

# Interview Preparation

FOR TEACHING & NON-TEACHING JOBS

Career Development Centre  
2013

# Transition to Teaching – Issues, Trends & Tips



MARCH 2011

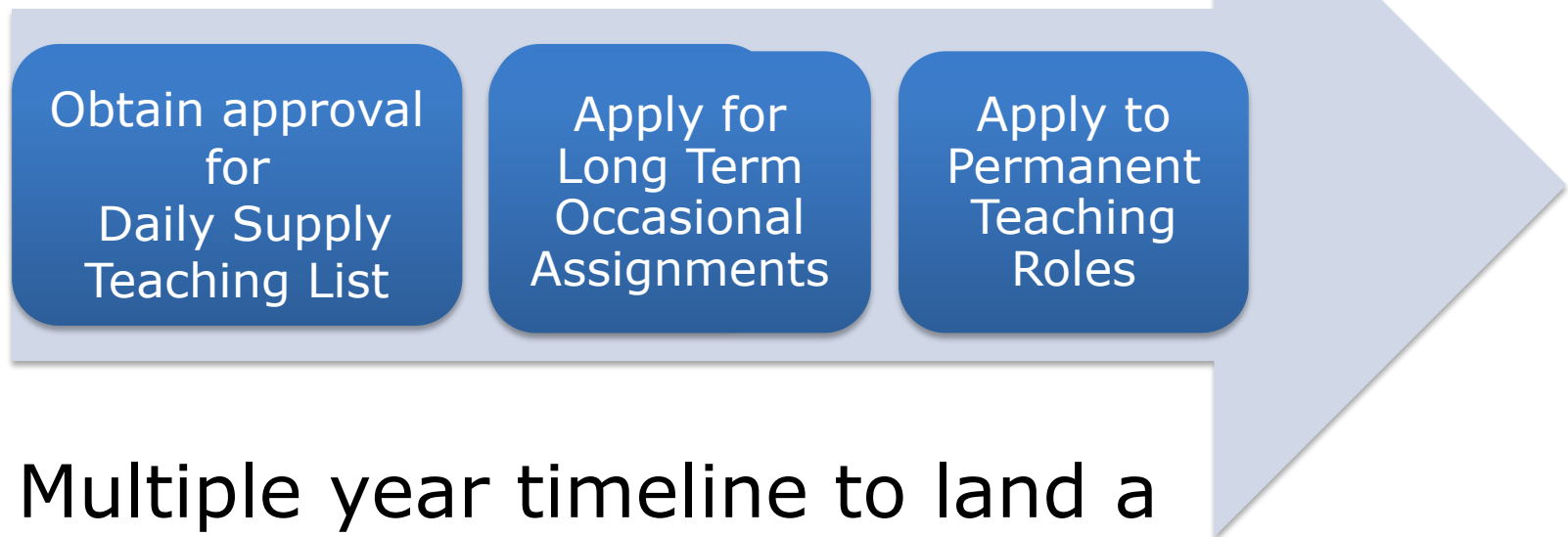


MARCH 2012

# A Unique Job Search process

“This is the (hiring) trend we are seeing with most School Boards in Ontario...”

- Mark Laurie, President, applytoeducation



Multiple year timeline to land a permanent teaching role...

# Now What?



- **Today:** TEC Career Sessions – General Preparation
  - 9:00 – 10:15 a.m. Interview
  - 10:30 – 11:45 a.m. Resume
- **Feb 1:** TEC Career FORUM Teaching Roles

# Learning Objectives

Interview Preparation Strategies for Teaching and Alternative positions

- **Recognize** common interview pitfalls
- **Understand** how to prepare pre-interview
- **Discover** the importance of follow-up
- **Become aware** of interview preparation resources

# Reframing the Job Interview

Think of the job interview as a meeting

Purpose: to find out whether or not there is a **suitable match** between your needs and skills and the needs of the employer

Are you the '**right fit**'?



So, tell me  
ABOUT  
yourself

# Tips for your response

- **Purpose**

- Set the tone of the interview (first impression)
- Set the agenda for the interview

- **Preparation**

- Strategically identify what you want to include:
  - education/qualifications
  - experience/strengths
  - enthusiasm/research

- **Practice**

- Familiarize yourself with articulating your professional introduction (in 60 seconds!)
- Obtain feedback from others on the impact and effectiveness of your introduction



# Common Interview Pitfalls

As Cited by Employers

- Being too vague
- Talking too much
- Dressing down
- Not asking questions
- Bringing up topics of salary/negotiation
- Poor etiquette (e.g. cell phone)
- Projecting lack of career clarity
- Absence of job specific knowledge
- Lack of enthusiasm
- Not following up
- “Trash talking”

## So how can you avoid these pitfalls?

# Interview Preparation

- **Part I – Before the Interview**
- **Part II – During the Interview**
- **Part III – Interview Follow-up**

# Part I – Before the Interview



# Key Areas of Pre-Interview Research

- Self-Awareness
- Career Awareness
- Employer Awareness

# Self-Awareness

1. Identify, assess and be able to articulate what you uniquely have to offer an employer or contribute in their environment
2. Compile a comprehensive list of your:
  1. Skills – Technical and Transferable
  2. Experiences
  3. Qualifications
3. Be prepared to discuss these in depth

**Ensure that your online image supports your professional image!**

# Research Your Skills

## Technical skills –

Specific skills and training required for a role;  
(usually) competency can be objectively measured.

