



**YOU NEVER  
GET A SECOND  
CHANCE TO  
MAKE A FIRST  
IMPRESSION.**

— *Will Rogers*

Shine On 

# How to Prepare your Interview

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

# BEFORE The Interview

- Review the job posting
- Reflect on why you are interviewing and your qualifications for the job
- Research the YMCA Mission & Values
- Practice Common Interview Questions
- Prepare questions for the interviewer
- Choose your interview attire
- Prepare copies of your resume and references
- Prepare specific examples of your work
- Prepare your travel arrangements. **Be on time!**

# Practice Common Interview Questions

## **General and Behavioral Interview Questions**

- Tell me about yourself
- What do you know about YMCA Calgary?
- Why do you want to work here?
- Tell me about a challenge or conflict you have faced at work. How did you deal with it? What was the outcome?
- What are some of the most important factors that must be present in your work environment for you to be successfully and happily employed?

## **Child Safety & Protection Interview Questions**

- If there was a child (or vulnerable individual) that another employee/volunteer picked on or made fun of, what would you do?
- Describe some ways in which you have motivated children (or vulnerable individuals)?

# STAR method to answer the questions

- **Situation:** Set the scene by describing the context and background of the example. Include relevant details such as when and where it occurred.
- **Task:** Explain your specific responsibility or the challenge you faced in that situation.
- **Action:** Describe the steps you took to address the task or solve the problem. Focus on your individual contributions and avoid generalizations.
- **Result:** Share the outcome of your actions, highlighting measurable achievements or lessons learned. Quantify results when possible, such as percentages, time saved, or improvements achieved.

# STAR method to answer the questions

## Example

**Situation:** In a previous role, I was supporting a time-sensitive project while also managing a high volume of daily responsibilities. Midway through the week, a key stakeholder requested significant last-minute changes that could have impacted our delivery deadline.

**Task:** My responsibility was to ensure the project stayed on track without compromising quality or overloading the team.

**Action:** I stayed calm and first clarified the stakeholder's priorities to understand what was truly critical. I then broke the work into urgent vs. non-urgent tasks, adjusted timelines where possible, and communicated transparently with both the team and the stakeholder. I also delegated appropriately and blocked focused time to handle the most complex items myself.

**Result:** We delivered the project on time, met the stakeholder's core requirements, and avoided burnout on the team. The experience strengthened trust with stakeholders and improved how I approach prioritization and communication under pressure.

**Pro Tip:** Don't memorize your answer. Practice on your own words, BE yourself.

## **Preparing questions for the interviewer shows your engagement, professionalism, and strategic thinking:**

- **Shows genuine interest**

Asking thoughtful questions signals that you're truly interested in the role and the YMCA—not just looking for any job.

- **Demonstrates preparation**

Good questions demonstrate that you've researched YMCA Calgary and understand the role, reflecting a strong work ethic and attention to detail.

- **Helps you evaluate the role**

An interview is a two-way conversation. Your questions help you assess the team culture, expectations, and growth and development opportunities.

- **Helps you stand out**

Many candidates don't prepare questions. Asking insightful ones can make you more memorable and leave a strong final impression.



# Prepare questions for the interviewer

- How would you describe the company culture?
- What would my day-to-day responsibilities look like?
- How would my performance be measured?
- Why is the position open?
- What types of professional development opportunities does the company offer?
- What are the next steps in the interview?



# Prepare questions for the interviewer

# DURING The Interview

- Arrive early (5~10 minutes)
- Be Respectful. Your interview starts the moment you enter the building
- Confident handshake & eye contact
- Use the STAR method when answering questions
- Ask questions
- Close Interview with a Strong Statement

# AFTER The Interview

- Send a Thank You Note
- Follow Up
- Stay connected



*Be Yourself!*

**EVERYONE ELSE  
IS ALREADY  
TAKEN**

OSCAR WILDE

**BE YOU!**