

Application and Interview Guidance for Indigenous Talent

Are you considering applying for a role in railway operations at CN? Read below for some tips to help you better prepare for the application process and your interview.

CV Tips

Before you begin your application to CN, look at your resume to make sure that it highlights what matters most to the role. **Here are some tips to help you prepare your CV:**

- Identify the key skills and experience needed for the role, and show the skills and experiences that make you a good fit (*i.e. comfortable being outdoors, working on shifts, physical labour...*)
- Highlight your safety mindset in either professional or personal activities (*i.e. safety at work or safety during outdoors activities...*)
- Mention your soft skills (*i.e. communication, teamwork, collaboration...*)

***Note:** Research shows that candidates often don't apply unless they feel they fit the job posting at 100%. Even if you don't meet every job requirement listed in a posting, we still encourage you to apply. If you require accommodation for the recruitment process, please get in touch with our team at cnrecruitment@cn.ca.

****Note:** You can leverage free AI tools to help you map the key skills of a job description to your resume.

Interviewing at CN

If your application is selected for the next steps, you will be invited to a career presentation hosted by a CN recruiter (either in person or online), where you will learn more about CN, what we do, the role itself, working conditions, benefits, and more. Interviews are scheduled once the presentation concludes.

Keep an eye out for communications from the recruitment team and respond promptly when updates on your application are shared. Keep in mind that **first impressions matter**, so make sure to show up on time to your scheduled interview and present yourself in a professional manner when meeting the hiring team (*i.e. being cordial and dressed in appropriate attire*).

Questions during the interview will generally revolve around the tasks and skills needed to perform the job safely and effectively. **You'll be asked questions relating to:**

- The information on your resume (*be prepared to elaborate on what's on your CV*)
- How will you perform the job safely and effectively (*share real-life examples if applicable*)
- Your future goals (*i.e. skill development and career progression...*)
- Theoretical questions (*i.e. what would you do in this situation...*)
- Why have you chosen CN as a potential employer (*research the CN values*)

Keep in mind that interviews are an opportunity for you to show your fit for the role, even if you don't have the traditional experience required. **Here are some tips to help you think of talking points:**

- Share real-life examples when answering questions (*you can share personal experiences if you do not have professional examples to share*)
- Describe the skills that make you a good fit (*skills relating to job tasks, or your familiarity with the working conditions of the role*)

- Share your soft skills (e.g. communication, leadership, conflict resolution, teamwork...)
- Share your transferable skills (skills you've acquired elsewhere but may still apply to the role)
- Showcase your safety mindset and your ability to work well alone and with others

CN uses a structured behavioural interview format to ensure fairness and consistency across all candidates, an objective evaluation on past behaviours with a strong focus on safety, rule adherence, and teamwork.

When answering behavioural questions, you can use the **STAR** method below to help ensure that your responses are clear, structured, and showcases your relevant experience. This entails the following steps:

- **S – Situation**
 - Set the context clearly and provide background information to help interviewers understand why this chosen situation is pertinent to the position and its requirements (i.e. working outdoors).
- **T – Task**
 - Make your ownership of tasks clear and **avoid “we” statements**. Define your responsibilities and objectives, clarify what you were accountable for and what success looked like. Mention your specific role in this situation, what the goal or expected outcome was, and key challenges with this initiative.
- **A – Action**
 - Explain what you did, and how you did it. Demonstrate your skills, behaviours, and thought process, with a special consideration for the **CN Values (i.e. Safety)**. Mention the steps you took to implement actions, how reasoning behind key decisions, collaboration and communication opportunities, and any adjustments to mitigate obstacles along the way.
- **R – Result**
 - Demonstrate your impact and learnings to close the situational response with a clear outcome. Talk about tangible outcomes or results, provide a *before-and-after* comparative on the situation, and lean into the learned lessons for future initiatives.