- Years of Experience
- Education/Certification
- Artistic/Musical Skills
- Computer Skills  
(Programs/Hardware/  
Software)
- Knowledge of specific  
methods or procedures
- Physical abilities  
(strength, dexterity,  
speed)
- Mechanical/technical  
knowledge
- Languages  
(written/verbal)
- Specialized Training  
(e.g. AQs)

# Research Your Skills

## Transferable skills –

Versatile skills that can be applied in a number of different roles; usually assessed subjectively

- Communication
- Analytical/Research
- Computer Literacy
- Adaptability/Managing Multiple Priorities
- Interpersonal Abilities
- Leadership
- Multicultural Sensitivity/Awareness
- Planning/Organizing
- Problem Solving
- Teamwork

# For teaching/facilitation roles...

Prepare a **teaching philosophy** statement that considers -

- How you believe learning occurs
- How you facilitate learning
- How have you grown throughout your practice teaching experience

***Job Search Communication Guidelines***



# Career Awareness

e.g. Requirements for a teaching related role may include –

- Classroom Management
- Teaching/Learning Strategies
- Program Planning, Assessment and Evaluation
- Learning Community/Areas of Specialization

# Layer Your Skills Demonstrate Self Awareness

## Classroom Management

WHAT

Establishing Routines

Behaviour Management

Co-creating  
Expectations

Creating  
Schedules

Assigning  
Roles

Modelling  
Behaviour

Resolve  
Conflicts

HOW

# Research the Career/Job

**How much do you know about the career field or industry?**

Research and review the following -

- 1. Technical, Transferable and Interpersonal** Skill Requirements
2. Daily Tasks and Responsibilities
3. Affiliations (who does the job have contact/interact with?)

