

September 2023 Issue

Mock Interviews in the Classroom

Case Study: AFF604 (Ethics in Finance)

This past Spring semester, Dr. Alan Kaplan offered his AFF604 (Ethics in Finance) students the opportunity to conduct a mock interview related to a position in Finance. This report summarizes the Faculty and student experience while demonstrating the value of integrating career exploration into the classroom.



44

Students Participated



45-Minute

Class Presentation



Spring

Academic Semester

The Initial Faculty Consultation

Dr. Kaplan reached out to us in Winter 2023 to explore how we might be able to support his AFF604 students in preparing for interviews. As a follow-up, Tania Rasie, our Career Consultant for the Finance portfolio, scheduled a number of meetings with him to discuss his overall objective and expectations.

In these consultations, they both agreed that the best way to prepare students for the interview was to a) deliver a classroom presentation and share best practices, b) share relevant Hub Insight reports as a further student resource, and c) provide them with the opportunity to practice their interviewing skills. Through Google Calendar, we provided 44, 15-minute virtual appointments for students to view and decide which one to sign up for.

Dr. Kaplan also wished to incentivize his students to participate, so he decided to assign a grade to their work. The grade, in which he determined, was based on the quality of the student's mock interview.

After the interviews were completed by the Career Consultants, recorded versions were shared with Dr. Kaplan to review and grade.

Presentation in Class

Students attended a 45-minute class presentation in May on best practices for conducting an interview, at which time the assignment details were shared.



These two Hub Insight reports were provided to students for their reference in preparing for their mock interview.

Behavioural Interviews

Behavioural Interviews- In-Depth

Business CAREER HUB HUB INSIGHTS
A Publication of the Business Career Hub

Strive to Thrive

Career Tips For TRSM Students

These reports leverage the expertise of BCH Staff to share best practices with students and alumni.

Tips on Acing a Behavioural Interview

This is simply the most common type of interview you will face. In this kind of interview, you are expected to talk about your past experiences in a way that highlights the skills that employers are looking for.

A Few Tips

- Every behavioural question will be focused on a specific skill that the employer is looking for - these skills are typically found in the 'requirements' or 'qualifications' section in the job posting.
- Answers to behavioural questions should follow the STAR method (see below).
- Don't memorize your answers, there is little chance that you will guess all the questions you will be asked. Be ready to adapt based on the differences in questions, for specific situations.

STAR Method

Situation Explain the SITUATION or TASK that had to be solved or completed – include the people involved, deadlines and places to validate the story. You must describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past.	S	Task Outline a specific TASK you were required to carry out or perform.
Action Clarify the ACTIONS you took to specifically manage the situation or task successfully.	T	Result Explain the RESULTS accomplished. Clearly explain the positive impact you had on the organization through your actions. Don't be shy about taking credit for your behavior!
	A	
	R	

Business CAREER HUB HUB INSIGHTS
A Publication of the Business Career Hub

Strive to Thrive

Career Tips For Ted Rogers School Students

These reports leverage the expertise of BCH Staff to share best practices with students and alumni.

Behavioural Interview - In-Depth

As discussed in the Resume section, S.T.A.R. stands for Situation-Task-Action-Results. The STAR method is a great way to uncover your personal accomplishments and achievements, helping you differentiate yourself from your competition. This method is also a great way to tackle behavioral questions in interviews. The first step in developing your STAR statements is to brainstorm your past experiences.

The STAR Method

Situation Explain the SITUATION or TASK that had to be solved or completed – include the people involved, deadlines and places to validate the story. You must describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past.	S	Task Outline a specific TASK you were required to carry out or perform.
Action Clarify the ACTIONS you took to specifically manage the situation or task successfully.	T	Result Explain the RESULTS accomplished. Clearly explain the positive impact you had on the organization through your actions. Don't be shy about taking credit for your behavior!
	A	
	R	

TIP: STAR Method
When preparing your STAR statements, keep in mind the abilities and competencies the employer is inquiring about. Make sure you have several examples you can pull from, built from your experience in current or past jobs, extracurricular/volunteer activity, academics and more.

