



Interview Strategies

Topics Covered

- ◆ Strategies for success
- ◆ Behavioural interviews
- ◆ Telephone interviews
- ◆ Panel interviews
- ◆ Typical interview questions
- ◆ Case interviews used by consulting firms
- ◆ Salary information



Career Management Handouts On-Line:

Careers in Business

Company Research

Effective Job Search Letters

Evaluating and Negotiating Job Offers

Interview Strategies

Job Search Strategies

Networking at Company Recruitment Sessions

Professional Business Resumes

Go to: www.sauder.ubc.ca/ccs, Click on "Career Management"



Strategies For Success

PRIOR TO THE INTERVIEW

Be Prepared

As with your cover letter, you need to identify:

*“What **key competencies** (skills, strengths and abilities) will my interviewer be looking for in an ideal candidate for this position?”*

Analyze the job posting to assess what key competencies (specific skills and abilities) the interviewer will be looking for: communication, leadership, initiative, decision-making, problem solving, presentation and time management and/or computer skills.

Once you have analyzed what the interviewer is looking for, structure your answers to anticipated interview questions ensuring these key competencies are addressed.

Prepare answers to the key interview questions listed on page 3

Research the Company

A well-prepared candidate definitely has the edge. By researching the company and industry, and being knowledgeable about the line of work, you are able to:

- “Talk-the-talk” of the industry. Use industry related terms to show you know what the industry is about.
- Prove you are career-focused and want to establish a career within that industry.
- Show the interviewer you are keenly interested in working for their particular company.

Download the “*Company Research*” Handout from www.sauder.ubc.ca/ccs - click on “Career Management”.

Also, company recruiting sessions provide an excellent forum for researching the firm and gaining insights into what qualifications the interviewers will be looking for. During these sessions ask questions of a company representatives to get an inside track on what the company needs. For more information, check the “*Networking at Company Recruiting Sessions*” handout at www.sauder.ubc.ca/ccs - click on “Career Management”.

Be aware of the Company’s:

- **Business products or services**
- **Competitors**
- **Business or distribution alliances**
- **Recent news briefings**
- **Names of key individuals**
- **Import/export partners**
- **Locations**

Interview Dress

The majority of employers prefer that candidates dress in professional business attire. Some high tech companies are more casual in their attire, (e.g. Electronic Arts, Crystal Decisions). In these cases, keep the suit but substitute a polo shirt for the dress shirt and tie.



Interview Dress (continued)

The rule of thumb is:

- match your attire to that of the most senior individuals with whom you will be interacting during your workday. If you are meeting with industry professionals or clients who dress professionally, model this in your interview.
- if in doubt, dress professionally.
- if necessary, modify your dress for your second interview.

At least two days prior to your interview decide what you will wear and prepare your outfit. This avoids last minute problems such as a stained tie, missing buttons, torn hosiery, and unpolished shoes.

What To Bring To The Interview

Professional Folders

In a professional folder bring copies of your resume, reference list, letters of reference, a list of questions for your interviewer, other supporting documents, pen and paper.

Portfolios

Professional Portfolios are excellent tools to feature your work and accomplishments. Consider bringing a 3-ring binder containing copies of your resume, reference list, letters of reference, transcripts, lists of the projects you have worked on, copies of term reports (for which you have received good grades), lists of specialized training, and copies of your publications. For information on portfolios, download the "*Professional Business Resumes*" handout from www.sauder.ubc.ca/ccs - click on "Career Management".

DURING THE INTERVIEW

First Impressions Count!

Within seconds the interviewer has made a decision as to whether you are a potential candidate. This impression is based on your professionalism, confidence, and whether you are approachable.

Making that Winning Impression

- **P-r-e-p-a-r-e** and rehearse your answers to interview questions, but avoid sounding too automatic.
- **Visualize success** as you sit waiting for your interviewer. See yourself acing the interview and getting the job
- **Be focused**; put away all other concerns and worries
- Keep in mind that **eye contact** conveys confidence
- **Introduce yourself clearly** with your first and last name
- Ensure you have heard the interviewer's name
- Put forward a **firm handshake**
- SMILE!

Key to acing the interview:
PRACTICE!
PRACTICE!
PRACTICE!

<http://interview.monster.ca>
provides on-line interview
practice!



