STUDENT GUIDE TO ON-CAMPUS RECRUITMENT INFORMATION SESSIONS

WHAT IS AN ON-CAMPUS RECRUITMENT INFORMATION SESSION?

A recruitment information session is an event organized by an organization looking to hire students and recent graduates. Employers typically hold information sessions to promote their organization and present information about their organization’s job opportunities, potential career paths, and recruitment practices. Every year, the University of Toronto hosts over 100 on-campus recruitment information sessions to provide students and recent graduates with valuable opportunities to learn more about the labour market and network with industry representatives.

WHY EMPLOYERS HOST INFORMATION SESSIONS

- To promote their organization and build brand awareness on-campus.
- To identify potential employees based on their demonstrated professional and interpersonal skills.
- To attract top talent to their organization. U of T graduates and alumni are globally in-demand and go on to hold leadership roles in their respective fields. U of T is also the top-ranked Canadian university with one of the highest graduate employability outcomes in the world (2018 QS Graduate Employability Rankings).

WHY STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADUATES ATTEND

- To learn more about positions available within an organization, required skills, experiences and knowledge, recruitment process, work environment and culture, and future industry trends.
- To network with recruiters and employers and make valuable contacts to explore future opportunities and referrals.
- To demonstrate interest in the organization and articulate skills and qualifications. Make a good first impression and get invited for an interview.
- Network with other students (peers) and recent graduates who are interested in the same industry, organization or roles.
- Hear diverse and non-traditional career stories from alumni and employees at an organization.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Recruitment information sessions typically last between 1 to 2 hours. The first 30 minutes involves a presentation by representatives outlining the organization’s mission, vision, values, career opportunities, recruitment process, and culture and work environment. The presentation is followed by a discussion period, during which attendees can ask recruiters questions about the organization and employment opportunities. The remainder of the time is an opportunity for attendees to network and interact with recruiters. Below is a list of tips to prepare you to make the most of a recruitment information session:

BEFORE THE EVENT

- Research the organization and its industry in advance to understand their operations and trends.
- Read the job posting (if available) in detail, identify the skills, experiences, knowledge, and values the
employer is seeking in a great candidate. Plan to customize your application after learning about the positions and the organization at the information session. Articulate how you meet the employer’s expectations.

- Update your LinkedIn profile to match the opportunities you are seeking and, if applicable, upload your portfolio.
- Prepare a 30-second introduction statement (elevator pitch) about your skills, experiences, knowledge, values, and interests that align with the organization and its opportunities.
- Prepare questions to ask during the discussion and networking period. Asking thoughtful, well-informed questions will help you stand out to the recruiters and employers.
  - The best questions to ask are typically regarding the organization’s presentation content, industry trends, current and future projects of interest, workplace culture, and professional growth opportunities.
- Dress standards are not consistent across different organizations and industries. Dress “professional” as it relates to the organization and industry you are pursuing.
- Bring something to take note of important information that is mentioned.
- Consider preparing a networking business card.

**DURING THE EVENT**

- Arrive at least 10 minutes early! This will give you time to find a seat and sign in to the event.
- Listen attentively during the presentation period. Take note of important deadlines and information.
- Turn off your phone. Using it is distracting to both the presenter and to others around you. It may also give recruiters the impression that you are not fully engaged.
- During the discussion period, ask general questions that will be applicable to everyone. Save your specific questions for the networking period.
- Pay attention to the questions asked by others to avoid repeating them.
- After the discussion period, it is your chance to give your introduction statement (elevator pitch). Make sure to specifically mention how your skills and qualifications match with the expectations of the organization and the position which you are interested in.
- Be careful not to monopolize a recruiter’s time. Know when the conversation has run its course and move on!
- If food and beverages are served; be judicious. You don’t want to be speaking to potential employer with food stains on your clothing. If you choose to partake in any alcoholic beverages that are served, consume moderately to maintain your composure and professional presence.
- Before ending the conversation, ask if the recruiter or employer is interested in connecting on LinkedIn or willing to share their business card. You may also offer your own networking business card, if you have one.
- Network with other students! The connections you make with your peers who are also interested in the same industry can be very helpful for exploring future opportunities.

**AFTER THE EVENT**

- Try to stay in contact!
- Follow-up with a recruiter within a few days with a thank-you message, if they shared their contact information. You can maintain an email correspondence, or use a service such as LinkedIn. This will help you to build and maintain your network with the organization, so you can be notified of future opportunities.
- Prepare your application. Shortly after a recruitment information session, the host organization often accepts applications for job postings, as well as conducts on-campus interviews.
- Consult your campus Career Centre for many resources and services to assist you with putting together a great resume and cover letter.
• When applying for a job posting, mention that you attended the information session in your cover letter. Reference your discussion(s) with a recruiter or employer to emphasize your interest in the organization.

