

Interview Mastery Workshop - Resource Doc

Welcome to the Interview Mastery Workshop! This doc contains links and supplemental resources. Also, we've added some additional content to the end of this worksheet. Check it out!

Relevant links:

- [Narrative assignment](#), [Questions to Ask in Interviews](#)

Third-party links:

- [MBTI Personality Assessment](#)
- [MBTI's 16 Personalities Description](#)
- [High 5 assessment](#)

The third-party online assessment links included here are intended to be completed with no additional cost; be aware that some versions on these sites (not linked here) may have an out-of-pocket cost charged by the site, not Coding Dojo. It is the student's choice to complete additional assessments at their own cost.

The “Elevator Pitch”:

- “Elevator Pitch”: Your professional introduction and response to “Tell me about yourself.”
- Links present professional life (web dev skills, projects, professional interests) to past (previous work, career, education) and future (alignment with company/role, desired career trajectory)
- Values, passions, interests form “through-lines” that link past, present and future
- Places to use “elevator pitch”: Interviews, LinkedIn “About” section, resume / cover letters, cold emails / networking outreach

Sample Alumni Elevator Pitches:

Sample 1

Hello, my name is Elizabeth. I am a Software Engineer and I've lived in different countries and speak a number of languages... In fact I know 6! I started my career in the world of data analysis, using data to optimize efficiency and impact for the tech industry. In addition to my background in data, I completed an intensive programming bootcamp to refine my technical skills and created projects that combine data analytics and machine learning algorithms. I created an awesome data visualization project by leveraging my skills in Python, Kaggle, and algorithms that tracks Covid Cases in real-time across the globe.

I have always loved to create things, to take them from idea to actuality, and becoming a Software Engineer has allowed me to really live into this passion. During the bootcamp I created three passion projects, the most meaningful of which was multilingual peer-to-peer video chat with consecutive speech to text translation. This project was important to me because it was the purest form of my passion for coding and languages combined together, and I was able to create an environment where people can speak any language they want to communicate.

I'm really passionate about turning ideas into actual products. I also bring a very focused working style, which has allowed me to learn new technologies quickly and incorporate them into my projects. I'm really excited to discuss the challenges your company faces and how I might impact those challenges.

Sample 2

Hi, I'm Fatima. I have always loved helping others and having a positive impact on their lives. I'm from the Middle East, and when it was time for me to choose a major I wanted to become a software engineer, but coming from a country with a traditional culture my parents encouraged me to go into the science field because they thought it would be more suitable for a woman.

I became a pharmacist in my country, which I enjoyed, especially when I was working in a lab doing research and thinking about ways to deal with challenging issues. After graduation, I decided to move to the USA, the land of opportunities. I studied hard to pass the exams and got licensed here; a difficult feat that only not many foreign pharmacists can pass. After I got my license I worked in a pharmacy for 3 years which was a great experience, but I always felt that I needed something more challenging with greater impact in the world.

I started learning to code and finally decided to pursue my dream of becoming a developer, so I enrolled in a coding Bootcamp. There, I leveraged my pharmacy expertise to build a software project that improved prescription processing for pharmacies. I showed my former employers and they implemented it! Since completing the bootcamp I've realized that this is truly the work I want to do. I'm currently learning Linux OS. I believe coding is a lifestyle because it teaches you how to approach life challenges and think about finding a way to solve it. I'm excited to share this passion with your company.

Sample behavioral interview questions:

Problem Solving Skills:

- *Tell me about a recent technical challenge you've faced. What steps did you take to overcome it?*
- *Describe a time when you learned new skills or knowledge at work. What did you learn and how did you implement it on the job?*
- *Can you talk about a situation where you recognized a problem as a potential opportunity?*

Motivation and Drive:

- *Tell me about your proudest professional accomplishment. What made it impactful for you?*
- *Have you volunteered your coding skills or worked on open source projects? Tell me about them.*
- *Please share about a time when your work ethic inspired others. What happened?*

Communication / Interpersonal Skills:

- *Describe a time when you struggled to build a relationship with someone important. How did you overcome this?*
- *Tell me about a time you said no or disagreed with your leadership. How did the situation play out?*
- *Describe specific methods you've used to build relationships and gain the trust and respect of key stakeholders.*

STAR Table: Pick one question from the above question set and craft your response here:

Question:	
Situation	
Task	
Action	
Result	

Sample Behavioral Response Rating Rubric - Evaluate your above response based on this rubric:

Score	Rating Values	Definition
1	Significant Gap	Fails to demonstrate competency regardless of guidance provided. No good examples. Did not answer question
2	Below Requirements	Demonstrates competency inconsistently, even with repeated instruction or guidance from the interviewer. Few good examples. Incomplete or partial answer.
3	Meets Requirements	Demonstrates competency accurately and consistently on familiar procedures and shows need for supervisor guidance for new skills. Some prompting/guidance is needed to complete the answer from the interviewer. Has some good examples.
4	Exceeds Requirements	Demonstrates competency accurately and consistently in most situations with minimal guidance from managers. No guidance/prompting needed to answer by the interviewer. Answers include critically thought out and relevant details and/or examples.
5	Far Exceeds Requirements	Perfect answer. Demonstrates competency accurately, consistently, and independently. All points relevant and makes deep, reflective connections between behavioral questions and past experiences. All good examples.