Verbal Communication Skills

Richard H. Beatty's "The Interview Kit" suggests: "Your verbal communication skills (or lack thereof) are going to be rather evident throughout the interview....Here are some basic guidelines to follow in communicating effectively:

- Be expressive. Use alive, animated speech. Avoid using a monotone.
- Be conscious of your articulation. Pronounce words clearly. Don't mumble or slur your speech.
- Be concise. Avoid being too wordy or rambling.
- Stay focused and to the point.
- Be direct and forthright. Don't be evasive or beat around the bush.
- Use appropriate hand gestures to emphasize key points. Avoid overuse of the hands."

Key Interview Questions

When answering any interview question you must:

***Prove you have the skills & ability
to do the job through developing stories
based on your experiences!***

When talking about your strengths and skills, provide **specific examples** of when and how you developed those skills. Draw on experiences from work, school and your volunteer activities. Avoid talking in generalities and abstractions. Discuss **your** experiences; avoid the overuse of "we".

The following key questions are very often part of an interview in one form or another. They present an opportunity for you to sell your skills and abilities related to the position. Give **concrete examples** of how your experiences, skills and/or interests make you a strong candidate for the position.

1. ***Tell me about yourself.***

Tell the recruiter about yourself including 3-4 of your strengths you wish to promote related to the job and **provide examples**:

"I will be graduating this May with a Marketing degree and experience in marketing research and promotions. During university I worked for the Sales & Merchandising Group promoting Cellular One products. I also was involved in extensive market research during my work with the Saturn project. This project involved analyzing buying trends of specific ethnic groups in Vancouver."

**Provide
SPECIFIC EXAMPLES
from your experience –
PROVE you have the
skills the position
requires.**



Key Interview Questions (continued)

2. What are your strengths? What do you offer us? Why are you a good fit for this job? Why should I hire you?

As in #1, discuss your strengths related to the needs of the job, and support this by providing examples.

"I have a strong foundational knowledge of the investment banking industry developed through my degree in Finance. Additionally, last summer I worked at Nesbitt Burns as an Assistant to a Financial Advisor. I also am completing my CSC in February, and plan to start on my CFA after graduation."

3. What are your weaknesses? What would your previous boss say about areas you need to work on?

This question can be tricky to answer. Richard H. Beatty's "The Interview Kit" suggests you talk about a weakness that you have learned from and developed stronger skills as a result of. Never pick items that could be detrimental to your candidacy. Choose areas that you have already shown an improvement (not areas that continue to be a problem).

"An area I am working on is my time management skills. To ensure my projects are on track, I rely on my day timer. I lay out my projects in terms of daily requirements, and on Fridays I evaluate my progress."

4. Why are you interested in this job? Why do you want to work for us? What do you know about us? Why do you think you would add value to our organization?

The interviewer is trying to determine if you are really interested in working in that career area and for their company. In your answer explain why your skills are a strong match for that job.

To prepare for these interview questions – **thoroughly research the company**. If you can show you are knowledgeable about their organizational history, needs, future potential, and industry information you will appear to be a stronger candidate.

"I recently read an article in Business in Vancouver that Columbia Partners has landed a large contract to provide web services to a major telecommunications company and I am very interested in being a part of a team that is considered a leader in e-commerce. I will be graduating from Sauder School of Business with a degree in Management Information Systems and E-Commerce. Additionally, I have designed and developed several web sites. Would you like to see my portfolio includes copies of the web sites I have developed?"

**Be prepared for the
BEHAVIOURAL
INTERVIEW.
See page 7 for details.**

**A great company
research resource:
[www.library.ubc.ca/
david_lam/reference.html](http://www.library.ubc.ca/david_lam/reference.html)**



Key Interview Questions (continued)

5. *What are your salary expectations?*

You can choose to answer this question with a comment that your salary expectation is “negotiable”, but be prepared should the interviewer then request a specific salary figure. At that point don’t limit yourself to one figure, instead offer a salary range. Do your industry research to assess what salaries are applicable to that job, and in that region. For information on negotiating salaries and work conditions, see “*Negotiating Salary and Evaluating Job Offers*” at www.sauder.ubc.ca click on “Career Management”.

NEVER ask questions about salary or benefits in a first interview – unless you have a job offer.

6. *Do you have any questions for me?*

This interview question often shows if the candidate is really interested in working with the interviewer's company or, applying to any and every internship/job posting they see.

