

Company Research

RESOURCES INCLUDE:

Importance of Company Research

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Company Research

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Resources

Importance of Company Research

Preparing for an interview is more than pressing your suit and practicing your interview answers. Many students forget the most important part—researching the company. McCombs recruiters have stated, “Those students who know in-depth information about the company move on to the second round, the others are cut.” Company research is critical to helping you succeed in the interview. Through research you will be better prepared to answer interview questions and develop intelligent questions. You may also uncover information that tells you whether or not an industry and a company’s culture are a good fit for you. It can be difficult to decipher which information is important, below are some helpful hints for making an impact in your next interview.

Topics to Research

- | The Company | The Industry | The Future |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products & services • Types of customers • History/Culture • Company leadership • Acquisitions & mergers • Sales & profit trends | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company’s rank in industry • Principal competitors • Relative performance • Market size | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in strategic leadership • Current events • New products/Services • Plans to enter new markets • Other recent news on company/industry |

Company Research

Consider the following questions when you research specific companies. Knowing the answers to these questions will help you stand out as a strong candidate.

- General organization information: founding, headquarters, size, competitors, stock information, product information
- What is the history of the organization?
- Who are the main leaders for this organization? Any recent changes?
- What is the organization’s business and how is it structured?
- What are the various departments/groups and what does each do?
- What products or services are offered by this organization? Which are the best-sellers? Your favorite? Any major product/service changes coming up?
- What are the innovative ideas coming from this organization?
- Why do you want to work for them? What impresses you about them?
- What makes this organization different from the others?
- What is the office culture like in this organization?

Industry Research

You should also have a thorough understanding of the industry in which the company does business. Consider the following industry questions for each company in which you are interested.

- What do businesses in this industry do?
- What are the products or services offered by this industry?
- What are the different sectors of business in this industry (public, private, etc.)?
- What is the purpose of this industry?
- Is there a specific location that is booming for this industry?
- Who are the major players for the industry? Where are they located?
- Are there any emerging companies?
- What new trends, products, or technologies are emerging?
- What characteristics or skills are desired in potential candidates in this industry?
- What does it take to be successful in this industry?

Be immersed in:

- Industry jargon
- Current news and events
- Industry trends
- Major changes that may affect the industry

Resources for Researching Employers

Glassdoor.com
(inside info from employees)

O*NET
(Occupational Outlook Guide)

Alumni
Industry magazines

Google Alerts
(Set for favorite companies)

BBA Career Services Online Resources
(Vault, Reference USA, etc.)

BizJournals

LinkedIn Network(s)—follow employers
you are interested in

Business Information Center
(through PCL resources)

Employer web sites &
social media outlets

Reference USA: Allows students to create and download company lists customized to certain areas and industries that students are interested in. Great for job seekers who would like to organize potential employers by locations.

Business Information Center: A database of databases. Includes ratings of databases and articles based on student needs and areas of company research for certain industries. Also has access to business research and academic tutorials.

BizJournals: For students who want to update their knowledge about current business news in certain regions/cities through news and journal articles. Also provides access to multiple cities' Book of Lists.

The Wall Street Journal: Online news articles based on industries for students to get current information on certain companies and fields.

Vault Career Insider: Allows students to conduct in-depth research on industries and companies. Vault provides access to downloadable career guides, employer profiles and rankings, discussion boards, industry blogs, and a job board to help match students with employers and recruiters.

How to access the web sites listed above:

1. Go to www.mcombs.utexas.edu
2. Click on the MOR link (<http://acsprod.mcombs.utexas.edu/MOR/>) in the top right
3. Log in as a student using your UT EID
4. Tab over to Career Services
5. Find links to the rest of the company resources under the Company Research section

In addition to independent research, you can learn more by attending employer information sessions and conducting informational interviews. See *Networking Strategies* guide for more information on informational interviews.