Career Services Assignment 4 – Soft Skill Interview Prep

Points possible: 50

Category	Criteria	% of Grade
Completeness	All requirements of the assignment are complete.	50
Quality	Answers show thought, proper grammar, and would be acceptable in most interview situations.	50

Instructions: Find a job post online for a role and company you would like to apply for. Answer the following questions as if you were being interviewed for the job. Research the STAR method of answering behavioral interview questions and where applicable, utilize the STAR method in answering the below questions.

How did you hear about this position? I was looking for software engineering positions, especially ones for companies that I found interesting. I noticed Applied Materials has a significant presence in the area I live so I searched and found the position on the company website.

What do you know about the company? I know that the company is one of the largest manufacturers of semiconductors and display equipment in the world. I know that the company spends about 2.5 billion dollars annually on research and development and that the company headquarters are in Silicon Valley. I also know there is a large facility located here in Flathead County which has office space for software engineers.

Why do you want this job? I like the idea of being part of something as big as Applied Materials. Being a part of a software engineering team here will allow me to grow and become the kind of team member who can really contribute to my work environment.

Why should we hire you? I have strived to always grow as a person. I like learning and I like feeling like I am contributing to the world around me. This is what allowed me to go back to school and get a math degree with a high GPA. This is what will lead me to be a successful software engineer at your company.

What is your greatest professional achievement? My greatest professional achievement was completing my undergraduate degree in mathematics. This is something that I spent years

working long days on some of the hardest subject material I had ever been exposed to in my life. I had to learn many concepts that few students ever make it to, and I exceeded in my coursework when working on these concepts. My background of learning was diverse with me doing research in fields such as cryptography, machine learning, group theory, mathematical physics, and others. After achieving something like this learning the computer science concepts that I picked up in a coding boot camp felt easy by comparison.

Describe a difficult work situation and how you overcame it. I became a graduate student in 2020, during the height of the COVID pandemic. This meant that as a graduate teaching assistant, I had to teach my classes in ways that previous graduate students never had to deal with. I rose to the challenge. I utilized new technologies such as teaching using OneNote and creating a hybrid style class with both online and in person available simultaneously. I excelled in my teaching to the point where the university allowed me to teach calculus classes my second year. Something they had never had their graduate teaching assistants do prior.

What are your goals for the future? My goals are to gain enough software engineering knowledge to become a software engineer 2 after a couple years and eventually a 3 and then team lead. I want to be heading projects as the lead of a team within the next decade. I know that to do this I will have to perform well in my duties as a junior engineer.

Why are you leaving your last job? I wanted to get a college degree and move into a more skill focused industry so that's what I am doing.

What is your salary expectation? I would be happy with a typical market salary for a junior software engineer. I know that something around $80,000 is typical upon entry into the market so I would find this perfectly reasonable.