Ask questions about the job, the company, the industry, or external events impacting the above. Don’t ask questions that could easily be answered through conducting research on the company – such as “How many branches does the company have?”

NEVER ask about salary or benefits. The first interview is an opportunity to SELL yourself to an employer.

AT THE END OF THE INTERVIEW

The interviewer will often indicate the closing of the interview by asking: *Do you have any questions for me?* This is usually followed by the recruiter indicating what the next step in the recruiting cycle will be, and then thanking you for coming to the interview.

At this point, as a highly effective means to reinforce your candidacy for the position, it is strongly recommended that you:

- Re-state your interest in the position. Briefly summarize how your experience matches their needs. Thank the interviewer for his/her time.

“Thank you for your time, Mr Smith. I am very interested in this position, and I feel my degree in Finance and my industry experience equip me with the skills needed to be a good Analyst. I look forward to hearing from you.”

- Ask for the interviewers business card, if they have not already given it to you.

A powerful closing to an interview includes:

- a statement of your interest in the position,

and

- a summary of your skills and experience related to the job.



AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Within 24 hours, mail or email a professional thank you letter to each of your interviewers. In your thank you message revisit your key strengths related to the position, confirm your interest in the job, and if needed, dispel any concerns which you felt the interviewer had about you. Ensure your message is professional, and without grammatical or spelling errors.

THANK YOU LETTERS
can reinforce your
candidacy by expressing
your interest in the position.

Sample Thank You Letter:

SUE MOSS
11-22 West Street Vancouver BC V6F 5F4 moss@hotmail.com 604.822.8383

October 20, 200X

Mr. Sam Brown
Human Resources Manager
Royal Price Inc.
123 King Street
Toronto, ON N3N 3N3

Dear Mr. Brown:

I enjoyed meeting with you on October 19th. The information you provided regarding the Financial Assistant position with Royal Price confirms my desire to become a member of your team.

During the interview you stated you needed someone with strong organizational and time management skills. I have successfully demonstrated these skills while working as a Broker's Assistant with TBC Securities. In order to meet tight time deadlines on a daily basis, I quickly refined my priority management skills to ensure all client transactions were processed.

I look forward to hearing from you and the possibility of joining Royal Price.

Sincerely,

Sue Moss

Sue Moss

FINAL COMMENTS

PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE!

There is no easier way to increase your confidence and professionalism in an interview than to practice. Prepared candidates show an interviewer they are keenly interested in working for that firm and are prepared to go that extra mile to prove it. Keep in mind that the competition for jobs is high.

**Practice your
interviewing skills
during a
CAREER COACHING
APPOINTMENT.**



Behavioral Interviews

What is it?

The behavioral interview involves asking a candidate to reflect on their previous experiences and answer questions based on these experiences.

Why is it used?

The basic premise behind behavioral interviewing is that your past behaviour is the best predictor of your future behaviour. In essence, if you ask behavioral-oriented questions, you're no longer asking questions that are hypothetical, but are now asking questions that must be answered based upon fact. The interviewer determines the capabilities and traits that are essential for success in a position. Each question is designed to determine whether the candidate has developed these competencies through their past experiences.

Behavioural Interview questions require you to answer based on YOUR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE.

A typical behavioral interview question starts with:

“Tell me about a time when.....” or “Give me an example of...”

The interviewer is looking for results and not just a list of responsibilities and activities. The interviewer listens for names, dates, places, the outcome and especially what the individual's role was in achieving that outcome.

Preparing for the Behavioural Interview

STEP 1:

Prior to the interview, you need to identify:

What are the key skills and competencies needed to be successful in this job?

The most common key skills and competencies the interviewer will be listening for include:

- ☐ Job specific or technical skills
- ☐ Confidence/decisiveness
- ☐ Service orientation
- ☐ Leadership
- ☐ Team player
- ☐ Results orientation
- ☐ Initiative
- ☐ Analytical thinking
- ☐ Verbal and written communication
- ☐ Time management
- ☐ Problem solving

***“Tell me about a time when....”
Answer referring to a SPECIFIC experience you have had.***



Preparing for the Behavioural Interview (continued)

STEP 2:

Prepare to answer questions that will require you to talk about specific experiences where you used the key competencies the position requires. CIBC Wood Gundy has prepared this list of competency related questions:

Leadership Track Record

- What type of life goals have you set for yourself? What are you doing to realize them?
- Think of a crisis situation where things got out of control. Why did it happen? What was your role in the chain of events?
- What is your definition of leadership? How have you demonstrated excellence in leadership recently?

