Personal Interview

Semester 6
Employability Skills (303193353)

Learning Objectives

- To understand different types of interviews

- To develop key soft skills for interviews

- To learn how to use STAR and PEEL frameworks effectively

- To practice structuring interview responses

Topics to be Covered

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Introduction

A personal interview is a vital step in the selection process that goes beyond qualifications, focusing on how a candidate presents their knowledge, communication, confidence, and personality.

- First impressions through body language and etiquette matter.

- Preparation and self-awareness greatly enhance performance.

- Plays a decisive role in academic, job, and professional opportunities.

Importance of Interview Skills

First impression matters

Enhanced Career Opportunities

Clear communication boosts your chances

Confidence Building

Effective Self-Presentation

Helps manage interview stress

Demonstrates professionalism & preparation

Competitive Edge in the Job Market

Steps for Interview Preparation

Self-assessment of strengths, weaknesses, and goals

Prepare a strong elevator pitch

Research the company (mission, culture, services)

Understand the job role and key responsibilities

Align skills with the job description

Review and be thorough with your resume

Prepare real-life examples to support resume points

Stay updated with industry trends and news

Maintain professional interview etiquette

Dress appropriately and be punctual

Types of Interviews

- HR Interview
- Technical Interview
- Panel Interview
- Behavioural Interview
- Case-Based Interview
- Stress Interview

Structured vs. Unstructured Interview

Aspect	Structured Interview	Unstructured Interview
Definition	Pre-planned set of standardized questions	Free-flowing, spontaneous questions
Format	Fixed order and format	Flexible, conversational
Focus	Specific competencies and job-related skills	Personality, creativity, adaptability
Evaluation	Objective and consistent; easy to compare	Subjective; difficult to compare
Time Efficiency	Time-bound and efficient	Can be time-consuming
Interviewer Control	High – interviewer guides the conversation	Low – candidate can influence direction
Candidate Experience	Predictable and formal	Informal and more relaxed
Usage	Common in corporate, government, or high-volume hiring	Startups, creative fields, or initial screening
Scoring	Often uses scoring rubric or checklist	Based on intuition or general impression
Example Question	"Describe a time you handled a conflict at work."	"Tell me about yourself – what brings you here today?"

Types of Interview Questions

1. Personal Questions

These assess personality, motivation, and values.

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Why did you choose MBA?
- What motivates you?
- How do you handle failure?

2. Academic Questions

Focused on education background and learning aptitude.

- Why did you choose your undergraduate major?
- Tell me about a project you worked on during your degree.
- Which subject did you enjoy the most, and why?
- How do you apply what you've learned in real life?

Types of Interview Questions

3. Career-Oriented Questions

Judge clarity of career goals and planning.

- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- What is your dream job?
- Why should we hire you?
- What do you know about our company/industry?
- How does this role align with your career goals?

4. Behavioral Questions

Test soft skills and situational behavior.

- Describe a time you led a team (Leadership).
- Tell me about a time you faced a conflict (Conflict resolution).
- Give an example of a goal you set and how you achieved it.
- Talk about a failure and what you learned.
- How do you manage multiple tasks under pressure?

Types of Interview Questions

5. Situational/Case-based Questions

Test decision-making and analytical thinking.

- What would you do if your team members disagreed with you?
- If your client is unhappy with your solution, how will you handle it?
- A company's profits are falling—what areas would you investigate?

6. Industry Knowledge/Current Affairs Questions

Assesses awareness and preparedness.

- What recent trends are shaping your industry of interest?
- Name a company you admire and why.
- What's your opinion on a recent business merger or economic policy?

Types of Interview Questions

7. Technical or Domain-Specific Questions

Role-specific questions

Computer Science: How does an operating system handle deadlocks, and what are common strategies to avoid them?

Chemical Engineering: What factors determine the efficiency of a distillation column in separation processes?

Biotechnology: How does CRISPR-Cas9 function as a gene-editing tool?

Cross-domain (applies broadly): How do you approach scaling up a lab-level process or system for industrial application?
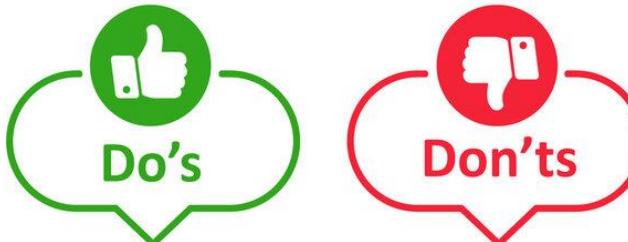
Do's and Don'ts during the Interview

Do's	Don'ts
• Dress professionally • Maintain eye contact • Be concise and confident	• Lie or exaggerate • Interrupt the interviewer • Use filler words excessively

