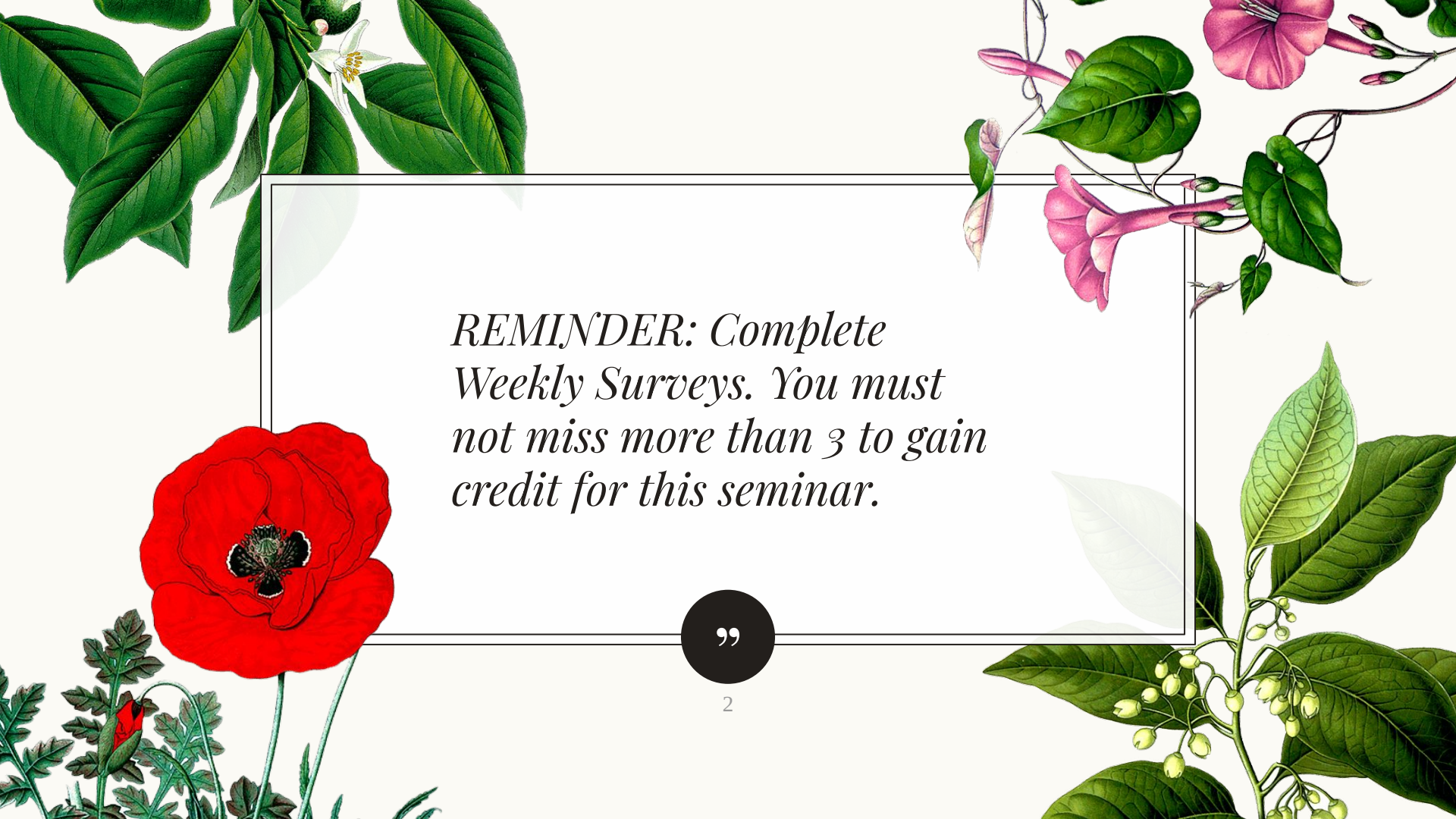


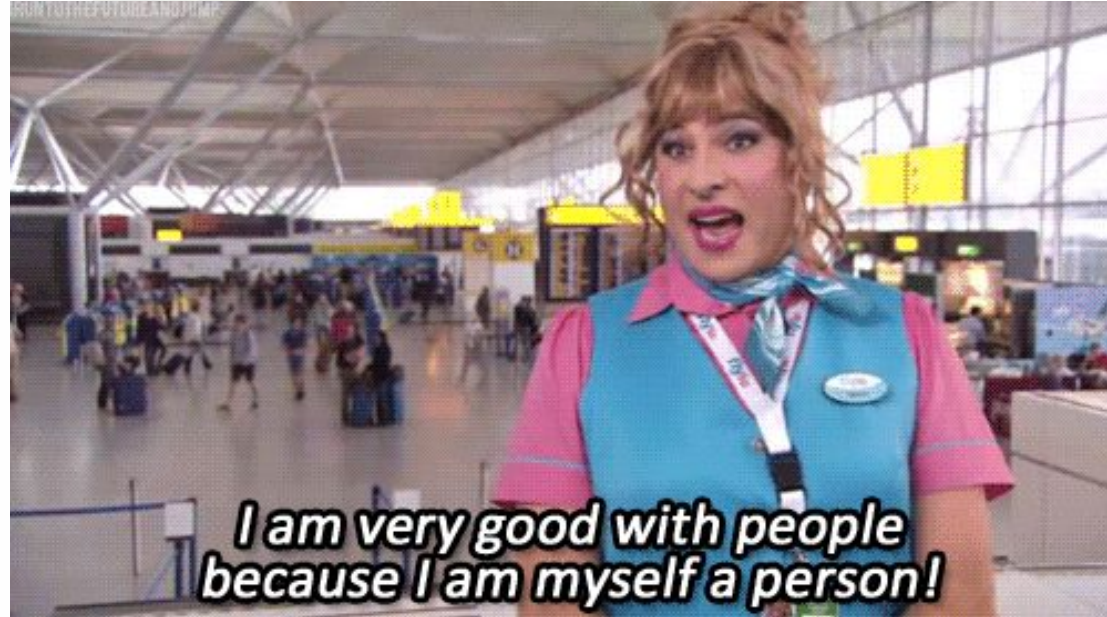
A detailed botanical illustration background featuring various plants. In the top left, there are purple flowers with green leaves. In the top right, there are white flowers with green leaves. In the bottom left, there is a large yellow flower with a dark center and green leaves. In the bottom right, there is a yellow lemon with green leaves and a small white flower. The central text is framed by a white border with a thin black outline.

Behavioral Interviews



*REMINDER: Complete
Weekly Surveys. You must
not miss more than 3 to gain
credit for this seminar.*

”





When do **behavioral** questions appear?

Recruiter Screens

In first round screens with recruiters, questions are usually exclusively behavioral.

During Technical Interviews

Technical interviews with engineers are usually kicked off by 1 – 2 behavioral questions.



Common **themes** for questions

❖ Teamwork

- Give me an example of a time you faced a conflict while working on a team. How did you handle that?

❖ Ability to Adapt