BEYOND ON-CAMPUS RECRUITMENT (OCR)

On-Campus Recruitment Information Sessions provide a valuable opportunity to gather information and contacts, but they are only one method of finding a job. With some organizations attracting higher competition for their opportunities it is not always feasible to be hired through a recruitment information session. Below are a list of other avenues through which you can widen and diversify your job search:

• Research the labour market
  ○ This will help you get informed about the employment opportunities that are available, and what skills and requirements you need to qualify for a role. You will also learn more about occupational trends, salary ranges etc.
  ○ You can find links to credible information on your campus main Career Centre websites, as well as sites like Statistics Canada, Industry Canada, Glassdoor and the U of T Libraries Databases.

• Know yourself
  ○ Reflect on your skills, strengths, interests and values. Decide on the type of employment you want, and where you would like to work. You will be most successful in your job search when you are passionate about the opportunities you choose to pursue

• Use your network: talk to people you know
  ○ Many positions are interviewed for and filled without ever appearing as a job posting. Oftentimes, these positions are filled through word of mouth and trusted referrals. By telling people that you are searching for a job, you open yourself up for consideration for positions that you may not have heard about otherwise

• Surf job boards
  ○ When combined with other job-search strategies, job boards can be helpful for keeping informed of new opportunities within your industry.
  ○ You can find a variety of job postings on websites such as: Career & Co-curricular Learning Network (CLNx), TalentEgg, Indeed, Charity Village, Service Canada, and directly from Company websites.

• Utilize your university campus resources
  ○ The University of Toronto has a variety of programs and resources to help prepare you for your next job. Make sure to take advantage of networking events, resume review services and resources on how to prepare for an interview etc.
  ○ Many of these resources are available through your campus career centre:
    ○ St. George Career Exploration & Education
    ○ UTSC Academic Advising and Career Centre
    ○ UTM Career Centre

• Get involved in your community
  ○ By being active in student organizations, participating in co-curricular programs, volunteering with local organizations and engaging in mentor-mentee interactions, you are developing and maintaining your skill set, as well as building your network.
UNDERSTANDING YOUR RIGHTS AS A JOB SEEKER

In accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Commission, every individual is afforded certain rights during the job seeking process. As you pursue employment opportunities, it is important to keep the following in mind:

- **Race and Race-related Grounds**
  - Employers can ask if a person is legally entitled to work in Canada. [But] employers cannot ask for information about citizenship.
  - In a job posting or interview, employers should avoid asking questions or otherwise commenting on the applicants’:
    - Presence or absence of Canadian experience
    - Landed immigrant status, permanent residency, naturalization or refugee status
    - Place of birth
    - Affiliation with a particular “community” or where the applicant “comes from”
    - Membership in organizations such as cultural or ethnic associations
    - Name and/or the applicant’s appearance
    - Name and location of education attended

- **Accommodation for the Interview or Test**
  - In Ontario, Employers must accommodate applicants’ needs related to Code grounds for any part of the interview or hiring process, including tests. The employer must provide appropriate accommodation subject to the test of undue hardship.
    - A person who needs accommodation to take part in an interview is responsible for advising of this need in enough detail, and cooperating in consultations to enable the employer to respond to the request before the interview or testing.
  - Disability-related issues should not be raised by the employer until after a conditional offer of employment has been received. All other questions about an applicant’s disability are prohibited.
  - In a resume or interview, if an applicant requests accommodation for religious requirements in the workplace, the accommodation needs may be discussed. Otherwise, employers should not discuss accommodations of religious needs in the workplace until a conditional offer of employment has been presented and the candidate requests accommodations.

- **Sexual Orientation**
  - Questions about sexual orientation are not allowed during the application or interview process, even if the employer is a religious, philanthropic, educational, fraternal or social organization.

- **Pregnancy**
  - The right to equal treatment in employment because of sex prohibits pregnancy-related questions during a job interview.

- **Requiring a Driver’s License As A Condition of Employment**
  - Unless a driver’s license is required to enable a person to perform the essential duties of a job, it should not be requested in an application form or during an employment interview.

- **Employment Related Medical Information**
• Any medical assessment to verify or determine an individual’s ability to perform the essential duties of a job, should only take place after a conditional offer of employment is made, preferably in writing.

- Drug and Alcohol Testing
  - Drug and alcohol testing as part of the initial applicant screening process is prohibited.
  - Refer to the OHRC Policy on Drug and Alcohol Testing for more details.

- Special Employment
  - Special service organizations that are religious, philanthropic, educational, fraternal or social may prefer to employ persons of a particular group if the organization serves mostly the interests of that group. If the exemption in subsection 24(1)(a) of the Human Rights Code applies, the organization would be permitted to ask questions about an applicant’s race, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, creed, sex, age, marital status or disability as a reasonable and bona fide qualification because of the nature of the employment.

For more information, refer to the OHRC's Human Rights Code.

Tell us about your on-campus recruitment and employer experiences. Contact us at:

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