

Career Essentials: Interview Success

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Career Essentials Programme

- 12 title lunchtime talks
- Small Group Work sessions
 - Work with a careers advisor in small groups
- 3 workshops covering LinkedIn, Mock Assessment Centres and MBTI Personality Profiling
- 6 module e-learning course

Talks coming up February/March 2020

Interview Success	Mar 4 th
Building a Freelance Career	Mar 5 th
Improve Your CV	Mar 9 th
Cover Letters & Application Forms	Feb 13 th , 28 th Mar 10 th
Your Future & How to Work Towards It	Mar 12 th
Discussing Disabilities or Health Conditions with Employers	Mar 28 th

Small Group Sessions

- 1.00 – 1.50pm, UCL Careers
 - Applying for Unadvertised Opportunities
 - February 17th, March 9th
 - Using STAR to showcase skills
 - February 14th, March 2nd, March 23rd
 - CVs
 - February 25th, March 16th

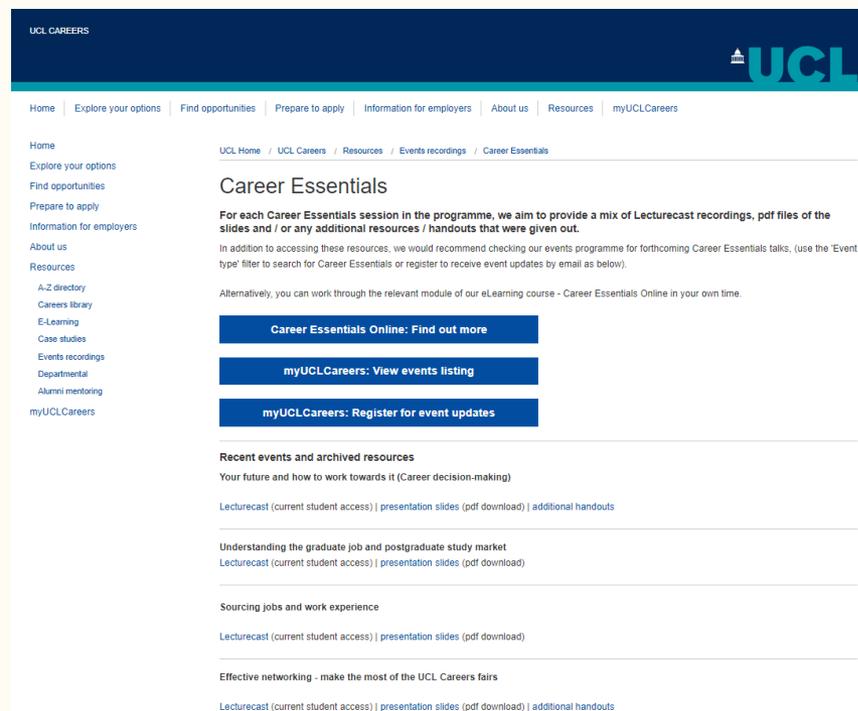
Workshops Spring 2020

Personality Profiling (MBTI)	Mar 4 th
LinkedIn	Feb 26 th
	Mar 18 th

Slides and Recordings

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/careers/resources/slides/career-essentials>

Search 'UCL Career Essentials'
 'Careers Essentials Online' is a 6
 module e-learning Moodle course.



UCL CAREERS

UCL

Home | Explore your options | Find opportunities | Prepare to apply | Information for employers | About us | Resources | myUCLCareers

UCL Home / UCL Careers / Resources / Events recordings / Career Essentials

Career Essentials

For each Career Essentials session in the programme, we aim to provide a mix of Lecturecast recordings, pdf files of the slides and / or any additional resources / handouts that were given out.

In addition to accessing these resources, we would recommend checking our events programme for forthcoming Career Essentials talks, (use the 'Event type' filter to search for Career Essentials or register to receive event updates by email as below).

Alternatively, you can work through the relevant module of our eLearning course - Career Essentials Online in your own time.

[Career Essentials Online: Find out more](#)

[myUCLCareers: View events listing](#)

[myUCLCareers: Register for event updates](#)

Recent events and archived resources

Your future and how to work towards it (Career decision-making)

[Lecturecast \(current student access\)](#) | [presentation slides \(pdf download\)](#) | [additional handouts](#)

Understanding the graduate job and postgraduate study market

[Lecturecast \(current student access\)](#) | [presentation slides \(pdf download\)](#)

Sourcing jobs and work experience

[Lecturecast \(current student access\)](#) | [presentation slides \(pdf download\)](#)

Effective networking - make the most of the UCL Careers fairs

[Lecturecast \(current student access\)](#) | [presentation slides \(pdf download\)](#) | [additional handouts](#)

What we will cover today

- ✓ It's not just what you say!
- ✓ State what employers are looking for in the selection process.
- ✓ Discuss an interviewee's performance during an interview introduction.
- ✓ Focus on competency based interview answers.
- ✓ Analyse a job description to estimate likely interview questions & discuss.