Strategic and/or Conceptual Thinking

- Describe an experience that involved creating a vision and implementing it.
- Describe the most challenging project you have been responsible for. What were some of the strategies you used to accomplish your goals?

Communication Skills: Oral, Written, Listening & Presentation

- Share a highly successful communication experience.
- Communication breakdowns are a reality in the course of doing business.
- Tell us about a situation where you put a relationship at risk due to ineffective communication.

Interviewers are assessing these key competencies:

- ☐ Job specific skills
- ☐ Decisiveness
- ☐ Service Orientation
- ☐ Leadership Skills
- ☐ Team Player
- ☐ Results Oriented
- ☐ Initiative
- ☐ Analytical thinking
- ☐ Communication skills
- ☐ Problem solving skills
- ☐ Time management skills

Step 3

When answering behavioural questions using the “**SHARE**” response will help you organize your thoughts and answer questions effectively:

1. **S - Situation**

Describe the situation in which you were operating.

2. **H: Hindrances**

Describe any constraints or hindrances on your actions.

3. **A: Actions**

Explain exactly what you did.

4. **R: Results**

Describe the results that can be attributed to your actions.

5. **E: Evaluate**

Summarize the example with a positive evaluation. What did you learn?

Develop a coherent and articulate SHARE narrative for each competency that you think the job requires.



Keys to success

Prior to the interview **ASSESS** the **CORE SKILLS/COMPETENCIES** needed to be successful in the job.

Prepare for questions that will require you to talk about experiences wherein you used these skills.

Provide **SPECIFIC EXAMPLES** from your previous experiences. **AVOID** talking in generalities or giving hypothetical answers. Use the **SHARE** method.

Ensure that the interviewer understands **YOUR** contribution to the given question/scenario. Avoid too many references to group experiences, such as “We did...”

AVOID giving a hypothetical answer. The interviewer wants a SPECIFIC EXAMPLE from your past experiences.

Go to
www.quintcareers.com/tutorials.html
for more hints on how to answer frequently asked interview questions.

Telephone Interviews

Just as you would during a regular interview, dress professionally for the telephone interview. We tend to project ourselves more professionally and confidently when we dress the part.

Have your resume, day timer, reference list, copy of the job posting and portfolio on hand to refer to during the interview. You may wish to have paper and pen to take notes, as well as a glass of water handy.

Smile and introduce yourself. Be sure to speak clearly and slowly, enunciating your words.

When the interviewer is being introduced, ensure you hear their full name, and write it down. If there is more than one interviewer, ask for each person's name.

The interview will progress as if it were an in-person interview. You may find that the silences seem longer as you can't see what the interviewers are doing. (They usually are writing notes or referring to your resume.) If you need more time to think about the answer to a question, communicate this by saying “Let me think about this for a moment...”

At the end of the interview thank the interviewer(s) for their time. Follow up with a thank you letter or e-mail.



Panel Interviews

A panel interview involves two or more interviewers. Each interviewer is assessing your “fit” for the position you are applying to.

Keys to Success

- Consider all interviewers (despite their titles) to be assessing your suitability for the position.
- When answering questions, use the “sprinkler technique”. Start with the interviewer who posed the question and as you answer the question move your gaze from one interviewer to the next. Your final comments should be directed to the originator of the question.
- At the conclusion of the interview, shake hands with Everyone, thank them for their time and ask them for their business card if they have not already given one to you.
- Send an individualized thank you letter to everyone on the panel.

Remember to establish the same amount of eye contact with all interviewers on the panel.

100 Typical Interview Questions (by Ron Fry)

The “killer question”

1. So, tell me a little about yourself.

What have you done with your life?

2. Why are you thinking about leaving your current job?
3. Are you still employed at the last firm listed on your resume?
4. After being with the same organization for so long, don't you think you might have a tough time getting accustomed to another?
5. You've changed jobs quite frequently. How do we know you'll stick around if we hire you?
6. You've been with your current employer for only a short amount of time. Is this an indication that you'll be moving around a lot throughout your career?
7. Have you managed people in any of the positions you've held?
8. Have you been in charge of budgeting, approving expenses and monitoring departmental progress against financial goals? Are you very qualified in this area?
9. How long have you been looking for a job?