Do's

Don'ts

Expectation of Recruiters

Strong communication skills

Analytical and problem-solving abilities

Teamwork and collaboration

Domain knowledge (specialization-specific)

Adaptability and learning attitude

Leadership and initiative

Ethics and professionalism

Industry and business awareness

Confidence and presentation skills

Time management and multitasking
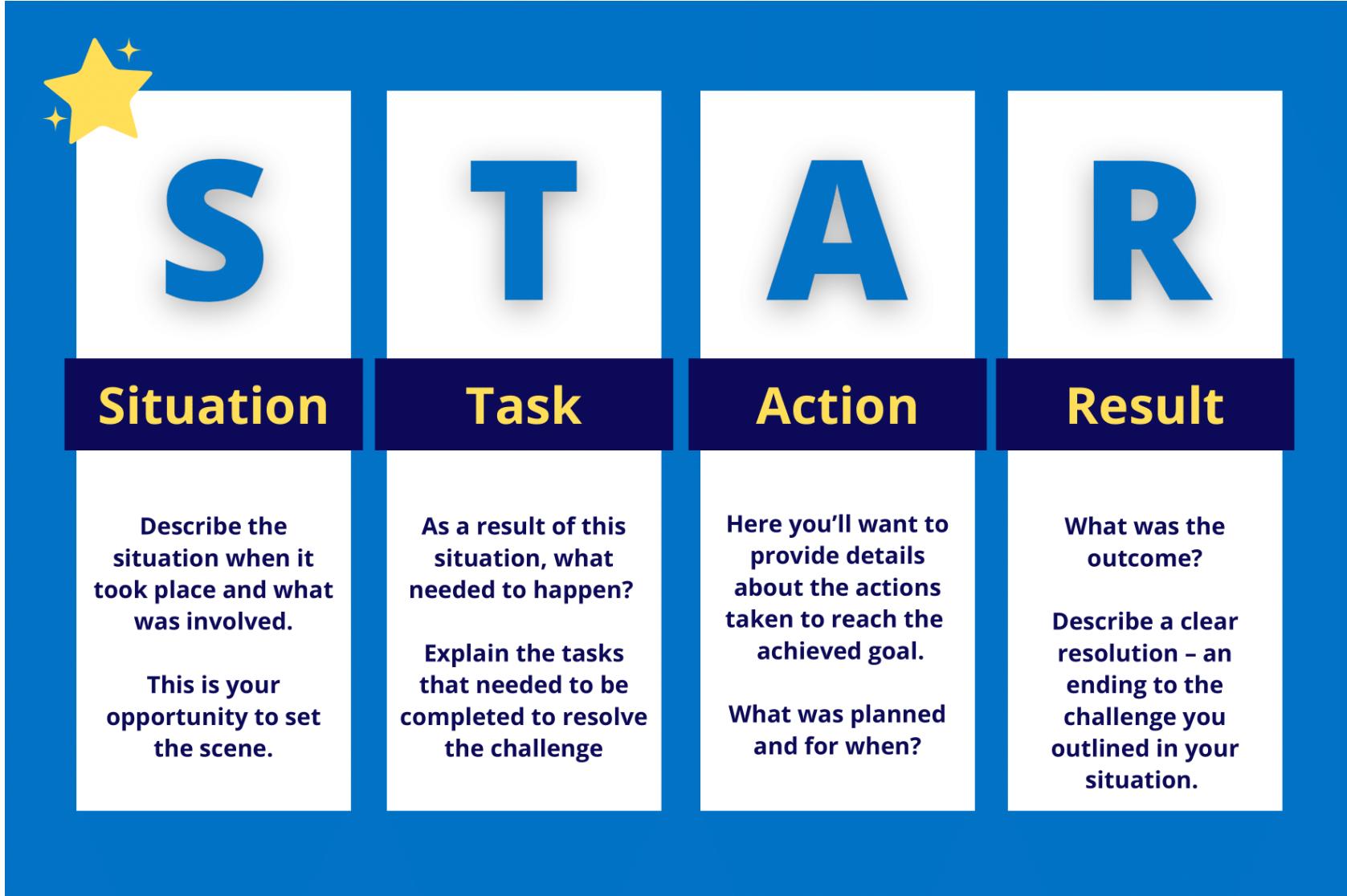
Response Models

Tools to structure responses

Help organize thoughts logically

Make answers concise and impactful

STAR Framework

S	T	A	R
Situation	**Task**	**Action**	**Result**
Describe the situation when it took place and what was involved.

This is your opportunity to set the scene. | As a result of this situation, what needed to happen?

Explain the tasks that needed to be completed to resolve the challenge | Here you'll want to provide details about the actions taken to reach the achieved goal.

What was planned and for when? | What was the outcome?

