

WHY RESEARCH A COMPANY?

Employers are always impressed with applicants who take the time to investigate their organization. Researching a company to write an effective letter of application or to prepare for an interview involves gathering information on the company's organizational structure, activities, products and services, industry links, market size and future plans.

STEP 1 – UTM CAREER CENTRE ON-LINE RESOURCES

Employer Directories

On the Career Centre website, click "Find Employment", then "Resources & Links". You will find links for online company directories of non-profit organizations and private-sector firms. These include Canadian and Peel regional directories. Check out Profit100 and Report on Business to see how companies rank in terms of growth and work place satisfaction.

Industry Outlook

Once you get an understanding of the market a particular company caters to and the industry in which it belongs, check out Job Futures and Career Centre Panel Packages to learn about both market trends and the jobs within the market. On the Career Centre website, click "Explore Careers" and "Resources & Links" to access these useful sites and more.

STEP 2 – UTM CAREER CENTRE RESOURCE LIBRARY

- **Canada's Sourcebook: Canadian Almanac and Directory:** A comprehensive directory, listing associations, government organizations, libraries, museums, art galleries, publishers, media and communications companies, financial services, hospitals, school boards, private schools, universities and colleges.
- **Canada Student Employment Guide:** Profiles of companies with indexes of skill types and programs of study.
- **Contact Toronto:** Profiles of Toronto's largest businesses, organizations and top executives.
- **Scott's Directories:** Includes the Scott's Greater Toronto Business Directory, Scott's Directories: Ontario Manufacturers, and Scott's Government Index.
- **Canada's Top 100 Employers:** This guide rates businesses, associations, and educational institutions in terms of favorable working conditions and benefits
- **Mississauga Business Directory:** A directory of local companies and organizations.
- **The Career Directory:** Profiles of Canadian companies from a wide variety of industries. The educational index, which lists organizations by degree specialty, is very useful.
- **Who's Hiring:** A listing of over 3,500 companies that have advertised at least two career-level positions in the last year.

STEP 3 – THE INTERNET

Browsing a *company's website* is an important step in doing your research—company representatives will expect it. To find additional information try the following sites:

- **Industry Canada:** Search Industry Canada's business information site by using the *Canadian Company Capabilities* directory with a database of 60,000 businesses at <http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/epic/site/ccc-rec.nsf/en/Home>
- **Search Engines:** Search for businesses on popular search engine such as <http://google.ca> or <http://ca.yahoo.com>
- **Corporate Information:** Provides information on companies worldwide, along with resources and links by country and industry, available at <http://www.corporateinformation.com>
- **Specialized on-line directories:** University of Toronto provides access for U of T students and staff to some useful on-line directories, via the Library's E-References Sources link on <http://www.library.utoronto.ca/resources/index.html>. You can search for "directories" to bring up a list of specialized on-line directories for Canadian organizations like libraries, professional associations, environmental organizations, and publishers.
- **Research centers:** To identify North American research centers, do an Extended Search by Organization through the Gale Ready Reference Shelf (through the E-References site listed above). For a listing of think tanks around the world, try the following web directory: <http://www.saigonbao.com/thinktanks/thinktanks.htm>.

STEP 4 – MAGAZINE AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

- On-line periodicals and periodical indexes can help you locate recent articles on companies and industry trends. They are accessible on-line via <http://www.library.utoronto.ca/resources/index.html>
- Some Key resources for company information are the CBCA (*Canadian Business and Current Affairs*) for Canadian publications, *ProQuest* which accesses a wide variety of publications, and *Mergent Online* for company profiles.
- Some other major indexes are *The Canadian Business Index*, *the American Business Periodical Index*, and *the Canadian News Index*. *Canada Newswire* is a basic news-search site that is free to the public at <http://www.newswire.ca/en>.

STEP 5 – LIBRARIES AT THE ST. GEORGE CAMPUS

Business Information Centre

Rotman School of Management, 105 St. George St.
416-978-6215, <http://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/bic>

- Collection includes annual reports on approximately 400-500 Canadian companies, Business Periodical Indexes – the *Financial Post Corporate Service Investor Reports* which contain data on Canadian public companies in card form, summaries of company histories, products, number of employees, offices, etc.

Robarts Library

4th and 5th Floor Reference Department, Robarts Library, 130 St. George St.
416-978-8450, <http://www.library.utoronto.ca/robarts>

- Business Periodical Indexes – its collection includes *Who's Who Directories* (containing biographies of top executives), international directories and telephone books for across Canada. Government reports, documents and statistics are available on the 5th floor.

Many faculties and departments downtown have libraries that specialize in resources for their subject area (e.g. Centre for Industrial Relations, Bora Laskin Law Library). These are good places to look for specific industry directories and journals.

STEP 6 – PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Mississauga Central Library

301 Burnhamthorpe Rd. W.
905-615-3500, <http://www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/centrallibrary>

- The Central branch of the Mississauga Library System houses the Business Department, located on the 4th floor, which offers information in print, electronic, and CD-ROM form. Resources include corporate and financial publications; national, international and local business directories; census information; corporate financial information; and the Mississauga and Toronto Business Directories (both on CD-ROM).

Toronto Reference Library

Business Department, 789 Yonge Street (*To gain access to directories and files, it is necessary to submit ID*)
416-393-7148

- The Business Department, located on the 3rd floor, maintains files on companies. Also available are the *Financial Post Investment Reports* and the Ontario Securities Commission filings of annual reports for most companies listed with the Toronto Stock Exchange. The library also carries some international business directories such as *Who Owns Whom*. Periodical indexes are included in their collection as well.

STEP 7 – FINAL WORDS OF ADVICE

In your research for information on a company, do not lose sight of the importance of understanding the requirements of the position for which you are applying. Since the purpose of an interview is to determine your suitability for a specific position, it is important that you have a good grasp of the position's functions and duties as well as being able to articulate how your skills relate to the position. Take as much information as you can from the job advertisement or posting (if that is what you are responding to) and use it in conjunction with information found in the sources recommended above in the Career Resource Library and on-line. Use Information Interviews with contacts in your network who work in a particular industry or company that you are interested in. (See *Information Interview* tip sheet to learn more.)

This tip sheet is intended as a counselling document and the information is subject to change. (Updated June 2011)