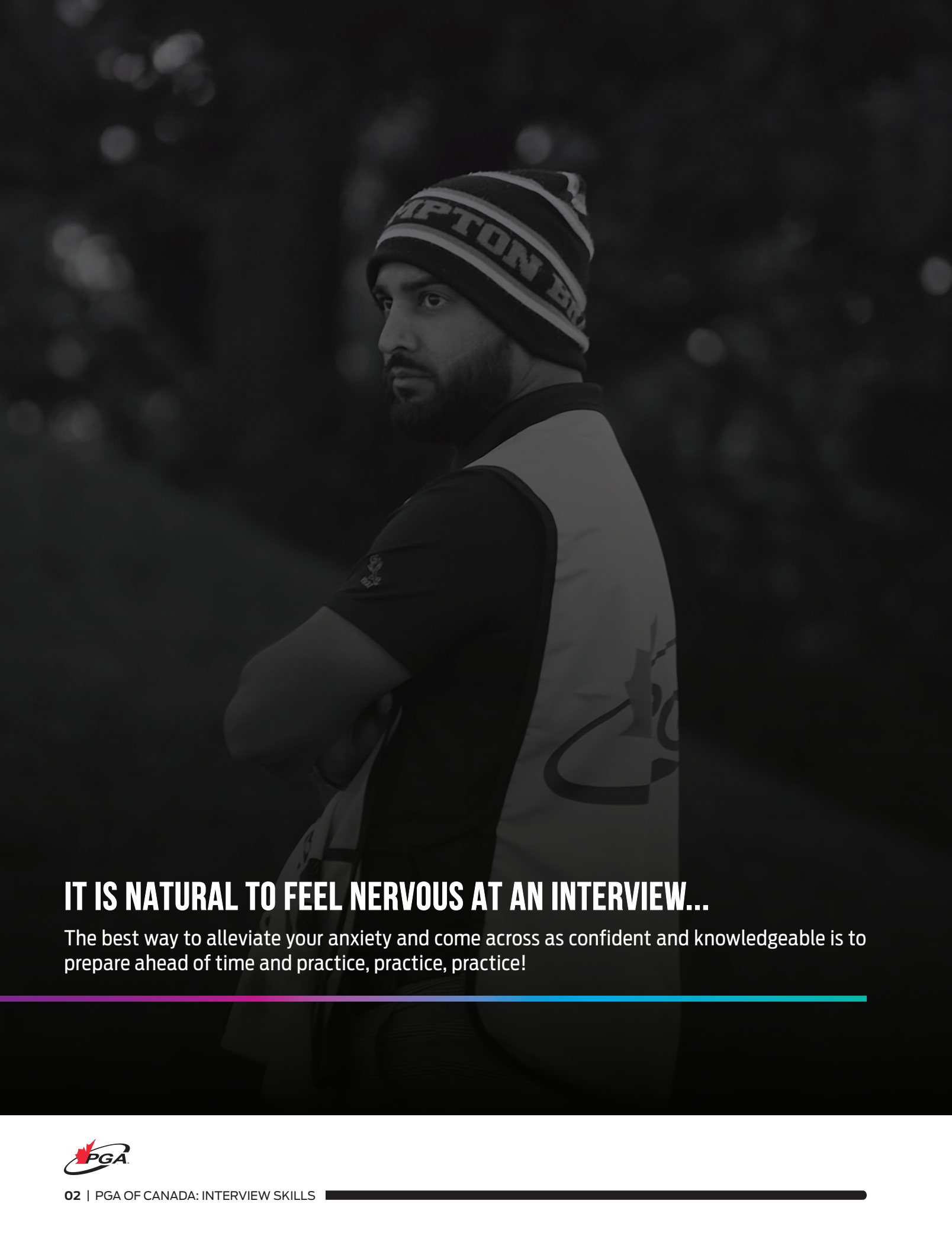




INTERVIEW SKILLS



IT IS NATURAL TO FEEL NERVOUS AT AN INTERVIEW...

The best way to alleviate your anxiety and come across as confident and knowledgeable is to prepare ahead of time and practice, practice, practice!