Practice your interviewing skills during a CAREER COACHING APPOINTMENT.



What have you done with your life? (continued)

10. Why haven't you received any offers so far?
11. Who made you an offer? For what type of position?

Work - and the real you

12. What are your strengths as an employee?
13. Why should I consider you a strong applicant for this position?
14. What are your biggest weaknesses as an employee and what do you plan to do to correct them?
15. What are the biggest failures you've had during your career? What have you done to make sure they won't occur again?
16. What are the skills you most need to develop to advance your career?
17. What do your supervisors tend to criticize most about your performance?
18. How did you do on your last performance appraisal? What were the key strengths and weaknesses mentioned by your supervisor?
19. Tell me about the best/worst boss you've ever had.
20. Looking back on the experience now, do you think there was anything you could have done to improve your relationship with that one boss?
21. Are you an organized person?
22. Do you manage your time well?
23. How do you handle change?
24. How do you go about making important decisions?
25. Do you work well under pressure?
26. Do you anticipate problems well or merely react to them?
27. Would you describe yourself as a risk-taker or someone who plays it safe?
28. If you could start your career all over again, what would you do differently?
29. What is the biggest mistake you've ever made in choosing a job? Why?
30. Do you prefer to work with others, or by yourself?
31. How do you get along with supervisors?
32. How do you get along with co-workers?
33. How do you get along with people you've supervised?

**Wetfeet's highly valued:
"INVESTMENT BANKING
INTERVIEWS" Insider Guide
Is available on 3-hour loan
at the Career Centre.**

Why are you here?

34. What were your most memorable accomplishments in your last job? Of your career?
35. Was there anything your company (or department) could have done to be more successful?
36. Did you inaugurate any new procedures (or systems or policies) in any of the positions you've held?



Why are you here? (continued)

37. Describe the way your department is organized? Also, what is the title of the person you report to, and what are his or her responsibilities?
38. If you don't leave your current job, what do you think will happen to you in your career? How far do you expect to advance with your current company?
39. If you're so happy at your current firm, why are you looking for another job? Will they be surprised that you're leaving?
40. If you have these complaints about your present company, and they think so highly of you, why haven't you brought your concerns to their attention?

Okay, off with your defenses

41. What interests you most about this position? This company?
42. What have you heard about our company that you *don't* like?
43. This is a much larger (or smaller) company than you've ever worked for. How do you feel about that?
44. What are you looking for in your next job?
45. What aspect of the job I've described appeals to you the least?
46. Based on what you know about our industry right now, how does your ideal job stack up against the description of the job you're applying for?
47. What do you feel an employer owes an employee?
48. What types of people do you find it most difficult to get along with?
49. Are there any people who have trouble getting along with you?
50. Have you hired anyone? Why did you choose him or her (or them)?
51. Have you ever fired anyone? Why?
52. What does the word "success" mean to you?
53. What does the word "failure" mean to you?
54. What do you want to be doing five years from now? What are your most important long term goals?
55. Have you recently established any new objectives or goals?
56. How would you describe your management philosophy?

Let's get personal

57. Are you in good health? What do you do to stay in shape?
58. Do you have any physical problems that may limit your ability to perform this job?
59. What do you like to do when you're not at work?
60. How would your co-workers describe you?
61. How do you generally handle conflict?
62. How do you behave when you're having a problem with a co-worker?



Let's get personal (continued)

- 63. If you could change one thing about your personality with the snap of your fingers, what would it be? Why?
- 64. Describe your best friend and what he or she does for a living. In what ways are you similar or dissimilar to your best friend?

What if everyone called in sick, and...?

- 65. Say your supervisor left an assessment in your "in" box, and then left town for a week. You can't reach him and you don't fully understand the assignment. What would you do?
- 66. The successful candidate for this position will be working with some highly trained individuals who have been with the company for a long time. How will you fit in with them?
- 67. Your supervisor tells you to do something in a way you know is dead wrong. What would you do?
- 68. If you were unfairly criticized by your supervisor, what would you do?
- 69. Would you like to have your boss' job? Why or why not?
- 70. How will you handle the least interesting or least pleasant tasks of this job?
- 71. You've had little experience with budgeting (or sales or marketing or whatever). How do you intend to learn what you need to know to perform well in this job?
- 72. What extracurricular activities were you involved in? What made you choose those? Which of them did you most enjoy, and why?