Exercise 1 – What are employers looking for in interviews?

- In pairs (or threes).
- Introduce yourself.
- Describe a **perfect** interview from an employer's perspective.
- 5 minutes!

It's not just what you say!

You only have one chance to make a first impression – make it count!



Making an impact

What we say (7%).

How we say it (38%).

Unspoken signals 55%.

Preparation

- Critique your own skills and qualities.
- Research the organisation you are interviewing with.
- Research the occupational area and sector.
- Practice!



Tania ep.3 - Preparing for an Interview | The Great Grad Job Hunt



76 views

Interviews: Formats

- Unstructured
- Structured
 - Introduction
 - Motivational
 - Competency
 - Behavioural/SJT
 - Strengths
 - Technical/Case



* SJT – Situational Judgement Test

Unstructured Interviews

- Friendly chat.
- Relaxed.
- More about cultural fit.

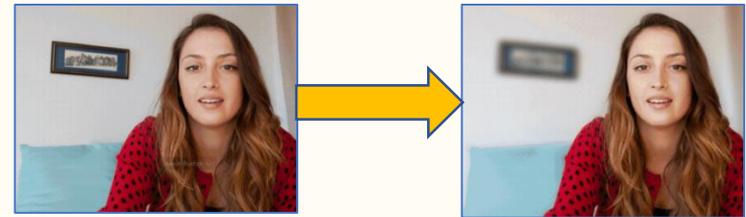


Structured Interviews

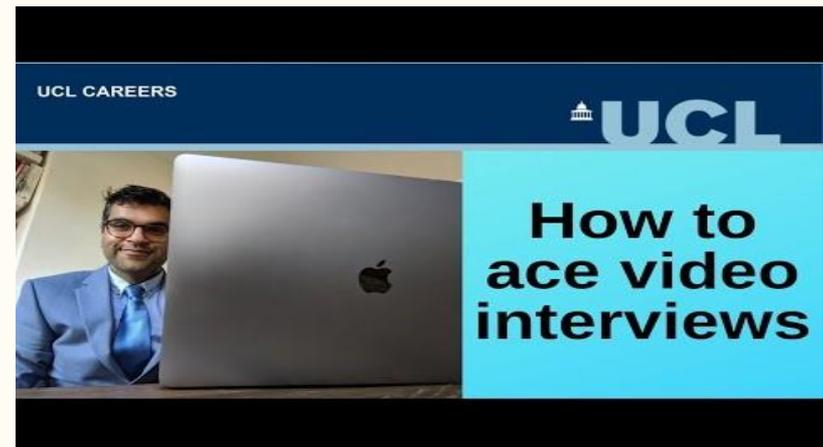
- Set of predetermined questions.
- Questions are planned and created in advance.
- All candidates are asked the same questions in the same order.

Digital/HireVue Interviews

- Over 15,000 traits that can be used to identify talent.
 - Choice of language.
 - Breadth of your vocabulary.
 - Eye movements.
 - Speed of your delivery.
- It's not just about your content, it's how you deliver it.
- Practice to become familiar with the process.



Further advice: UCL
Careers YouTube Channel



Introductory Questions

- Biographical
 - Tell me about yourself / Walk me through your CV.
 - An icebreaker.
 - Pick out your most relevant points, don't tell your life story!

Exercise 3:

What do you think of this interviewee's performance?

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HB0ldPdAhsg>

Motivation Questions

- Why do you want to work for us?
- Why do you think you are suitable for this role?
- Why are you applying for this position?
- What do you know about what we do?
- How does this role fit in with your longer-term career plans?

