Preparing for an interview is more than pressing your suit and practicing your interview responses. Many students forget the most important part -- researching the company. McCombs recruiters have stated that “those students who know in-depth information about the company move on to the second round, the others are cut.” It can be difficult to decipher which information is important. Below are several helpful hints for making an impact in your next interview!

INDUSTRY RESEARCH

- 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 where this industry is “booming”?
- Who are the major players in the industry? Where are they located?
- Are there any emerging companies?
- What are the new trends, products, or technologies arising in this industry?
- What characteristics or skills are desired of 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
- Professional organizations

COMPANY RESEARCH

- What is the company’s general information (i.e., founders, headquarters, size, competitors, stock information, product information)?
- What is the history of the company?
- Who are the main leaders in this company? Are there any recent changes?
- What is the company business and how is it structured? What are the various departments and what does each do?
- What products or services are offered by this company? Which are the best-sellers? Your favorite? Any major product/services changes coming up?
- Are there any major news stories or trends coming up in this company?
- What are the innovative ideas coming from this company?
- Why do you want to work for them? What impresses you about them?
- What makes this company different from the others?
- What is the office culture like in this company?

In addition to independent research, informational interviews are another great resource for finding information. See the BBA Career Services Networking Strategies guide for more information on informational interviews.

Resources:

- LinkedIn Network(s)
- Glassdoor.com (inside info. from employees)
- McCombs Online Resources (Vault, Reference USA, etc.)
- Business Information Center (through PCL resources)
- Alumni
- Biz Journals Book of Lists
- Google Alerts (Set for favorite companies)
- Industry Magazines
- O*NET (Occupational Outlook Guide)
Company research can be tricky! There’s 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 company as a whole.

1. Identify Company to Research
2. What 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 Join This Company? What Excites You About Them?
7. How Do You Best Fit Into the Company? (Skills, Abilities, Experiences, Etc.)
8. What Have You Not Been Able to Find Through Your Research? What Questions Do You Have for the Company?