

Get the **EDGE** in
your next interview

The *Make it Happen*
Packet

Be a star. Use S/T A R method.

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|------------------------------------|---|
| <p>Situation or Task</p> | <p>Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish. You must describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. This situation can be from a previous job, from a volunteer experience, or any relevant event.</p> |
| <p>Action you took</p> | <p>Describe the action you took and be sure to keep the focus on you. Even if you are discussing a group project or effort, describe what you did -- not the efforts of the team. Don't tell what you might do, tell what you did.</p> |
| <p>Results you achieved</p> | <p>What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn?</p> <p>If possible quantify the results in measurable terms. NEVER LIE, ok to put a little something on it, to make the truth and the impact memorable.</p> |
| <p>Zippit</p> | <p>After giving the concise, high-quality result; stop talking. Don't ramble because you could undo all the good you just did with the STAR.</p> |

Example Question: Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way.

Example using Situation:

Situation

When I worked at XYZ Department Store, my shift manager once had to leave early to take care of a family emergency. He/she announced to the crew that I would manage the department store for the rest of the day. As the day progressed, one of the employees (a peer under normal circumstances) falsely assumed that because the shift manager had left, he/she was under no obligation to carry out the duties I assigned.

Action

I asked to speak to the employer in private. I told him/her that if he/she had been chosen to take charge, that I would have given him/her the same courtesy that I give the shift manager. I tactfully asked him/her to respect my role for the day and that I would return the respect twice over.

Result

In the end in I convinced him/her to see it my way because he/she agreed to show courtesy and ended up being one of my most valuable workers that day. He/she sold 15% above their daily average.

Example using Task:

Task

My supervisor told me that he believed I had the capacity to be a great leader so he/she tasked with managing ABC Store for a week during the busiest time of season.

Action

After thanking him/her for the opportunity, I developed a game plan for a successful week called a meeting with the 6 employees that were under my charge, outlined the game plan and checked for understanding. When I was sure that everyone understood and was on board with the plan. We executed the plan that following Monday.

Result

The week progressed without incident and sales for the week that I managed ABC store matched my supervisors 3rd best sales week ever. At the time he had been a manager for 7 years.

8 Tips to get in where you fit in

1. Make sure to apply for jobs you think you would like. The key to successful interviewing can be summed up in one word: passion. It's your passion for the job that will set you apart from the crowd. Let your passion for the job show through in every aspect of your interview.
2. Have the right attitude. If you want to rise above others with better experience, better grades, or better anything, you will need to work on developing a highly positive attitude.
3. There is one thing you must do before you interview. You need to interview. Not the actual interview, but a practice interview or mock interview.
4. Present yourself with confidence and quickly build a rapport with the interviewer. Make a personal connection. Smile but not excessively.
5. Convey your Strengths and Accomplishments whenever the opportunity presents itself
6. Look your interviewer in the eyes but don't stare... its creepy. If you have difficulty maintaining eye contact, try this simple technique to lock in a strong first impression. Concentrate on noticing (and remembering) the color of the person's eyes as you shake hands. In doing so, you will not only show excellent initial eye contact, you will also create interest in your eyes, which will be clear and focused.
7. Address interviewer with Mr. (Last Name) or Ms. (Last Name) unless told otherwise; use his/her name strategically for charming purposes.
8. If asked "are there any questions for me/us?" always have a question or a comment ready – finish strong. Question example: So Mr./Ms. (Last Name) what is the next step in the decision process? Comment example: I appreciate your time Mr. XYZ and I look forward to adding value to this organization if I'm given the opportunity.

Tips on How to Dress appropriately:

Men and Women

- Conservative two-piece business suit (solid dark blue or grey is best)
- Conservative long-sleeved shirt/blouse (white is best, pastel is next best)
- Clean, polished conservative shoes
- Well-groomed hairstyle
- Clean, trimmed fingernails
- Minimal cologne or perfume
- Empty pockets—no bulges or tinkling coins
- No gum, candy, or cigarettes
- Light briefcase or portfolio case
- No visible body piercing (nose rings, eyebrow rings, etc.) or tattoos
- Show up with appropriate hygiene and brush your teeth....well.

Men

- Necktie should have a conservative pattern
- Dark shoes (black lace-ups are best)
- Dark socks (black is best)
- Get a haircut; short hair always fares best in interviews
- Fresh shave; mustaches are a possible negative, but if you must, make sure it is neat and trimmed (but just don't... quit trying to be Billy D. Williams)
- No beards (unless you are interviewing for a job as a lumberjack!)
- No rings other than wedding ring or college ring
- No earrings (if you normally wear one, take it out)

Women

- Wear a suit with a jacket and skirt or slacks; no dresses & shoes with conservative heels
- Conservative hosiery at or near skin color (and no runs!)
- No purses, small or large; carry a briefcase instead
- If you wear nail polish use clear or a conservative color & only one set of earrings
- Keep your makeup simple and natural (it should not be too noticeable)
- No more than one ring on each hand (please don't show up looking like Mr. T)

Other Examples of Behavioral Questions:

- Describe a time when you were faced with a stressful situation that demonstrated your coping skills.
- Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
- Give me an example of a time when you set a goal and were able to meet or achieve it.
- Tell me about a time when you had to use your presentation skills to influence someone's opinion.
- Give me a specific example of a time when you had to conform to a policy with which you did not agree.
- Please discuss an important written document you were required to complete.
- Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
- Tell me about a time when you had too many things to do and you were required to prioritize your tasks.
- Give me an example of a time when you had to make a split second decision.
- What is your typical way of dealing with conflict? Give me an example.
- Tell me about a time you were able to successfully deal with another person even when that individual may not have personally liked you (or vice versa).
- Tell me about a difficult decision you've made in the last year.
- Give me an example of a time when something you tried to accomplish and failed.
- Give me an example of when you showed initiative and took the lead.
- Tell me about a recent situation in which you had to deal with a very upset customer or co-worker.
- Give me an example of a time when you motivated others.
- Tell me about a time when you delegated a project effectively.
- Give me an example of a time when you used your fact-finding skills to solve a problem.
- Tell me about a time when you missed an obvious solution to a problem.
- Describe a time when you anticipated potential problems and developed preventive measures.
- Tell me about a time when you were forced to make an unpopular decision.
- Please tell me about a time you had to fire a friend.
- Describe a time when you set your sights too high (or too low).

For further resources Google: Interview tips; S/TAR interview tips; Interview preparation; Interview techniques

Now Go Make it Happen!