Motivation Questions

- Research the:
 - Sector.
 - Role.
 - Specific organisation (e.g. read the company's Annual Report).
- Demonstrate that you thoroughly understand what the role involves.
- Self audit - Show that you understand how your skills, qualities and experience match the requirements.
- Say why you would specifically like to work for this particular employer. **Does the answer pass the 'blind test'?**



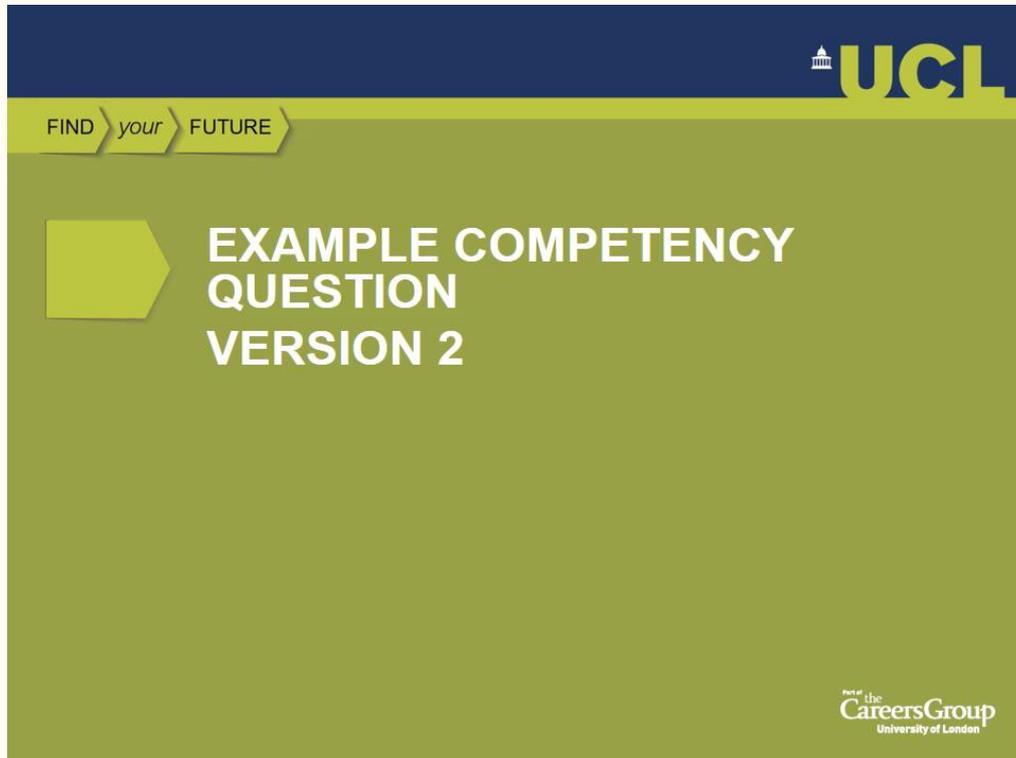
Competency Questions

- Each question is designed to test one or more skill/ability within the context of a specific example.
- The answer is then matched against pre-decided criteria and marked accordingly.
- For example, the interviewer may want to test the candidate's ability to deal with time management by asking the candidate to provide a specific example of a situation where they had to deal with competing deadlines under pressure.

Leadership Skills Questions Version 1

The image shows a thumbnail of a document. At the top right is the UCL logo. Below it is a navigation bar with 'FIND your FUTURE'. The main content area is olive green with a white arrow pointing right, followed by the text 'EXAMPLE COMPETENCY QUESTION VERSION 1'. At the bottom right is the logo for 'Part of the CareersGroup University of London'.

Leadership Skills Question Version 2



The image shows a document cover with a dark blue header containing the UCL logo and the text 'FIND your FUTURE'. Below the header is a green section with a white arrow pointing right, followed by the text 'EXAMPLE COMPETENCY QUESTION VERSION 2'. At the bottom right, it says 'Part of the CareersGroup University of London'.

Competency Questions – ‘STAR’ or ‘CAR’ model

S – Situation

- Briefly describe



Context



T – Task

- What was your specific task?

A – Action

- What did you do and how? (evidence your skills).
- Add quantities where possible.
- Be specific (use “I”)

R – Result/Reflection

- What was the positive outcome? (and mention any learning points).



Example Competency Based Answer

Describe a project for which you faced multiple deadlines, and how you handled it.

Last autumn I took the initiative to apply for grants to fund a professional speaker for my university's International Relations Society event. It's often difficult to get grants for event funding, and it's important to meet various grant deadlines. **I researched grant options and found several possibilities. Each had a different deadline and different window of time for which the money could be used. Due to varying timelines I created a small database, which I organized by grant deadlines, purposes, and the windows of time they could be used. I analysed the database to help me apply for the appropriate grants at the appropriate times. The primary grant came through, but a smaller grant did not. So I quickly helped find a last-minute event sponsor, then I updated the PR materials and budget accordingly.** In the end, the event was successful on multiple levels. We expected about 50 students to attend and got 60. Also, we were able to provide honorariums to additional speakers.

