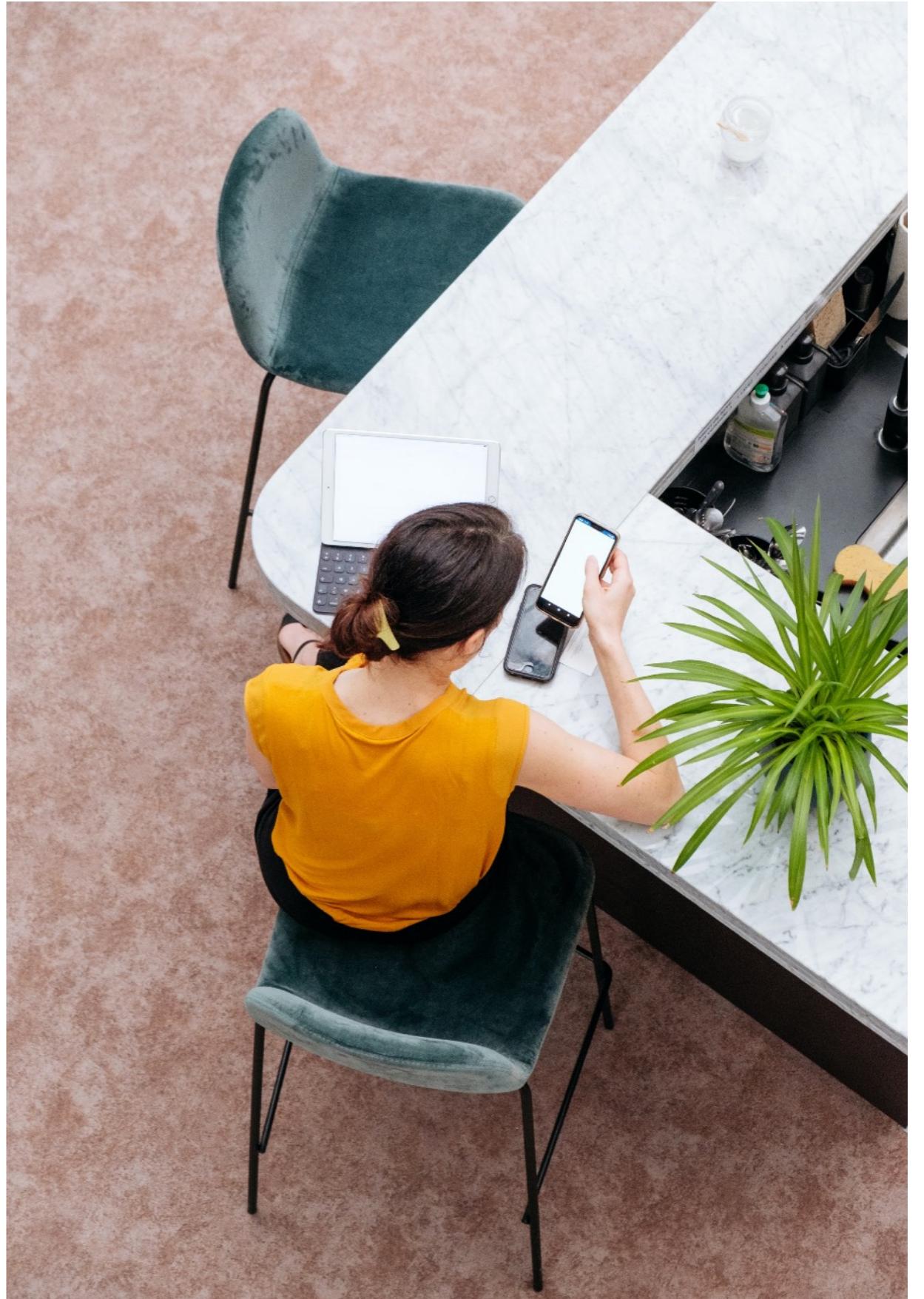
- What are your main responsibilities?
- What is a typical day (or week) like for you?
- What do you enjoy about your work?
- What do you like least about your work?
- What is changing in this sector?
- How do you get into this line of work? What are common entry-level jobs?
- What kinds of people do well in this industry?
- What are some common career paths in this field?
- What didn't you know before you got into this industry that you wish someone had told you?

Informational interviews and networking

Networking opportunities within MScAC

- **MScAC Talks:** monthly seminar series, September to June (mscac.utoronto.ca/talks)
- **Applied Research in Action (ARIA):** November 13th, 2025
- **MScAC Partner Events:** starting October 2025 (dates TBA)
- **MScAC Internship Expo:** week beginning January 19th, 2026
- **U of T and DCS career fairs:**
 - Student Life (studentlife.utoronto.ca)
 - U of T events (www.utoronto.ca/events)

Action plan and time management



Action plan and time management

When ready to start applying for jobs

- Set a schedule to keep your job search plan on track.
- Set up a system (a spreadsheet, a diary, post-its, etc.) for recording your job search activities.
- Use a calendar to track deadlines, appointments, events, and interviews.
- Set up reminders to follow up on applications and events as appropriate.

➡ A Five-Week Guide to Getting a Job (Harvard Business Review, <https://hbr.org/2021/03/a-five-week-guide-to-getting-a-job>)

Action plan and time management

When interviewing

- Practice and hone your interviewing skills. Set up mock interviews with career services advisors, family, friends, and colleagues.
- Have answers ready to address behavioural or open-ended interview questions.
- Choose who your references will be. Identify 3–5 potential references and, when appropriate, ask if they would be willing to provide a strong reference for you. Have your reference information ready when you interview, and provide it if asked.

→ How to Respond to “So, Tell Me About Yourself” in a Job Interview (Harvard Business Review, <https://hbr.org/2019/08/how-to-respond-to-so-tell-me-about-yourself-in-a-job-interview>)

About the MScAC Internships

The internship process

2025–26 timeline



Finding your internship

Through the MScAC program

What to look for when considering internship opportunities:

- Quality of the applied research on offer.
- Work environment you will be exposed to.
- Team you will be working with.
- Supervision you will receive.
- Possibilities for personal growth and professional development.

Finding your internship

Conducting your own internship search

You are encouraged to find your own internship: look for organizations you may be interested in working with as an applied research intern and internship opportunities that sound interesting to you.

- Provide the Partnerships team with a brief description of the project you will be working on.
- Connect the Partnerships team with your point of contact at the organization so that the program requirements can be discussed.

You **must not** accept any offer before speaking with a Partnerships team member about the suitability of the project and confirming that it meets your degree requirements.

Interview preparation roadmap

Mar 2025	1+ year	Projects, languages, network, online portfolio/profile
Sep 2025	3–5 months	Résumé, companies, Big-Oh, algo & data struct, interview group
Nov 2025	1–2 months	Mini-projects, mock interviews, practice questions, track mistakes
Dec 2025/ Jan 2026	4 weeks	Interview prep grid, résumé, apply, mock interview, practice question, code on paper
Feb 2026	1 week	Online preparation, final mock interview, rehearse story, review Big-Oh, algo, data struct, practice interview questions
Internship Expo	Day before/of	Rehearse story, practice question, review mistake. Wake up and have breakfast, be on time, be confident, talk out loud

**Questions?
Comments?**

For more questions and comments

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