Once you've given your response, use this space to take notes:

Scores:	
Pros:	
Grows:	

ADDITIONAL CONTENT

The STAR Method

Situation: Set the scene for what was happening in your example story

- Include only what's necessary - we tend to overshare when we're anxious
- Paint a clear picture of the situation you were in, capturing its complexities
- Briefly describe what happened, how the situation came about, who was involved and what the main issues was

Task: Describe what you had to do, or what you were responsible for in the situation

- Help the interviewer understand where you fit into the situation
- Clarify your role / responsibilities in the given situation
- Briefly describe the problem you needed to solve, whether this was required of you or something you took on of your own volition and how others were involved

Action: Describe the steps you took to address the problem

- Explain your problem solving process and how you applied it specifically to this situation
- Showcase your contribution, describe how you collaborated with others
- Share about the tools and resources you employed and why

Result: Share the results of your actions

- Describe the outcome of the situation and link it directly to the actions you took
- Frame the outcome in terms of impact, quantify that impact and include metrics if possible
- It's OK if the outcome wasn't what you expected - what did you learn? How did you adjust your approach?

Sample response to "passion-based" question, "Why did you decide to become a developer?"

SITUATION	I grew up playing video games and gradually became interested in knowing more about how games were designed and developed.
TASK	I started reading books, watching videos, diving into blogs, joining tech, gaming and programming clubs in school, as well as virtual communities on Twitch where I started my own gaming blog. I soon realized that my real passion was for coding and not just gaming. I started to self teach coding and game development, but I wanted to go deeper.
ACTION	I applied to and completed an intensive coding bootcamp - I've taken advantage of my passion for learning and capacity to pick up new tech quickly to gain a better understanding of modern design principles across multiple languages. Over the last few months I've written thousands of lines of code, studied hundreds of algorithms, and joined several software communities. My gaming blog is now focused on coding. I still love gaming and became a contributor for an open source gaming site.
RESULTS	What started as an interest in how games work has become a career in software development. I have a deeper appreciation for game development, but I'm even more excited about how the technical and software skills gained extend to nearly all industries. I'm excited to share this passion for learning and on-going professional development to be an impactful contributor to your team.

Rubric System

Many companies use scoring rubrics to assess candidates in interviews. Rubrics differ from company to company, but understanding how interviewing rubrics work can help you prepare strong responses to behavioral interview questions. A good interviewer will assess whether your answers demonstrate a strong grasp of a desired skill or professional attribute.

Interviewing is a skill that you can build with practice. An important aspect of being a strong interviewee is active listening and understanding the skill or professional attribute that's at the core of each question. Most interview questions are open-ended to allow the candidate to answer in the way they think is appropriate.

At this point you've already identified a list of strengths and professional success stories you'll highlight during an interview. With active listening you can quickly adapt your selected stories to the question at hand. This preparation is important so you don't need to come up with a story on the fly!

Sample Rubric for Interviews

Score	Rating Values	Definition
1	Significant Gap	Fails to demonstrate competency regardless of guidance provided. No good examples. Did not answer question
2	Below Requirements	Demonstrates competency inconsistently, even with repeated instruction or guidance from the interviewer. Few good examples. Incomplete or partial answer. Answers do not include sufficient details and/or examples. Makes no or few connections between behavioral questions and past experiences. Answers are unstructured
3	Meets Requirements	Demonstrates competency accurately and consistently on familiar procedures and shows need for supervisor guidance for new skills. Some prompting/guidance is needed to complete the answer from the interviewer. Has some good examples. Answered questions but makes superficial connections between behavioral questions and past experiences. Answers are structured
4	Exceeds Requirements	Demonstrates competency accurately and consistently in most situations with minimal guidance from managers. No guidance/prompting needed to answer by the interviewer. Answers include critically thought out and relevant details and/or examples. Answers are structured, concise
5	Far Exceeds Requirements	Perfect answer. Demonstrates competency accurately, consistently, and independently. All points relevant and makes deep, reflective connections between behavioral questions and past experiences. All good examples. Answers are structured, concise.

Sample responses to interview prompt, “Tell me about a time when a team project did not go as expected.”

SCORE	Behavioral example
1	When I worked for ABC company, the team I worked on was responsible for developing instructional materials and providing training for a new type of software. During training there was a glitch that came and we had to change the training materials.
2	When I worked for ABC company, the team I worked on was responsible for developing instructional materials and providing training for a new system that was being implemented across the country. I put together the training materials, and while we were getting them ready a system glitch occurred. I thought it was the way the system was supposed to work and didn't report it to anyone. During training this issue came up again and as a result they had to delay the implementation. Someone else on my team changed the training materials so that they were correct.
3	When I worked for ABC company, the team I worked on was responsible for developing instructional materials and providing training for a new system that was being implemented across the country. To do so, I supported my colleagues by incorporating their systems and operational procedures into new training materials. During this project there was a software glitch that didn't occur during initial testing, but came up during training. As a result, the program implementation was delayed and we needed to revise the training materials appropriately. I was able to help my team prepare the materials in time for the next round of systems training.
4	When I worked for ABC company, the team I worked on was responsible for developing instructional materials and providing training for a new system that was being implemented across the country. To do so, I worked with a colleague to interact with members throughout the organization, gaining insights about the new technology and associated operating procedures. As we worked on this project there was a software glitch that didn't occur during initial testing, but came up during training. As a result, the program implementation was delayed and my team needed to revise the training materials appropriately. We were able to have the materials ready for the next round of systems training.
5	When I worked for ABC company, the team I worked on was responsible for developing instructional materials and providing training for a new system that was being implemented across the country. To do so my team worked across the organization, gaining insights about the new technology and associated operating procedures. As a part of this team, I was self-directed and worked diligently to communicate and share resources to complete this task according to our project deadlines. However, there was a software glitch that didn't occur during initial testing, but came up during training. As a result, the program implementation was delayed and I needed to support my team as we revised the training materials appropriately and prepared our instructors to understand the impact of this change. We were able to have the materials ready for the next round of systems training. As a result of our efforts, the system was well received by our clients.