Example Competency Based Answer

Describe a project for which you faced multiple deadlines, and how you handled it.

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Why Action Verbs are Good

- “I would say a weakness of mine is public speaking” may be an accurate statement, but it doesn’t tell the reader anything specific, interesting or positive.
- “I used to have a tough time talking in front of groups of people which was difficult when I had to make presentations. Last year I **attended** public speaking training to improve my confidence, in which I **addressed** groups of people and **reconciled** my fears, and now I’m much more comfortable talking in front of large groups.” Specific and interesting.
- Action verbs are positive!
- Visit <https://www.themuse.com/advice/185-powerful-verbs-that-will-make-your-resume-awesome>

Competency questions: Where might you get examples?

The person specification asks for:

- Report writing.
- Experience of IT.
- Time management.
- Relationship building.
- Adaptability.
- Communication.



Where you might gain these experiences

- Report writing.
- Experience of IT.
- Time management.
- Relationship building.
- Adaptability.
- Communication.
- Your degree.
- Website redesign.
- Multiple project deadlines.
- UCL student bar work.
- Travelling / year abroad.
- Charing society meetings.

Strengths Based Interviewing

- 50% employers use strengths
76% use competencies (ISE 2019).
- Competency – what CAN you do?
- Strength – what do you ENJOY doing?
- Reflective.
- Focusses on you and your natural areas.
- **Top Tip:** think about the role and the skills required when answering these questions.

What would a perfect day look like for you? (Understanding your interpretation of perfect)

What gives you motivation and energy? (Drive/Motivation)

If a colleague was struggling in your project, how would you help?
(Teamwork/Problem Solving/Interpersonal)

What has been your biggest failure?
(Resilience/Learning/Development)

Business / Commercial Awareness

Tests your interest in business and knowledge of the industry:

- Who are our competitors?
- Tell me about any recent developments that you have you read about in this sector? How does that affect our company?
- Which story in the press has caught your interest recently and why?



Case Study Interview

- Used by consultancy / accountancy firms to test your analysis, creativity and problem-solving skills.
- The recruiter describes a situation and you need to respond with advice, in the form of a report or verbal explanation. Your conclusion is reached by collating and analysing provided information. Anticipate the type of case study you could receive by researching the organisation and sector. They look for:
 - The approach you take to solving a problem.
 - How analytical and creative your thinking is.
 - Your usage of data to quantify and make your recommendations.
 - Your communication skills in conveying your ideas.
 - How you would suggest implementing these proposals.

Examples:

- Your friend needs our help. They're thinking of opening a coffee shop in a new city and wants our business advice before they proceed. Should they do it?
- At 3:15, how many degrees are there between the two hands of a clock? (J.P. Morgan interview question).

Curve-ball questions:

- How many trains are there on the London Underground?
- How many golf balls can you fit inside a London double-decker bus?
- How many soft drinks would you estimate were sold at the Rugby World Cup final?

Interviews: Case Study

- Most straightforward
- Different types:
 - Market sizing
 - Profitability
 - New product
- Skills are the same!
- Each type is different
 - e.g. McKinsey vs BCG
- Understand frameworks but don't force it:
 - Porter's Five Forces
 - Three C's
 - Four P's
 - SWOT
 - MECE
- Don't be overwhelmed by data
- Back to basics and identify common themes
- Segmentation is key
- Be sensible, use logic

Case Study Interview

- Listen to the interviewer - they may be providing valuable information. Use the facts you've been given.
- Take notes whilst the interviewer is presenting the case question. Summarise the case back to the interviewer.
- If you need clarifications before proceeding, ask!
- Write down the structure of your answer and try to guide the interviewer through your answer.
- Write down your calculations / quantities.
- Source case interview questions and practice! Try doing them with peers and get feedback.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6R5bT4cJh0A>

Psychometric tests

- ‘Psychometric test’ is an umbrella term which covers both **ability** testing and **personality** profiling. It can include:
 - Personality questionnaire;
 - Aptitude (or ability) test;
 - Situational judgement test;
 - Diagrammatic reasoning;
 - Numerical reasoning;
 - Critical thinking test;
 - Verbal reasoning test;
 - Inductive reasoning;
 - ...and more.

Psychometric tests

Practice psychometric tests at:

- [UCL Careers Free Resources](#)
- [Assessmentday.com](#)

Assessment Centres

- Group exercise
 - Psychometric test
 - Presentation
 - Interview
-
- Teamwork
 - Conflict management
 - Persuasion
 - Communication
 - Style/personality



Sound scary?