Getting into the school of hard knocks

- 73. What led you to select your major? Your minor?
- 74. Which of your courses did you like most/least?
- 75. If you were to start college over again tomorrow, what are the courses you would take? Why?
- 76. What did you learn from internships listed on your resume?
- 77. In what courses did you get your worst grades? Why? How do you think that will affect your performance on the job?
- 78. Why are you applying for a job in a field (or working in a field) other than the one in which you have your degree?

There are no innocent questions

- 79. How are you today?
- 80. Did you have any trouble finding us?
- 81. Do you know much about our company?
- 82. What is the last book you read?
- 83. What is the last movie you saw?



Are there any wrong questions?

It is illegal for Canadian employers to ask the following questions. If you are asked an illegal question you have the right to not answer. You can choose to politely deflect the question with a question, *"Can you tell me how that might impact the job?"*

84. Is that an Irish (or Italian or Vietnamese or whatever) name? Is it a Christian (or Jewish or Muslim or whatever) name?
85. Are you a family man (or woman)?
86. What is your birth date?
87. Do you belong to any organizations?
88. Do you have any physical disabilities?
89. What is your economic status?
90. Have you ever served in the military?
91. Have you ever been arrested?

Wrapping things up

92. Do you have any questions?
93. Are you willing to travel?
94. Are you willing to relocate?
95. May I contact your current employer?
96. May I contact your references?
97. Is there anything else that I should know about you?

Money talks

98. What sort of salary are you looking for?
99. The salary you're asking for is near the top of the range for the job. Why should we pay you this much?
100. When can you start?

And here are a few more to consider:

- Why did you choose to do your BCom at UBC?
- How do you respond when your ideas are rejected?
- Silence.
- Which of your achievements gave you the greatest sense of accomplishment?
- I now have 3 candidates (including you). What criteria should I use to select the one to fill the job?
- Why are you interested in this position? This industry?
- What do you know about this industry?
- Are you prepared to undergo psychological testing?
- Describe a few of your notable accomplishments, which have prepared you technically for this position.
- What are some of the biggest issues facing a firm like ours?
- How has your BCom prepared you for this position?



Mastering the Case Interview

Definition of a Case Interview

(Prepared by New York University, Leonard Stern School of Business)

The Case Interview is a scenario-based, problem solving activity. It is used by consulting firms to evaluate the following:

1. Diagnostic Skills

- How well do you narrow down a problem?
- Do you ask good, pertinent questions?
- Can you identify & extract the most important issues related to the problem?
- Can you prioritize?

2. Analytical Skills

- Can you follow a logical line of reasoning?
- How well do you structure your answer?
- Are you good at making quick calculations on your feet?
- Do you appreciate the implications of any recommendation?

3. Communication Skills

- Do you express yourself clearly?
- Are you a good listener?
- Do you ask good questions?
- Do you adapt to whatever information you are given?
- How well do you explain & defend your ideas?
- How well do you handle pressure?
- Do you have a high energy level & strong sense of self?

Wetfeet's highly valued:
"ACE YOUR CASE"
Insider Guide is available on
3-hour loan at the
Career Centre.

What Are Interviewers Looking For?

The purpose of the case interview is not to find the perfect solution but for you to demonstrate the steps you would take to solve the given problem/scenario. The interviewer will also be assessing the rationale behind your strategy.

Keep in mind that the interviewer is using these cases to assess your problem-solving abilities, your presentation/communication skills, your ability to think on your feet, and your energy. As vault.com states: "Interviewers look for zest and energy, firm handshake, sincere and warm smile..."

Great sites for Case
Interview information:
www.wetfeet.com
and
www.vault.com



The Case Interview Process

Part One: Getting to Know You

The first portion of the interview is focused on finding out more about you. You may be asked a variety of questions such as: Why did you choose the school you did; what are your interests; how are your classes going? The recruiter is assessing whether you are personable, fun and easy to talk with.

Some companies assess
“Part One” during a
lunch, dinner or casual
drink event.

To succeed, show:

- you are very interested in working for that firm
- you are solely focused on becoming a consultant (and provide reasons for your career choice)
- you radiate high energy and excitement about the consulting field
- you are excited about just being at the interview.