The following is a 60-minute preparation exercise for your next interview:

- **5 MINUTES** re-reading and analyzing the job description, focusing on the essential requirements and responsibilities to tailor your answers and hone in on the most important aspects of the job.
- **5 MINUTES** re-reading your resume and cover letter to review how you pitched yourself in the first place.
- **15 MINUTES** researching the company, looking into their history, mission, values, and recent projects.
- **15 MINUTES** researching potential interview questions specific to the position and the industry.
- **20 MINUTES** practicing answers to these questions and recalling specific examples from your work experience, such as major accomplishments, challenges, or milestones that will serve as anecdotes to strengthen your responses to situational and behavioural-based interview questions.

PLAN YOUR FIRST IMPRESSION

When up against the open-ended question; “so... tell me about yourself?” Where should you begin?

Interviewers want a recap of your resume/professional career, not your life story. They want to know why you are the most relevant and interesting person for this job. So, give them what they want. You are in control and you get to decide what parts of your professional story to emphasize and what to focus on.

Storytelling is your secret weapon. If you can use storytelling techniques in interviewing, it helps you connect with the interviewer and make you a more memorable candidate.

SELL YOURSELF

In an interview, talking about your strengths is not obnoxious. It is not bragging or being too forward. It is an essential skill to master if you want the job.

You must “sell yourself” and have hard data to demonstrate what you have done at previous workplaces – e.g., how you increased revenue or member retention.

Even if you are an introvert or a modest person by nature, there are ways to communicate your strengths while feeling comfortable and confident.

Take advantage of the opportunity to highlight your strengths and experience and be prepared to discuss this in your interview.

For example:

“Here are the top three reasons why I am the ideal candidate for this job.”

First, state the facts of what you accomplished. For example:

“I created a robust junior program that transformed my last course’s bottom line. We went from losing almost \$10,000 per year to grossing almost \$20,000 per year.”

Second, quote others. For example:

“In my performance review, I received positive feedback from my manager about my ability to mentor and motivate my team.”

Remember to practice aloud and with just a handful of practice responses, you can go from stumbling to polished.





How can you be prepared, but also authentic and spontaneous?

▶ BULLET POINTS ▶

PREPARE SPEAKING POINTS, NOT A SCRIPT

Do not script responses word for word. Simply capture a few bullet points that will communicate your answers for commonly asked questions.

Sometimes it can feel like you are at the mercy of the interviewer, but if you go in feeling comfortable with your speaking points and the things that you want them to remember about

you, it gives you an opportunity to be strategic and proactive. This can be especially helpful if there is an area you are concerned about, like a gap in your resume.

Do not stick your head in the sand and hope they do not ask. Prepare and practice so you will be in control of your message no matter what the interviewer throws your way.

SHOW YOUR ENTHUSIASM FOR THE ROLE

It is a given that you will research the company and be able to discuss why you are a good fit, whether it is your skills or your values.

But even more importantly, you need to express interest with sincere enthusiasm, explain how you are a great fit for the job and why you'd be excited to join the organization.

Think about:

- How am I uniquely qualified for this job?
- Why would I be motivated to succeed if they hired me?
- How does this job fit into my career goals and what I love to do?

Interviewers are trying to get a feel for whether you would be a passionate and strong performer if you were hired.

TELL A SHORT, IMPACTFUL STORY

It may be to your advantage to tell a story that allows you to demonstrate how you handled a project or tackled a problem.

- 1 Start with the backstory; just enough context to explain why the project was important.
- 2 Showcase your actions; the highlights of what happened, the obstacles you faced, and how you addressed them.
- 3 End with positive outcomes; either a quantifiable business improvement (I increased revenue by 8%) or an anecdotal, qualitative result (I came in under budget).

To make your story concise and engaging:

- Keep it under two minutes.
- Use "I" and not "we", if applicable.
- Think of your story as the start of a dialogue, not a monologue. If they ask follow-up questions to dig deeper, you know you have them hooked.

END ON A POSITIVE NOTE

Always end on a positive note by asking something like: "What do you think are the most important qualities for someone in this role?" It may open a final opportunity for you to talk about your experience in a different way and make a lasting impression.

SAY THANK YOU...

Don't just get up and leave at the end of your interview, thank the interviewer(s) for their time and consideration and express your gratitude for the opportunity to interview.



INTERVIEW SKILLS

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