Preparing for an interview is more than pressing your suit and practicing your interview answers. Many students forget one of the most important parts—researching the company. Company research is critical to helping you succeed in the interview process. Through research, you will be better prepared to answer interview questions and develop intelligent questions for the employer. 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 how to do impactful company research.

**Importance of Company Research**

“Those students who know in-depth information about the company move on to the second round, the others are cut.”

- Recruiters

**Topics to Research**

**The Company**
- Products & services
- Types of customers
- History of organization
- Company leadership
- Sales & profit trends
- Culture, mission, values

**The Industry**
- Organization’s rank in industry
- Principal competitors
- Relative performance
- Market size

**The Future**
- Changes in strategic leadership
- Current events
- New products/services
- Acquisitions & mergers
- Plans to enter new markets

**Company Research**

Know the answers to the following questions when you research specific companies to help you stand out as a strong candidate.

- Do you know the organization’s 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? If so, what has been the impact of those leadership changes?
- What is the organization’s core business? How are is the company 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 stand out from its competitors?
- What is the office culture like in this organization?
- Has the company or industry been in the news lately? Why?
Industry Research

You should also have a thorough understanding of the industry in which the company does business. Explore 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?

Resources for Researching Employers

- **Glassdoor.com**
  *inside information from employees*

- **O*NET**
  *(Occupational Outlook Guide)*

- **Google alerts and news**
  *(add alerts and news topics for favorite companies)*

- **McCombs Online Resources**
  *(Vault, Reference USA, GoinGlobal, etc.)*

- **LinkedIn network(s)**
  *(follow employers you are interested in)*

- **Business Research Center**
  *(through UT Library)*

- **Alumni**
  *Industry magazines*

- **BizJournals/Book of Lists**
  *Employer web sites & social media outlets*

**Business Research 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.

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

**Interstride**: Interactive career platform designed to enhance the career exploration and job-search experience for international students. Features include: Visa Insights - A tool to look up what companies and organizations have sponsored H1-B visas in the past.

**Vault Career Insider**: Allows students to conduct in-depth research on industries, companies, and roles. Vault provides access to downloadable career guides, day-in-the-life blog posts, employer profiles and rankings, discussion boards, industry blogs, career Q&A videos, and a job board to help match students with employers and recruiters.

**How to access the web sites listed above:**
1. Go to [https://www.mccombs.utexas.edu/](https://www.mccombs.utexas.edu/)
2. Click on the MOR link ([https://secure.mccombs.utexas.edu/MOR/](https://secure.mccombs.utexas.edu/MOR/)) located under Resource Links at the bottom of the page
3. Log in as a student using your UT EID.
4. Go to the Career Services tab.
5. Find links to many of the above resources in the Company Research section.

In addition to independent research, you can learn more by attending employer information sessions and conducting informational interviews. See the Networking Strategies guide for more information on informational interviews.
Company research can be tricky! There is a lot of available information that can seem overwhelming. Use the flow chart below to simplify your research process and clarify your understanding of the organization as a whole.

1. Identify Company to Research
2. Which Industry is This Company In?
3. How is This Company Positioned Against Competitors?
4. What Are Current Projects This Company is Pursuing?
5. How Will These Projects Affect the Industry?
6. Why Do You Want to Join This Company? What Excites You About Them?
7. How Do You Best Fit Into the Company? (Skills, Abilities, Experiences)
8. What Have You Not Been Able to Find Through Your Research?