As consulting is a high energy, long hours career, the recruiter needs to ensure you have the stuff to be a successful consultant.

Part Two: Assessing your Analytical Skills using the Case Interview

(From www.wetfeet.com - “Ace Your Case”)

Through a case problem solving exercise, whether analyzing a Market Sizing Problem, Brainteaser, Business Operations Problem, or a Business Strategy Problem, the recruiter is assessing:

- Do you listen carefully?
- If you are unclear, do you ask questions?
- Do you think before you speak (do you write notes to keep you focused)?
- What framework are you applying to solve the case?
- Is your thinking methodical?
- Do you pick up hints, extra data that the recruiter offers throughout the interview?

On-line video of a
case interview:
www.wetfeet.com
go to “Interviewing” and
look for “Video Case
Interview”

Types of Case Interviews

Brain Teasers (From Boston Consulting Group)

These types of questions assess your creative problem solving skills. Example:

“You and I are sitting in an empty room with no telephone, reference books, or computers. Can you tell me how many disposable diapers were sold in the US last year?”

“Why are manhole covers round?”



Brain Teasers (continued)

How to answer:

You are working with assumptions. If you are unsure about an assumption or unsure about what is being requested of you, do not hesitate to ask questions of the interviewer. Take notes as necessary. Be creative in your problem solving. Check out Boston Consulting Group (www.bcg.com/careers) for sample brain teasers.

Business Problems

These case questions start with a brief description of a typical client problem (often involving market analysis or new product development), or can be drawn from your own resume.

The interviewer will typically provide background information about the company, the industry, and a problem. Then you will be asked: *"What would you do now?"*

Keep in mind that the interviewer is not looking for the "right" answer, but is assessing your: 1) analytical/problem solving abilities, 2) ability to communicate your ideas, 3) poise and self confidence.

1. The Process:

You will be expected to analyze and provide solutions based on assessing issues of profitability, industry analysis, market expansion, pricing, and/or impact of market consolidation.

Although you will need to make some assumptions, don't hesitate to ask questions of your interviewer. Then move step-by-step through the case to ensure that you have covered the main points.

As you work through your answer, the interviewer may continue to provide more details about the case, and ask questions to probe your thought processes. You may be asked to provide a rationale for your approach.

2. To prepare:

PRACTICE is the best way to prepare for the Case Interview. Many consulting firms have on-line interactive practice cases such as:

- www.recruiting.mckinsey.com
(go to "On Line Case Study")

Review Business Case Frameworks prior to your Case Interview.

www.wetfeet.com outlines a number of frameworks.

Major consulting firms' websites contain practice cases to help prepare you for the interview.



Salary Information

UBC Commerce Average Salary – 2003 Graduates: \$38,729

Functional area average salary information:

Accounting	\$33,300
Commercial Banking	\$44,800
Consulting	\$N/A
Corporate Finance	\$42,800
Human Resources Management	\$37,000
Information Technology Management	\$40,500
Investment Banking	\$65,900
Management Trainee	\$48,000
Marketing Management	\$37,000
Personal Banking	\$39,200
Sales Management/Business Development	\$37,000
Transportation & Logistics	\$44,700

Salary Expectations

In preparation for your interview you must be able to answer the key question “What is your salary expectation?” Interviewers ask this question from a need-to-know perspective. It’s their job to ensure that your salary expectations fall within the range they can provide.

Suggested answers:

“Based on the research I’ve done through the Business Career Centre, I understand that salaries for graduates range between \$45,000-\$52,000. Based on my experience I’m targeting the top end of this range.”

“I’m targeting a salary in the range of \$40,000 - \$45,000.”

“Salary is really secondary to the opportunity to work with your firm. You have an excellent reputation and I believe your salary scale is competitive with industry standards.”

“My salary expectation is negotiable based on the total package you are offering.” But should the interviewer insist on a concrete salary figure, avoid restricting yourself to one figure – give a salary range.

Canadian salary info:

www.salaryexpert.com
<http://salary.monster.ca>

Western Canada Accounting
Salary Survey

<http://www.aplin.com/pressroom/pdf/SalarySurvey.pdf>

American salary info:

www.salary.com
www.vault.com

For further information on negotiations, refer to the Evaluating and Negotiating Job Offers Handout at www.sauder.ubc.ca/ccs click on Career Management.