- Tell me about a time you were under a lot of pressure. What was going on, and how did you get through it?

❖ Time Management Skills

- Tell me about a time you had to be very strategic in order to meet all your top priorities.

❖ Communication Skills

- Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully persuade someone to see things your way at work/school.

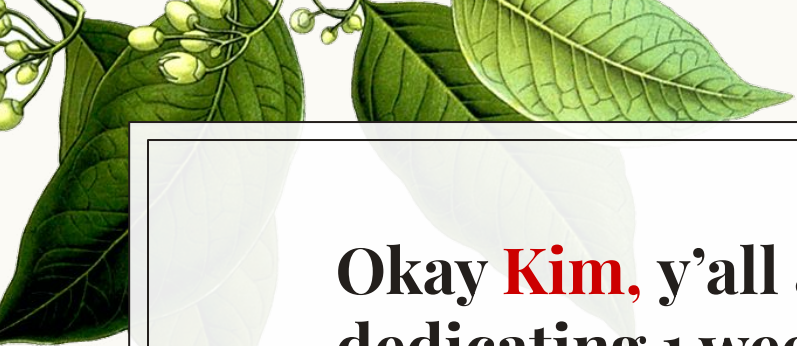
❖ Motivation and Values

- Tell me about your proudest professional accomplishment.




More examples of **common** questions

- [Teamwork] Talk about a time when you had to work closely with someone whose personality was very different from yours.
- [Ability to Adapt] Tell me about the first job you've ever had. What did you do to learn the ropes?
- [Time Management Skills] Describe a long-term project that you managed. How did you keep everything moving along in a timely manner?
- [Communication Skills] Describe a time when you were the resident technical expert. What did you do to make sure everyone was able to understand you?
- [Motivation and Values] Describe a time when you saw some problem and took the initiative to correct it rather than waiting for someone else to do it.



