# Interview Questions and Model Answers

## Q: Share an example where you had to follow up with a senior stakeholder (internal or external) who was not responsive. How did you phrase it? Did you escalate? If so, how?

In my previous role as a Java Spring Boot developer, I was waiting on API specification details from a senior product manager to proceed with integration work. The deadline was approaching, but I hadn’t received a response despite sending my initial query.  
  
For my follow-up, I kept my tone polite, clear, and respectful of their busy schedule. I wrote:  
  
Subject: Follow-up: API Specification for Payment Integration  
Hi [Name],  
I hope you’re doing well. I wanted to check in regarding the API specification for the payment module we discussed last week.  
Since we’re targeting a release by [date], having the details by [specific date] would help us stay on track. Please let me know if you’d like me to prepare any documentation or join a quick call to clarify requirements.  
Thanks for your time and support.  
Best regards,  
Salman  
  
When I still didn’t receive a response after two follow-ups spaced a few days apart, I escalated by looping in my project manager. I did this carefully to avoid making it sound like a complaint. I forwarded my last follow-up with a short note to my manager:  
  
Hi [Manager],  
I wanted to keep you informed — I’ve followed up twice with [Name] regarding the API specification (emails below) but haven’t heard back yet. Since this might impact our delivery timeline, could you please assist in getting this aligned?  
  
This escalation ensured that the request was prioritized without straining the working relationship. The product manager responded the same day, and we were able to complete the integration on time.

## Q: (Past Experience) Founders’ calendars often change last minute. Describe a situation where this happened and you had to rearrange multiple meetings/events. How did you communicate changes to each party? How did you ensure nothing important was dropped?

In my previous role, I supported a founder whose calendar often changed at the last minute due to urgent investor calls or client meetings. On one occasion, a high-priority investor call came up just 30 minutes before a day packed with back-to-back internal reviews and client demos.  
  
The first thing I did was quickly re-prioritize the schedule — identifying which meetings could be postponed, delegated, or shortened without impacting critical deliverables.  
  
For communication, I kept messages short, clear, and professional, tailored to each audience:  
- For internal team members:  
Hi [Name],  
Due to an urgent investor call, today’s review meeting with [Founder’s Name] will be rescheduled to [new date/time]. Please send me any critical updates so we can keep progress on track in the meantime.  
  
- For external clients:  
Hi [Name],  
Unfortunately, [Founder’s Name] has been called into a time-sensitive meeting. We truly value your time, so I’d like to reschedule our discussion to [new date/time]. Let me know if that works or if you prefer an alternate slot.  
  
To ensure nothing important was dropped, I:  
1. Maintained an updated master calendar that synced across devices.  
2. Used a color-coded priority system for meetings and deadlines.  
3. Sent follow-up confirmations for all rescheduled meetings.  
4. Logged every change in our CRM/meeting tracker so both I and the founder had a single source of truth.  
  
As a result, all meetings were rescheduled within an hour, clients appreciated the proactive communication, and the investor call went smoothly without disrupting other priorities.

## Q: You had access to sensitive information (e.g., acquisition talks, hiring decisions). How did you handle situations where others were pushing for details you couldn’t disclose?

In my previous role, I occasionally had access to confidential information, such as upcoming hiring decisions and strategic partnership discussions. When colleagues or external partners asked for details I couldn’t disclose, I maintained professionalism and protected confidentiality.  
  
For example, when someone directly asked me about a potential hire before it was finalized, I responded politely but firmly:  
I’m not able to share details at this stage, but I can let you know once it’s officially announced.  
  
I always redirected the conversation to non-sensitive topics or publicly available updates, so the interaction stayed positive. I understood that safeguarding such information was critical for maintaining trust, protecting the company’s interests, and avoiding any compliance or reputational risks.

## Q: What’s one specific improvement you made in your last EA/admin role that saved time, reduced mistakes, or improved communication? How did you measure its impact?

In my last EA role, I noticed that meeting requests, agenda files, and follow-up notes were scattered across emails, chats, and spreadsheets. This often caused delays and sometimes small mistakes, like missing attachments or outdated agendas.  
  
I implemented a shared calendar + centralized meeting tracker in Google Sheets that included:  
- Meeting date/time and link  
- Agenda and prep documents  
- Owner/responsible person for each action item  
- Status updates  
  
This cut down the time spent searching for details and reduced duplicate follow-ups.  
  
Measuring the impact:  
- Meeting prep time reduced by about 30% (from ~10 minutes to ~7 minutes per meeting).  
- Zero missed agendas or prep materials in the following quarter (compared to 3–4 the previous quarter).  
- Stakeholders reported faster responses and better clarity in a quick feedback survey I circulated after a month.