**Be prepared to demonstrate your understanding of the career/job**

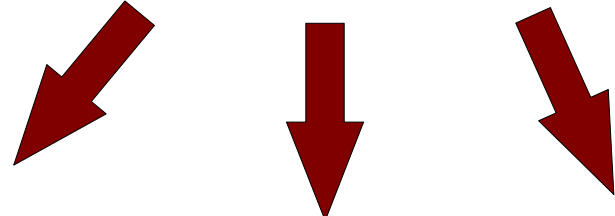
# Layer Your Skills

## Demonstrate Career Awareness

### Teaching Strategies

Creating Lesson Plans

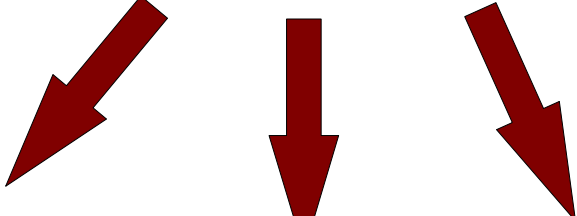
Building Rapport



Demonstrating  
Preparedness &  
Organization

Establish  
Assessment  
Criteria/Rubric

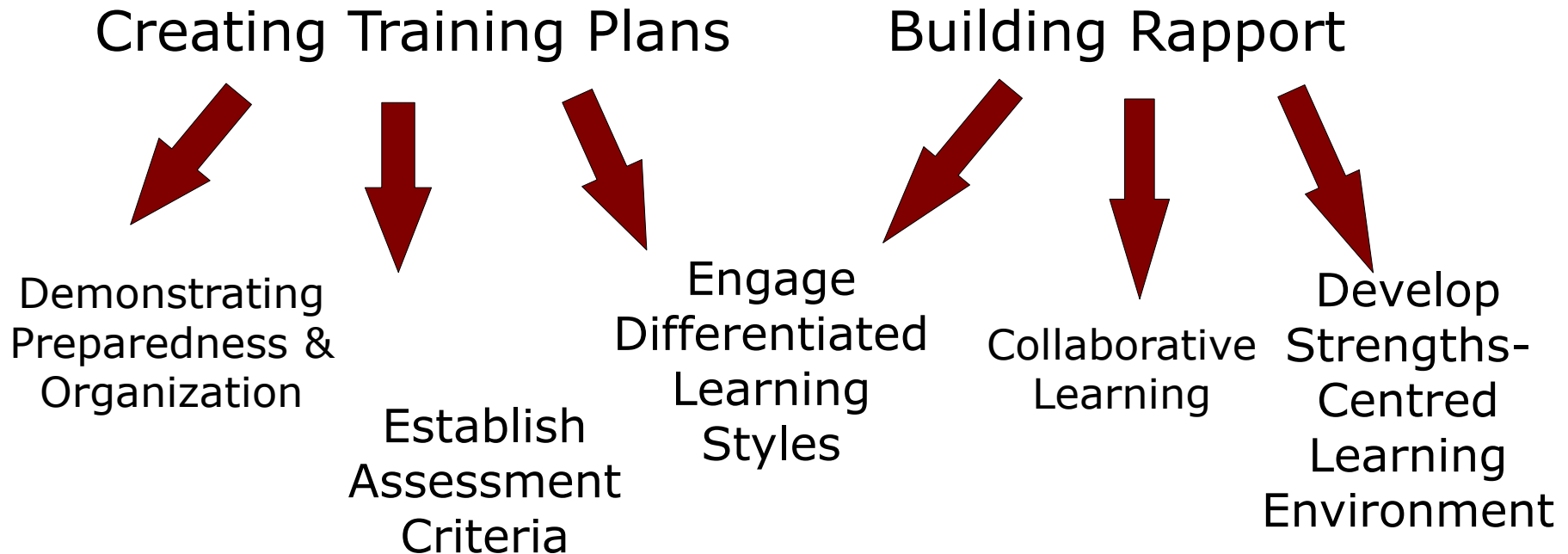
Engage  
Differentiated  
Learning  
Styles



Collaborative  
Learning

Develop  
Strengths-  
Centred  
Learning  
Environment

# Layer Your Skills – Demonstrate Transferability Group Facilitation

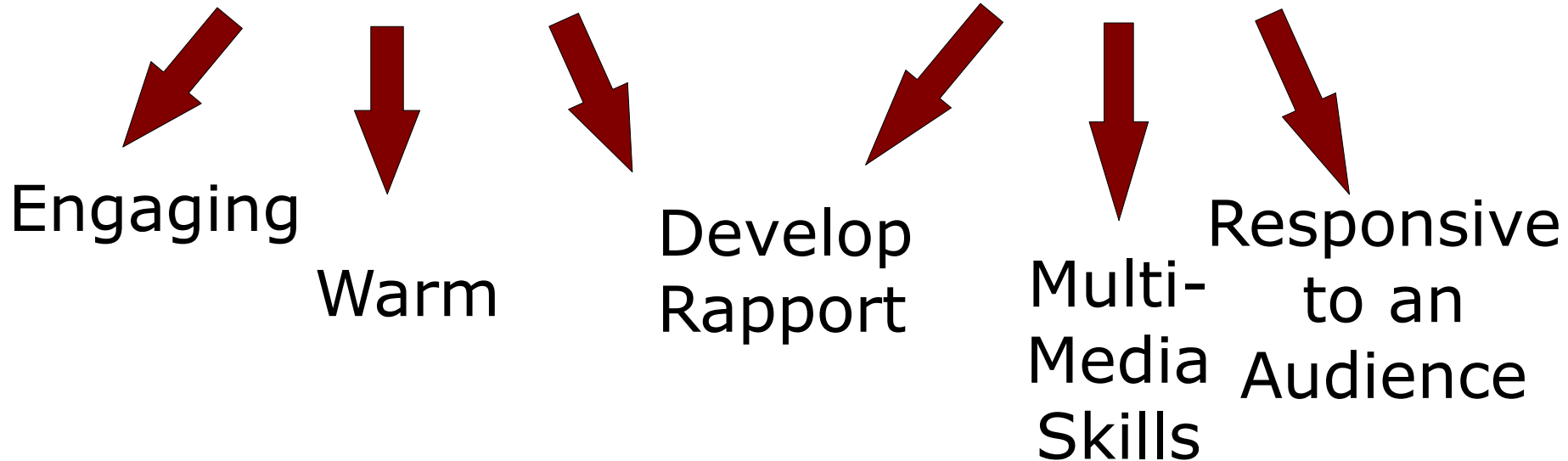


# EXERCISE - Layer Your Skills

## Communication

Personable

Presentations



# Employer Awareness

How well do you **really** know the employer?

