



# Demystifying the Interview

Presented by:

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# Session Agenda

- Preparing for the Interview
- The Interview
  - Behavior-based questioning
  - Making the Connection
- Closing the Interview
  - Smart Questions
  - Tough Questions
  - Closing “the Sale”
- After the Interview

# Preparing for the Interview

## KNOW...

- the Company
  - Vision
  - Mission
  - Competencies
  - Connections
- the interviewer (*if possible*)
  - LinkedIn
  - Connections
- your resume in and out
- the job description

# Preparing for the Interview

## *Positioning Statement*

*“Tell me a little about yourself.”*

## *Exit Statement*

*“Why are you looking? Why did you leave your last job?”*

# Preparing for the Interview

- Logistics
  - Attire
  - When to arrive
  - What to bring
  - Etc...

# Why Behavior-based Interviewing?

- Probe for the KSAs
- Past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior
  - *What a person has done (or has failed to do) in a given situation*
- Helps reduce the impact of common interview errors, biases or misunderstandings
- Discourages candidate “faking”
- Encourages consistency by interviewers
- Is a valid, reliable and legally defensible method

# Unsafe Questioning Areas

Interview questions should be **job-related**  
...and so should your answers.

Topics that may elicit potentially discriminating information:

- Gender and Family
- Race and National Origin
- Age
- Religion
- Disability
- Other “private” information

# Why Behavior-based Interviewing?

- Requests a detailed example of job-related behavior
- Asks what the candidate has done (in the past tense)
- Is open-ended
- Does not signal a “correct” answer
- Interviewer may “probe” for additional information (*Who, What, Where, When, Why or Explain*)

## Quiz: Behavior-based ?

1. What are your three greatest strengths? **NO**
2. **Occasionally people are dissatisfied with the quality of service they receive. Can you tell me about the most difficult situation you've faced in that area?** **YES**
3. What kind of challenge do you enjoy? **NO**
4. Tell me about a time when you worked on a project with other people and received recognition for your work. **YES**
5. Describe for me a presentation you made either in work or in school. **YES**
6. What's the worst job you can possibly imagine having? **NO**

## Quiz: Behavior-based ?

7. When you're put in charge of some project or activity, what kind of leader are you? **NO**
8. **I'd like you to describe a time when you were involved in developing a solution to a problem. YES**
9. **Tell me about a time when you made a major mistake in your work. YES**
10. What qualities do you think make a good team player? **NO**
11. How do you know when it's time to give up on something that isn't working? **NO**

## Quiz: Behavior-based ?

12. Tell me about a time you had to work in a high-pressure situation to meet a deadline. **YES**
13. **Tell me about the last time you made a decision or solved a problem that required a lot of careful thinking and analysis. YES**
14. What motivates you in terms of job satisfaction? **NO**
15. Given a choice of reading information in a book, hearing it explained by an expert, or working out the information for yourself, which do you prefer? **NO**
16. What is the one element of a job that is most important to you? **NO**

## In the Moment...

- Don't fear silence. Take your time and think of a good response.
- Talk in the past tense-This is a story about "You"
  - Speak in the first-person
  - Balance the "I" with the "we" or "team contributions"
- Be detailed (but stick to about 4-5 minutes per response)
- Don't use hypothetical's

# Can You Prepare?

Review the Company values, competencies and/or job description for key KSAs

- *Customer Service*
- *Teamwork*
- *Communication*
- *Problem Solving*
- *Detail Orientation*
- *Multi-tasking*
- *Dedication or Results-orientation*

# Can You Prepare?

- What 2-3 experiences are you most proud of?
- What experience was a great learning experience?
- What would distinguish you from others who might be applying for the role?

# Aim for the STARs

<b>S</b> ituation/ <b>T</b> ask	<b>A</b> ction	<b>R</b> esults
<i>“Why is the person doing this things”</i>	<i>“What did the person do?”</i>	<i>“What happened or what was the outcome?”</i>

# Making the Connection

- Does the Interviewer(s) seem to value task or relationships?
- Do they seem to be talking in questions or statements?
- “Mirroring”
- What about multiple interviewers?

# Role Play: Behavior-based Questions

Watch for:

- Taking Notes
- Position & Exit Statement
- Using the STAR technique for Behavior-based Questions
- Making the Connection

Take Notes:

# Handling the Tough Questions...

- Your weaknesses
- Education and training
- Gaps in employment
- The Salary Question

# Smart Questioning

## Examples:

- *“Can you describe the training/onboarding for this job?”*
- Career Progression: *“What type of role do you typically see individuals in this position (or similar position) move into?”*
- *“What is a typical day like for someone performing this job?”*

Are there questions that you shouldn't ask?

# Closing “the Sale”

## Final Question:

- *“Can you describe for me where you are in the hiring process and what I might expect in regards to the next step?”*

## Ask for the Job:

- *“Thank you for your time and consideration. I am the best fit for this job because... (recap the important job-related qualities)”*

# Role Play: Closing the Interview

Watch for:

- Responding to the “tough” questions
- Asking “smart” questions
- Final Question: Asking about the hiring process
- Asking for the Job

Take Notes:

# After the Interview

- Thank you notes
- The rules of following up
- Get Company updates (Yahoo, St. Louis Business Journal)
- LinkedIn??
- Debrief your experience
- Get everything in writing
- Keep network updated on progress

# Breakout Sessions

Roles for teams of 2-3 people:

1. *Interviewer*
2. *Interviewee:*
  - *Respond to Questions*
  - *Make the Connection*
  - *Close the Sale*
3. *Feedback Leader & Timekeeper*

3 rounds per team:

- Interview round: 8 minutes
- Feedback round: 5 minutes

# Thank you on Behalf of your Presenters

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