Sample Response To Typical Questions

Interview Questions

- Tell me about a time when you experienced a challenge with a coworker, classmate or peer. What happened and what was the outcome?
- Tell me about a time when you went above and beyond for a customer?

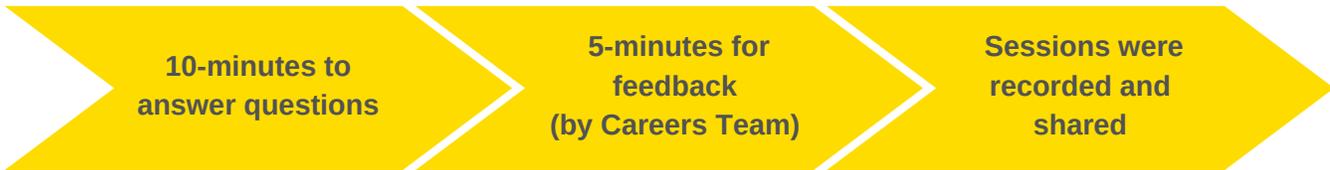
Student Mock Interviews

Mock interviews were then scheduled and conducted over the course of one week in early June with the Hub's Career Consulting team.

Students selected a time slot based on available dates and times. Each mock interview was 15-minutes in length and conducted virtually over Zoom.

The mock interviews were recorded so they could be viewed and assessed by Dr. Kaplan himself.

Interview Format



Questions were provided beforehand for the purpose of **evaluating students' communication and presentation skills in an interview setting**, instead of the student's ability to think on their feet. Questions like 'Why did you choose your Major?' and 'Tell me about a time where you overcame a challenge or obstacle.'

The Rubric

After viewing each recording, Dr. Kaplan used the following rubric to support him in the assessment of the mock interview itself.

		Date:					Impromptu	
Speaker:							Informative	
							Persuasive X	
CRITERIA	1	2	3	4	5	COMMENTS		
	(Lowest)		(Highest)					
PLATFORM MANNER								
Eye Contact								
Posture/Gesture								
Facial Expression								
Poise and Confidence								
VOCAL DELIVERY								
Pace								
Volume								
Articulation								
Vocal Variety								
CONTENT								
Responds to question(s) asked								
Stays on Topic								
Response is consistent and clear								
Supporting Detail as needed								
Where appropriate, a summation is provided								
Analysis of Audience								
Word Selection/Grammar								
GENERAL								
Overall Effectiveness/Persuasiveness								
Credibility								
DESCRIPTION OF STRENGTHS AND AREAS TO BE IMPROVED								
Strengths -								
Areas to improve -								

Dr. Kaplan's Feedback to Students

“First of all, I thought that in general people had: a very positive tone, **showed some confidence, a certain comfort level, and some professionalism**. With some exceptions, I could also see that people did some prep.

Second, I hope that the feedback that you received was helpful to you, and a few of you asked if you could do this again with the career centre person at some later date (you can). So, if you need more help going forward, you can contact Tania Rasie (tania@torontomu.ca). Tania is the Finance rep at the Business Career Hub. Some of you, but not all of you, interviewed with her.

Third, while the grades were generally very strong, perhaps there are still areas where most of us can improve. Most notably, eye contact was often not strong. This can be a particular problem in an online interview, but since this type of interview/presentation is becoming more and more common, try and figure out how to maintain some level of eye contact.”

The Overall Experience

Through this opportunity, students were able to practice their interviewing skills in a safe space, and with the questions in hand before their scheduled time.

Students were also able to watch their recorded interviews after the fact, and pick up on their hand gestures, eye contact, and the use of filler words, like 'um'. This was a solid learning experience for them and it is our hope they will return to the Hub for further coaching and engagement.

Wish to Learn More

If you are interested in learning more about integrating career conversations into the classroom, please connect with Donna Muirhead by responding to this email, and feel free to reach out to Dr. Alan Kaplan to learn more about his experience in the classroom - akaplan@torontomu.ca