HOW TO ACE The INTERVIEW

THE MOST COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

- Can you tell me a little about yourself?
- Why do you want to work for our company?
- How did you hear about the position?
- Why did you major in?
- What are you strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- Where do you see yourself in the next 3-5 years?
- What is your greatest professional achievement?
- What other companies are you interviewing with?
- How would your professors/boss/co-workers describe you?
- Why should we hire you?
- Describe your dream job.
- Why do you want to leave your current job?
- What kind of work environment do you like best?
- What is your salary range expectation?

Behavioral Interview Questions

- Can you tell us about a time when you faced a challenging situation at work? ✷ (Answer on the back!)
- Talk about a time when you had to work closely with someone who's personality was very different from yours.
- Describe a long-term project that you managed. How did you keep everything moving along in a timely manner?
- How do you handle it when there's a conflict among team members?
- Describe a time when you disagreed with your supervisor on how to accomplish something.

INTERVIEW TIPS

Research indicates:

- Your interviewer's perception of your personality is crucial.
- First impressions are important: make sure to dress appropriately.
- The decision gets made early in the interview; you need to start strong.
- Recruiters have rejected 2 in 5 candidates because of lack of eye contact and bad posture in the interview.
- It is essential to exude confidence and assertiveness.

Before the interview:

- Understand as much as possible about the position, the organization, and where you fit.
- Identify your main strengths and be ready to provide supportive evidence.
- Anticipate how to help your interviewer "sell" you to others in the organization.
- Research and set your salary range.
- Prepare some questions for the interviewer- this is your chance to show interest in the organization and start a two-way conversation.
- Practice, practice, practice.

During the interview:

- Give a firm handshake while introducing yourself.
- Speak slowly and articulate.
- Communicate carefully: be concise, strive for poise, be clear, and be specific.
- Participate, don't dominate.
- Be mindful of your body language. Sit up straight and don't cross your arms!
- Watch out for pre-scripted responses - be specific and authentic.
- Use the STAR technique (example on the back).
- Close with confirmation of a major relevant strength.
- Make sure to send a thank you message afterwards.

HOW TO APPLY THE STAR METHOD

The STAR method is a structured manner of responding to a behavioral-based interview question by discussing the specific situation, task, action, and result of the situation you are describing.

Example Q&A:

> **"Tell us about a time you faced a challenging situation at work and how you handled it.**

Situation
Describe the situation that you were in.
At my last job, my coworker needed to miss work for some time, and their project was left unfinished and without a manager.

Task
Your responsibilities and assignments for the situation.
My supervisor instructed me to take on the project, and with no leniency on the deadline, I had days to complete a project that originally should have taken several weeks.

Action
Describe the actions you took to address the situation.
I requested and was granted reduced weekly goals. I was able to delegate my weekly goals out to teammates and could dedicate more time to the special project.

Result
Describe the outcome of your actions.
This allowed me to finish it on time and with complete accuracy. My supervisor appreciated my attitude and drive, and I was given more projects after that, along with an eventual promotion.

Behavioral Based Interviewing Tips:

- Answers to behavior interview questions should be in the form of a brief anecdote that illustrates your strengths and skills as a worker. Provide background on the situation, the specific actions you took, and the results.
- Prepare ahead of time. Review common behavioral interview questions ahead of time and practice your answers.
- Take your time. It's okay to take a moment before answering the question. Take a breath, or a sip of water, or simply pause. This will give you time to calm any nerves and think of an anecdote that appropriately answers the question.
- Be positive. Often, behavioral interview questions require you to focus on a problem or a failure at work. Describe the problem or issue you faced, but don't focus too much on the negative. Quickly shift to describing how you solved the problem and the positive results.
- Keep your answers short and to the point. Behavioral interview questions can easily incite a lengthy response, but keep cool and stay focused.