Okay **Kim**, y'all are dedicating 1 week to behavior iv's and 5 weeks to technical iv's, so does that mean behavioral questions aren't that important?





Lol. Obviously the behavioral interview matters. Employers want to...

Learn about your previous experiences.

Interviewers want to know how you behaved in a real-world situation.

Learn about how you've made an impact.

Interviewers want to understand the measurable value you added to that situation.

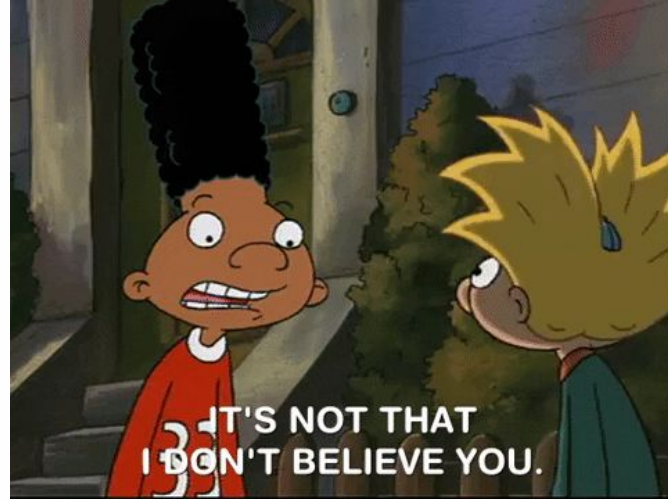
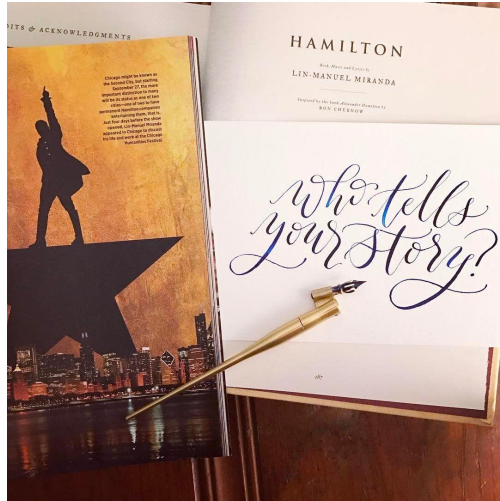
Learn if you are a good fit for their company, role and team.

Interviewers are trying to learn how you define something like, “pressure at work” and if that aligns with their team’s perspective.

Ultimately, these questions help the interviewer determine if they **want** to work with you.



Okay, so back to that **idea** about crafting your story. We need a damn good story...several actually.





Preparation is key

There aren't right/wrong definitive answers to behavioral questions. However, there are *more compelling* ways to express and communicate your ideas and stories when answering these questions that will leave a positive impression.





Phase 0: Introspection

- ◉ You are the hero of this story (that sounds effing cheesy but I'm for reals)
- ◉ As the author of this story, you need to know your hero inside and out, so you can properly tell this story.
- ◉ What are your hero's strengths?
- ◉ What are your hero's weaknesses?
- ◉ What kind of work does your hero like to do?
- ◉ What kind of work does your hero hate to do?
- ◉ What is your hero STOKED about?





- **Adventurous:** I take risks.
- **Ambitious:** I am driven to succeed.
- **Approachable:** I work well with others.
- **Articulate:** I can express myself well in front of groups.
- **Autonomous:** I use initiative.
- **Calm:** I stay levelheaded in a crisis.
- **Charismatic:** I can be a leader when need be.
- **Cheerful:** I develop a positive work environment.
- **Clever:** I can juggle multiple tasks.
- **Competitive:** I thrive under pressure.
- **Confident:** I am not afraid to ask questions.
- **Cooperative:** I get along well in a team setting.

- **Determined:** I am self-motivated.
- **Devoted:** I am committed to the company's success.
- **Diligent:** I always work my hardest.
- **Easygoing:** I easily adapt to new situations.
- **Educated:** I possess formal training.
- **Efficient:** I have very quick turnover time.
- **Eloquent:** I have strong communication skills.
- **Energetic:** I am able to work long and hard hours.
- **Enthusiastic:** I put my all into every project.
- **Flexible:** I am able to adapt my priorities.
- **Focused:** I am goal-oriented.
- **Friendly:** I am easy to work with.
- **Honest:** I value integrity.
- **Imaginative:** I am inventive in my work process.
- **Independent:** I need little direction.
- **Inexperienced:** I am a blank pallet.
- **Inquisitive:** I am excellent at gathering information.
- **Insightful:** I can read between the lines.

