

— My Experience Applying For MyFirst Co-op Job —

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Jiajun is a Master of Finance candidate who is busy seeking co-op opportunities for the first time. He received his Bachelor's degree in China and has a solid background in accounting and finance. We hope that his experience going through the co-op application process can provide some useful information to graduate students who are searching for internships, especially international students.

1 HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT CO-OP APPLICATIONS AS AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT?

I am currently in my first term of the Master of Finance (Co-op) program, and am looking for my first co-op opportunity this semester. The application process is long-lasting and stressful as most of us are worried about getting our first job. I have sent out nearly 120 applications in various fields covering corporate finance, consulting, accounting and data analytics. I am happy to say that I have four interview requests (even though I am looking for more invitations!).

Up until now I have only had one interview, which recently took me the majority of my time to prepare for. It was for a financial analyst position within a bank, more related to process optimization and performance management. Besides preparing for behavioural and technical questions, I spent most of my time researching the team as well as the company.

2 HOW DID YOU PREPARE FOR THE INTERVIEW?

First, I searched on LinkedIn to check whether the company had co-op students on their specific team/line before, and asked whether they would like to share any information about the team environment and company culture. Then I visited the company's official website to briefly review its business segments, investment approach, current portfolio, long-term vision and their management team. After a basic review, I searched for annual reports of both the company as well as its competitors, trying to compare the competitiveness in each product or business segment. Based on the findings, I became more confident to be able to answer the typical interview question, "What do you know about our company" when asked. I also made sure to write down anything I found confusing, so that I could raise some questions during the Q&A session.

3 SUGGESTIONS?

What's worth mentioning is that knowing the current career background of the interviewer and doing some research on their team may help you have a better conversation about issues within their team! I tried this method and it works! The interviewer was really happy to tell me what type of challenges they are facing, how they envision the future development of their team, and the expected contribution to the company.

TOP TIPS

1. Know the background of the interviewer
2. Search LinkedIn to see if there was previous co-op students at the company you're applying to and reach out to them to gain insights
3. Write down questions you can ask during the Q&A portion of the interview when doing research on the company