Research and review the prospective employer, board or school information -

- History/Current Status
- Programs/Services + Reputation
- Niche/Industry/Sector (including competitors)
- Global/National/Local Presence
- Culture/Environment
- Students or clientele

# Sample Research Resources...

- Employer Websites (Press/News Releases)
- Blogs/Twitter/LinkedIn
- Magazines/Newspapers (e.g. Professionally Speaking)
- Professional Associations, School & Career Events
- Alumni Sharing Knowledge (ASK) program
- Informational Interviews
- Marketline & Scott's Directories (<http://library.wlu.ca>)
- Other schools or organizations
- Strategic volunteering



# Prepare Your Agenda & Portfolio

**Your agenda** - key points you want to communicate to the employer during the interview.

- Relevant skills/qualifications
- Key experiences and achievements
- Knowledge of the company/industry
- Questions to ask the interviewer



**Your portfolio** – key documents to support your candidacy

- Copies of resumé, job posting, transcripts, reference letters, samples of your work, agenda
- Employer contact information & location/directions

# A Teaching Portfolio may include...

- Lesson plans
- Academic projects
- Copies of résumé
- Laurier program overview
- Photos/Videos :  
classroom, displays,  
you in action
- Copy of Teaching  
Certificate
- Student Teaching  
evaluations
- Letters of  
recommendation
- Copy of Transcripts



# Confirm Composition of the Interview Team

- May include any or all of the following:
  - Principal or Vice Principal(s) or Manager(s)
  - Human Resource and/or Union Representative
  - Teachers or Co-Workers
  - Parents and/or Community residents
  - Board members
  - Other candidates (e.g. group interview)
- Varies by Organization, Board and School so be sure to inquire about **participants and format** prior to your interview .

# Part II – During The Interview



# Types of Questions

## 1. Tell me about your...

**self · strengths · weaknesses**

## 2. Behavioural-based (a.k.a. Situational)

Past performance predicts future performance

**Tell me about a time when...**

**Describe a situation that...**

## 3. Competency-based (a.k.a. Skill-based)

Identify and/or discuss the competency (skills)

**How would you approach...**

**Describe the core skills required to...**

# Approaching Answers

- Draw upon your past experiences
- Be systematic, concise & analytical
- Focus on 'lessons learned' and possible future approaches
- Connect all your responses to relevance to the target position
- Consider the **STARR** response ...

# The STARR Response

<b>S</b>	Situation	Describe the setting/situation (briefly)
<b>T</b>	Task	Indicate what needed to be accomplished
<b>A</b>	Action	Detail the actions you took and the skills utilized
<b>R</b>	Relevance	Describe the job-relevance of the skills used
<b>R</b>	Result	Outline the outcomes & benefits

# Most Common Type of Interview Questions

## Behaviour-Based Questions



# EXCERISE

**“Tell me about a time you had to intervene in a difficult or complex group or classroom situation.”**

Which transferable skills might you present within your STARR example?

# Other Common Questions

## Interview Demonstration

# Other Common Questions

- What are your ultimate career goals?
- Why are you looking for work outside of teaching? How has your training prepared you for this field?
- What do you think about recent changes in this field or where do you see this field heading?

# Questions For The Interviewer

- **Always prepare** 5-8 questions which specifically demonstrate your familiarity with the school/organization/industry
- **Focus on the future** e.g. training/project opportunities, your role, your supervisor, team philosophy, primary initial duties, work environment, company direction
- Avoid salary and benefit questions
- **Be respectful** of the time; confirm next steps

# Part III – Interview Follow-Up



# After The Interview

A **2011** study\* of hiring managers showed -  
(\*collegerecruiter.com)

- **22%** less likely to hire someone who doesn't send a thank-you note
- **86%** believed when a candidate does not follow-up with a thank-you note it showed lack of follow-through
- **56%** state it made them believe that a candidate wasn't serious about the job opportunity



**Send a thank-you message within 24 hours of your interview!**

# If You Haven't Heard a Response...

Within 8-10 days, follow up with a phone call -

- Indicate that you are checking on the **status** of their decision

## **NOT the successful candidate?**

- Thank the employer for their time
- Request feedback on your interview performance
- Ask if you may contact them for future opportunities

**Do not burn bridges!**



# Career Resources

**FACT:**  
**Practice increases confidence.**

To book an **interview coaching**  
or a **practice interview appointment**  
with a career consultant call  
**519.884.0701 ext. 4495**

# Additional Resources

- **Job Search Communication Guidelines**
- **[Interview Guidebook and resources](#)**
- **[Teaching is a Verb Too: Career Planning for Alternatives to Teaching](#)**
- **TEC Career Forum - Friday Feb 1, 2013**
- **Career Workshops & Employer Events**

# Connect With Us!

519.884.0710 x4495

careercentre@wlu.ca

**wlu.ca/career**



facebook.com/lauriercareercentre



lauriercareercentre.wordpress.com



linkedin.com (Laurier Career Centre group)

# Upcoming Career Events

## JOB FAIR 2013

120+ EMPLOYERS

**February 6**

[partners4employment.com](http://partners4employment.com)