On average, 3 out of 4 questions are **predictable!**



Exercise 2 – You’re the recruiter!

- In small groups read the job description in the next slide.
- From an employer’s perspective, what would you ask a candidate in order to interview them for this job?
- 5 minutes!



- The UCL Engineering Careers team provides a wide variety of careers information, one-to-one guidance and events to all current UCL Faculty of Engineering undergraduate, postgraduate taught students and recent graduates.. This role will use creative approaches to engage students in the work of the Engineering Careers team working closely with colleagues in UCL Engineering and UCL Careers.
- We are a small, supportive team with the benefits of also being part of the wider UCL Careers team and the Faculty of Engineering. The role holder will build strong relationships with students and academic departments within the Faculty. They will have the communication skills, attention to detail and creativity to produce engaging content for students in a variety of formats. They will promote our work using social media, newsletters, online content and guides. They will use creative and data-informed approaches to reach our student population while complying with accessibility regulations, GDPR and CMA guidelines. The role will be managed by the Engineering Careers Team Leader and will work directly with the rest of the Engineering Careers team, Faculty Communications and Student Engagement Manager and UCL Careers colleagues.
- We are looking for a Student Engagement Officer who can create engaging copy, lead on creating our team's brand identity and be able to use social media to promote and inspire. The ideal candidate will have experience communicating with a range of audiences, in writing and verbally and will have practice in proactively building strong working relationships with a range of stakeholders. They will have a good understanding of working in a student-facing environment, have excellent organisational skills with the ability to multitask, prioritise their own workload and remain calm under pressure. They will have the tenacity and drive to overcome challenges to achieve outcomes, and the ability to respond confidently and positively in difficult situations. Familiarity with social media tools such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook are required as well as the flexibility to support the wider work of the Engineering Careers team

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Potential Interview Questions?

- Tell me about yourself. **(biographical)**
- Why are you interested in this role? **(motivational)**
- Tell me about a time you demonstrated good attention to detail. **(competency)**
- Can you give me an example on when you have used a social media and how you applied it? **(competency)**
- Can you give me an example when you had competing deadlines and how you coped? **(competency)**
- Do you give up easily? **(strength)**
- Do you have any questions for us?

Interviews: Do you have any questions?

Areas to avoid:

- Salary and remuneration and other benefits (e.g. holiday entitlement).
- Information publicly available (website/ recruitment literature) or covered during the interview).

Areas to consider:

Role:

- More detail about what the role involves, who the role-holder reports to.
- Challenges of the role, level of responsibility and how that may grow.
 - e.g. “What would a typical day be like for me?”

Development:

- Training and development opportunities, how work will be appraised and opportunities for advancement.
- Support mechanisms e.g. mentors/ buddy systems.

The organisation:

- Organisational structure and how the role sits within this framework.
- Challenges/ initiatives/ projects that the organisation is currently working on and future initiatives.

The process:

- What are the next steps and opportunities for feedback during the process?
- When they expect to be in a position to advise on whether candidates have progressed to next steps?

Personal (use judgement):

- Why do you enjoy working at X?
- What are some of the most interesting areas of work you have been involved in?

Final tips

Creating an impression

- Be on time & dress appropriately.
- Know who you're meeting & be pleasant to everybody.
- Assume no knowledge on behalf of interviewer.

If it seems to be going wrong

- Keep calm if interviewer is aggressive/ doesn't seem to like you.
- Try not to panic – unlikely to fail on one question.

Closing the sale

- Thank them and have some questions for them.
- Make sure you know what the next step is.

Afterwards

- Review performance & ask for feedback.
- Invest ahead of time for later stages.

Resources

- [Preparing for interviews resources](#) on UCL Careers website including Interview Stream.
- UCL CareersLab YouTube – [Video Interviews](#).
- [Great Grad Job Hunt](#).

Future Interviews:

- Interview Feedback – [WikiJob](#), [Glassdoor](#), [Student Room](#).
- [Library resources](#) – Business Source Complete & Business Market Research Collection/Hoover's company profiles.

UCL Careers 1 to 1 Support

- Applications advice (20 minutes).
- Short guidance (20 minutes).
- Practice Interview (60 minutes, on condition of real employer interview).
- Book online in advance using myUCLCareers.

Find us

4th Floor, Student Central Building, Malet Street

Mon-Thurs 9:30 - 17:00

Fri 11:00 -17:00

careers@ucl.ac.uk

020 7866 3600



Questions?