- **Open-minded:** I take constructive criticism well.
- **Opinionated:** I am comfortable voicing opinions.
- **Organized:** I am a meticulous planner.
- **Patient:** I am not easily ruffled.
- **Perceptive:** I can read people effortlessly.
- **Persuasive:** I am a natural salesperson.
- **Procedural:** I work best with structure.
- **Punctual:** I have great time management skills.
- **Quiet:** I am a great listener.
- **Relaxed:** I do not stress easily.
- **Resourceful:** I use every tool at hand.
- **Responsible:** I always finish a task on time.
- **Talkative:** I am comfortable initiating a dialogue.
- **Technological:** I am incredibly savvy.





Carry these
positive
affirmations
with you and
weave them into
your stories.





Phase I: Research

- ◉ Read the job description
 - ◉ Read the company's mission statement/value statement
 - ◉ Email the recruiter 2 – 3 days beforehand and ask them if there's any insight they can give you into the team you are interviewing with or if they have any last minute tips for you.
 - ◉ Hit up your friends/acquaintances/network that have interviewed at or currently work for the company that you are interviewing for and ask for tips.
 - ◉ Scour the internet for intel (reddit, glassdoor, fire up the search engine, etc)
- 
- 



Phase II: **Brainstorm**

- ◉ Reference your resume, there's a story behind every single thing listed on there.
- ◉ What's the story behind your biggest success?
- ◉ What's the story behind your biggest failure (and how you overcame it)?
- ◉ Review feedback documents you've received from other jobs.
- ◉ Phone a friend or family member and get perspective on yourself from those that care about you.
- ◉ Write these down somewhere!





Phase III: **Author** (STAR Method)

- **Situation:** What is the context of your story? In setting the situation, you are telling your listener when or where this event took place. For example, “We were working on a quarter long project in our upper division Machine Learning course...”
- **Task:** What was your role in this situation? For example, “It was my role to lead the effort to determine which machine learning model would be best to use”
- **Action:** What did you do? For example, “I researched several machine learning models and narrowed it down to 3 that might work. I worked with my teammate who oversaw setting up our initial data set to run a few comparisons. I put together a comparison report with metrics to make it easy for the team to discuss and collaborate on next steps.”
- **Result:** What did your actions lead to? For example, “We were able to choose XXX algorithm for the project which lead YY% accuracy. It was incredibly rewarding to navigate a new technical problem space and work together with my teammates.”





Just a few **pro** tips

Honesty is the best policy

Be as open and honest as possible with your answers. As you review possible stories, remove any where you can't quite remember all the key details or those that make your uncomfortable to tell.

Practice makes perfect

You need to practice your interview responses aloud. In the mirror to yourself or better yet, with a friend so you can get feedback.

Two minutes

Keep your initial answers to under two minutes. Don't worry, if don't cover everything your interviewer wanted to know, they will probably ask a follow up question about it.



Two **questions** you should always be ready for



Tell me about yourself

Who are you?

What are your interests? Goals?

Why are you interested in this position?

This should be 30 – 60 seconds

Tell me about a technical project

At any given time, you should have at least 1 (if not 2) well crafted pitches ready to go for your most significant coding projects.



Pick your biggest or most technically interesting project(s). It's okay to talk about school projects.



Project Discussion Example


"I spent this summer working at an advertising network, specifically trying to drive engagement on our video ads by A/B testing new ad content and formats. I worked primarily in the backend and used Python and R for data analysis. I produced an 8% improvement in click-through rates across the board over six weeks of testing."

Follow up questions:

- How long did you work on this project?
 - How big was the team working on this, what was your role specifically?
 - Why did you choose that technology stack?
 - What was the biggest bug you encountered and how did you fix it?
 - If you redid the project what would you do differently?
- 
- 



Preparing **your own** questions

- Create a positive interaction between you and your interviewer.
 - What is your favorite part about working for X?
 - Where do you see X in 5 years?
 - What keeps you excited and motivated to show up to work every day?
 - This is your opportunity to probe the company and decide if it's a good fit for you. Reflect on your values and come up with some non-aggressive questions you can ask.
 - Large tech companies can sometimes have a reputation for being ultra competitive. Do you have any perspective or advice for a young, hungry new grad that cares about work but also cares about life outside work?
 - Covid-19 has brought to light how important it is to work for an employer that takes care of its people. How did X make you feel safe and valued during the situation?
 - Don't ask rude questions
 - Did I pass the interview?
 - How much do you make?
- 
- 