**Complete and submit this worksheet on Blackboard before your Small Group Reflection Discussion session begins.**

**Interview Preparation**

Preparing for an interview can be a difficult task as numerous questions can be asked. Instead of trying to prepare unique answers for every interview question imaginable, a more effective strategy would be to know how to adapt a formula or technique that can be used to answer multiple questions. In this case, the STAR technique is a valuable tool to assist in answering behavioral interview questions.

**Behavioral-based Questions**

Here are some examples of behavioral interview questions:

“*Tell me about a time when you managed a difficult client or customer?”*

*“Share a scenario when you used one of your strengths in your last job?”*

*“Tell me about a time when you used your interpersonal skills to succeed on a project?”*

This type of question asks the candidate to describe a specific situation from their past and to explain how they behaved or responded in that specific situation. Your past actions are an indication of how you will act in the future, that is why this question type is common.

**Create and record a behavioral-based interview question appropriate for each of these three positions:**

A candidate interviewing for a customer service representative role:

Tell me about a time when you managed a difficult client or customer?

A jobseeker interviewing to work as a preschool instructor:

Tell me about a time when you handled a difficult child's shenanigans?

A person interviewing for a job you want :

Share a scenario where you used your problem-solving skills?

**STAR Technique**

The acronym STAR provides you with a guide to effectively answer behavioral-based interview questions.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **S** | Situation (Describe the situation: general/specific) |
| **T** | Task (What needed to be done?) |
| **A** | Action (What action did you take?) |
| **R** | Result (What was the result of your action?) |

Here is a sample behavioral interview question and a STAR response:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Tell us about a significant problem you solved at your last job? | |
| **S** | I was working as a Math Tutor for XYZ. |
| **T** | XYZ had a student who was having a difficult time understanding parabolas. |
| **A** | I spoke with the student to understand what aspects were confusing them most. After discovering they were a visual learner, I used Desmos, an online graphing tool, to illustrate examples in their textbook. This way, the student could easily see how different variables affect parabolas. |
| **R** | By providing an individualized teaching style, the student scored over 90% on their next math test. |

**Use the STAR technique to answer one of the behavioral-based questions you created in the exercise above, by entering your narrative into the chart below.**

**Copy the question you will answer here:** Share a scenario where you used your problem-solving skills?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **S** | I was working as a Product Validation Engineer at Cadence Design Systems |
| **T** | Our team was tasked with regression analysis and maintenance of 10000+ testcases |
| **A** | With input from my manager and my team members, I came up with the idea of msgID-based analysis. The idea was to compare logs by message IDs instead of complete message text. We developed infrastructure around this idea to make log differences concise and succinct. I also developed a webpage around the idea to make regression analysis tasks easier. |
| **R** | The developed web page, as well as the infrastructure, improved productivity. Regression analysis used to take a week to complete but this idea resulted in a turnaround time of a day or two. The webpage enabled catching of gross errors, across multiple testcases, easier and hence helped improve turnaround time. |

**Tip**: Most people tend to forget or rush through the Result portion (the most important part) of their STAR answers when speaking in an actual interview. This is natural since people get nervous and just want to finish their responses quickly. Remember, the employer is interested in what you have to say, so feel free to slow down when providing your response to ensure you clearly explain the Result portion of your answer. Otherwise, it would be similar to telling a joke and forgetting to mention the punchline in the end.

Congratulations! You have now added the STAR Formula as a tool in your toolbelt of interview strategies. Now you are one step closer to landing your next job!

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