



March Hiring 2023-2024 Resource Package



Introduction

Hiring Process

CREO uses a two-round interview process to evaluate and hire its consultants.

The first-round interview is 15 minutes, broken down into 5 minutes of behavioural questions and a 10-minute market sizing exercise. Some time is also left at the end for the candidate to ask the executive team any questions on their mind.

Between the first and second rounds, CREO will hold a Case Introduction session for all successful first-round candidates. The purpose of this will be to ensure candidates understand what to expect in the case interview. Interviewees will also be paired with a case buddy on CREO to help prepare them for the interview.

The second-round interview is 25-30 minutes long and contains a mix of behavioural questions and a case exercise. The case exercise will involve a discussion between the interviewers and the candidate around a problem a business is facing.

All second-round candidates will be notified of our decisions by EOD March 24th.

What We Look For

Problem Solving Ability

- Almost all of CREO's work involves problem solving. Consultants need to be able to logically understand, structure, and solve problems.

Creativity

- To deliver value to clients, CREO consultants often need to come up with unique ideas and to think outside of the box.

Initiative

- CREO's success as an organization is a result of all members taking initiative on a regular basis. Regardless of seniority on the club, all members are encouraged to contribute new ideas for internal and external club matters.

Character and Commitment

- Most critical to the success of CREO consultants is a great work ethic, an ability to lead and work with teams, and a willingness to accept and grow from feedback.

Behavioral Interview Questions

General Advice

We encourage you to use the behavioral section of the interview to demonstrate the qualities listed before such as hard work, leadership, collaboration, and initiative.

No behavioral questions will seek to confuse candidates or to “trip them up” and will all focus on the executive trying to learn more about the candidate through their prior experiences.

To best communicate your stories, feel free to use common interview response structures such as the STAR method. Provide context for the situation you were in, discuss what your task was, explain what actions you took, and finally talk about the results that came from your actions.

Make sure not to ramble or take too long with a response, as this will degrade your answer.

The questions to the right are examples of the types of questions CREO asks. They may or may not be asked in your interview.

Sample Questions

Tell Me About Yourself.

- Keep it short, no more than 1-2 minutes. Talk about 1-3 of your experiences or interests and very briefly touch on why you are interested in joining on CREO.

Tell Me About a Time You Solved a Problem in a Team.

- Talk about the team situation and task and focus on what you individually did within the team. Show that you can manage team dynamics.

Tell Me About a Time You Took Initiative.

- Discuss the situation at hand and what you did that was outside the scope of your assigned task. Explain why you decided to take initiative in that given situation.

Tell Me About a Time You Struggled to Overcome an Obstacle.

- Demonstrate your ability to persevere through a problem. Talk about what you were struggling with and what you did specifically to overcome the difficulty.

Marketing Sizing Questions

General Advice

With the market sizing exercise, CREO wants to see candidates' ability to use logic to structure the problem and cover all major considerations, develop assumptions, and calculate a final answer. The 'Introduction to Market Sizing' deck on our website has a more detailed step-by-step explanation of market sizing but here are some things to keep in mind:

Take Your Time: Do not feel the need to rush into the problem and solve it as fast as possible. Take some time to think about how you want to structure the problem. While the market sizing discussion will be completely verbal, feel free to draw out a tree on paper to help you plan out your analysis. You *cannot* use a calculator, however.

Explain Your Thinking: Try to consistently explain what you are thinking. The goal of the exercise is to understand how applicants think through problems, so it is critical that you consistently communicate. Hearing what you are doing can also help the interviewers steer you in the right direction.

Sanity Check: As you complete the market sizing activity, be sure to 'sanity check' your numbers. This means taking a step back and evaluating whether a certain number 'seems right.' Even if you sanity check your final answer and it seems to be off, it shows to the interviewers that you are aware of that and can use logic to identify potential issues.

Use Round Numbers: While we want to see that you can handle basic calculations, we don't need applicants to be math wizards or to do complex mental math. Use simple numbers and feel free to do calculations on paper. Whenever possible, round to easy to work with numbers (multiples of 2, 5, and 10).

Explain Your Assumptions: There are not right answers to these questions, but it is important that you explain the logic behind assumptions you make. For example, if the question asks about how many people in Canada own pets, you can even use personal experience (i.e., out of my 20 closest friends, 5 have dogs so around 25%). As long as you have logic and evidence backing your assumptions, you don't need to worry about your answer.

Marketing Sizing Questions + Virtual Advice

Sample Questions

How many coffees does the Goodes Starbucks sell in a year?

- Think about the number of people on campus, amount and frequency of coffee drinkers, other places to get coffee etc.

How many pages worth of textbooks does the Queen's bookstore sell in a semester?

- Think about the number of student at Queen's, the numbers of courses and required textbooks, the percentage of online textbooks etc.

How many cars are in Kingston?

- Think about the split of Kingston population (students and households), the percent of each that would have a car etc.

The above questions are just examples of the types of questions CREO asks. They will NOT be asked in your interview.

Virtual Interview Advice

This year we will be conducting first round interviews over Zoom. While all general interview advice stays true whether in-person or virtually, there are a few things to emphasize when engaging in a virtual environment.

Communicate: Be sure to constantly explain what you are doing when it comes to market sizing and the case. The interviewers won't be able to see your paper, so it is essential that you describe your structuring and your math as you do it. Try to speak a little slower than usual as words can get lost through Zoom.

Enjoy It: Although easier said than done, try to enjoy the interview. Positive energy can be difficult to see through Zoom so try to smile and be enthusiastic throughout the interview.

Ask Questions: Always feel free to ask clarifying questions in case you mishear things or want to confirm that you correctly heard something. In virtual settings, it can be harder for an interviewer to tell if a candidate is 'stuck' on a problem so ask for help if you are struggling.

Case Interview + In-Person Interview Advice

Case Interview

With the interviewer-led case exercise in the second interview, CREO wants to further evaluate a candidate's ability to structure a business problem and develop a final recommendation. The 'Introduction to Casing' deck on our website has a more detailed explanation, but here are a couple of things to keep in mind:

MECE: Structuring your thoughts into mutually exclusive, collectively exhaustive (MECE) buckets that either support a claim or allow you to brainstorm all potential options with any given prompt.

Answer-First: Also referred to as point-first communication, the answer-first approach suggests beginning with the insight or answer to your analysis. Afterwards, provide your rationale for why you believe the answer is correct.

Structured Communication: When explaining your thoughts or answers, it may also be helpful to structure your communication similar to a written paper (firstly, secondly, thirdly, etc.).

In-Person Advice

This year we will be conducting second-round interviews in person, and with its' return, there are a few things to remember in addition to the Virtual Interview advice.

Dress Code: During second-round interviews, CREO recommends a business-casual dress code. This includes, but is not limited to, dress shirts with no tie, blouses, golf shirts, dockers, slacks, and more.

Punctuality: To ensure the interview schedule runs relatively on time, it is important to remember to be punctual. In-person interviews will be held in a breakout room in Goodes Hall, and arriving early is recommended.

Professionalism: Unlike virtual interviews, in-person interviews require an additional element of professionalism. In addition to the two points above, it is important to present yourself well and follow basic interview etiquette and norms.