## Q: Walk us through how you’ve used Notion, Google Sheets, or Slack to manage CEO tasks. Give an example of a system you built or improved. How did it save time or prevent errors?

In my last role, I used Notion, Google Sheets, and Slack in combination to manage the CEO’s priorities and ensure nothing slipped through the cracks.  
  
One specific system I built was a Notion “CEO Command Center” that integrated:  
- A weekly priorities board (linked to company OKRs)  
- A calendar view of meetings and deadlines synced from Google Calendar  
- A task tracker with owner, due date, and status fields  
- Quick links to key documents  
  
For operational tracking, I paired it with a Google Sheets dashboard for KPIs and project milestones, which automatically updated from team submissions. On Slack, I set up dedicated channels for “Urgent Actions” and “Daily Brief,” so the CEO could see critical updates at a glance without digging through multiple threads.  
  
Impact:  
- Reduced meeting-prep time by ~40% because all context and documents were in one place.  
- Prevented missed follow-ups — the Notion tracker sent reminders automatically 24 hours before deadlines.  
- Stakeholders reported faster turnaround on CEO approvals since urgent requests were visible immediately in Slack.

## Q: In a parallel universe where financial constraints or considerations were not a factor, what career or pursuit would you choose to engage in, and what motivates your choice?

If money were no object, I would dedicate myself to building a global, open-access learning platform that teaches practical skills — from technology and entrepreneurship to creative arts — to people in underserved communities.  
  
What motivates this choice is the belief that access to knowledge can completely change someone’s trajectory. I’ve seen firsthand how learning a skill like coding or project management can open doors, create independence, and inspire innovation.  
  
In this parallel universe, my focus wouldn’t be on generating profit but on scaling impact, using technology to make high-quality education accessible to anyone, anywhere.

## Q: What KPIs would you track to measure the performance and quality of a customer support team at Share At Door Step, and why would you choose each of them?

For a customer support team at Share At Door Step, I’d track KPIs that measure efficiency, quality of service, and customer satisfaction, while aligning with the company’s mission of creating a smooth donor experience.  
  
1. First Response Time (FRT) – Measures how quickly the team replies to donor or NGO queries.  
Why: A quick first touchpoint builds trust and reduces drop-offs in donation scheduling.  
  
2. Average Resolution Time (ART) – Tracks how long it takes to fully resolve an issue.  
Why: Ensures donors and NGOs get their needs met promptly, improving the likelihood of repeat participation.  
  
3. First Contact Resolution (FCR) – Percentage of cases resolved in the first interaction.  
Why: Reduces donor effort and shows the team’s ability to handle requests efficiently.  
  
4. Customer Satisfaction Score (CSAT) – Simple post-interaction rating from donors and NGO partners.  
Why: Directly reflects how satisfied people are with the interaction, which is critical for positive word-of-mouth.  
  
5. Net Promoter Score (NPS) – Measures how likely donors/partners are to recommend SADS.  
Why: Gauges long-term relationship strength and the emotional impact of the support experience.  
  
6. Ticket Backlog – Number of unresolved tickets at any given time.  
Why: High backlog could mean bottlenecks or staffing issues that affect donor experience.  
  
7. Quality Assurance (QA) Score – Internal score based on script adherence, tone, and empathy in responses.  
Why: Keeps communication aligned with SADS’s brand voice and mission of creating a joyful donation experience.  
  
8. Donor Retention Rate – Percentage of donors who return after their first experience.  
Why: Indicates if customer support interactions are helping to create loyal, repeat donors.  
  
Tracking these KPIs together gives a balanced view — speed, accuracy, satisfaction, and long-term engagement — ensuring customer support not only solves problems but actively drives SADS’s mission forward.

## Q: Tell us about a time you had to manage multiple urgent requests from your CEO in the same hour. What was the context? How did you prioritize? What was the outcome?

One busy afternoon, I got three urgent requests from my CEO — all within the same hour. First, an investor presentation needed updates for a meeting starting in 45 minutes. Second, a partner call had to be arranged immediately. Third, the board meeting agenda needed finalizing for the next day.  
  
I took a quick breath and triaged — urgency, impact, dependencies. The investor deck came first; without it, the meeting couldn’t move forward. I delegated the partner call scheduling to a colleague right away to save time. The board agenda, while important, could wait until the immediate fires were out.  
  
By focusing on one priority at a time, I delivered the investor presentation with 10 minutes to spare, locked in the partner call for later that day, and still sent the finalized agenda before close of business.  
  
The CEO appreciated the quick turnaround, and the partner deal moved forward smoothly. This experience reinforced my habit of quick triage, clear delegation, and protecting focus even in high-pressure situations.