Describe a clear resolution – an ending to the challenge you outlined in your situation. |

STAR Framework

When to Use STAR: Behavioral Questions:

- "Tell me about a time when..."
- "Give an example of..."
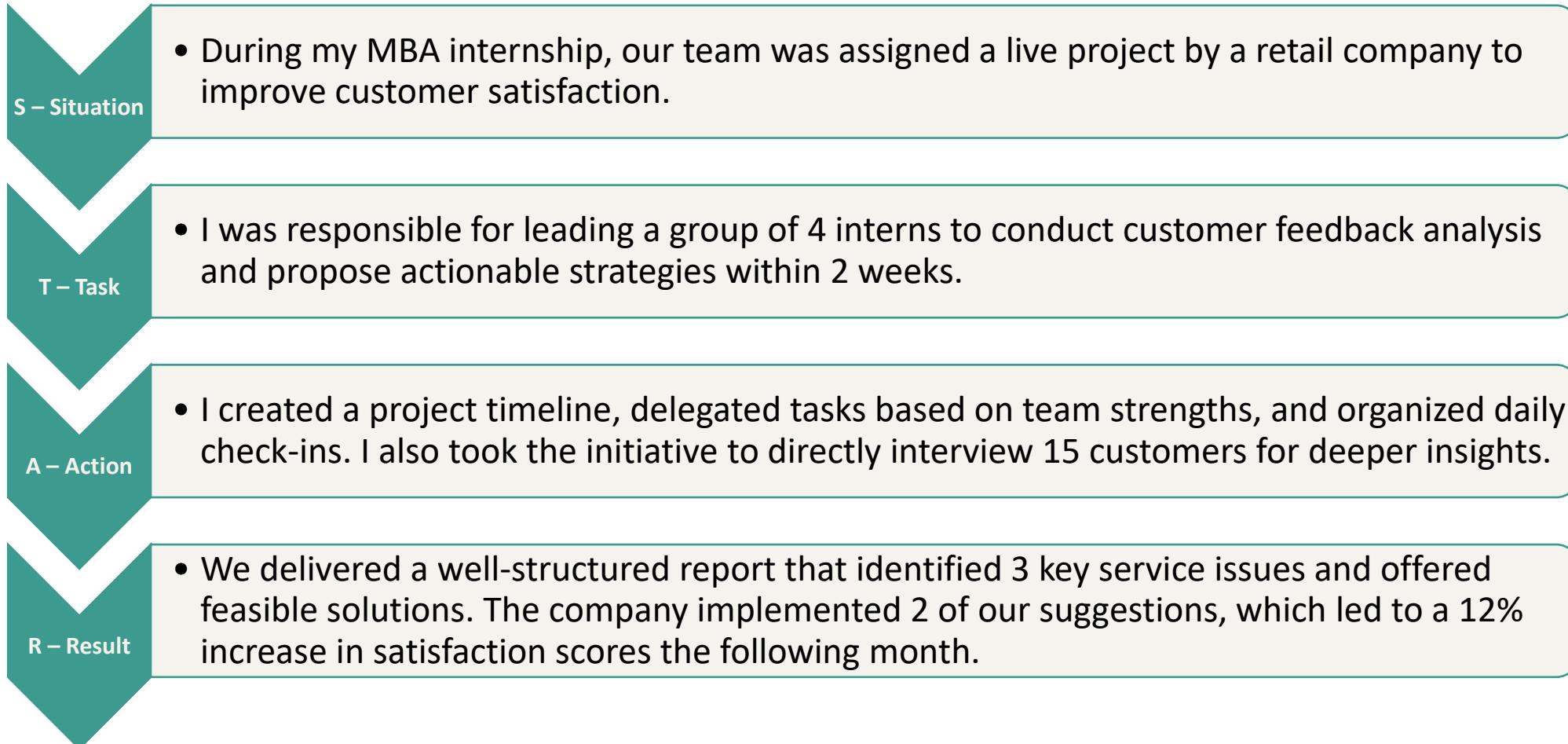
Why Use STAR?

- Provides clarity & structure
- Highlights problem-solving skills
- Makes storytelling easy to follow

Example

- **Situation**: Project deadline missed
- **Task**: Realign team roles
- **Action**: Introduced new time-tracking system
- **Result**: Project completed ahead of new schedule

Example: "Tell me about a time you demonstrated leadership."

S – Situation
- During my MBA internship, our team was assigned a live project by a retail company to improve customer satisfaction.

T – Task
- I was responsible for leading a group of 4 interns to conduct customer feedback analysis and propose actionable strategies within 2 weeks.

A – Action
- I created a project timeline, delegated tasks based on team strengths, and organized daily check-ins. I also took the initiative to directly interview 15 customers for deeper insights.

R – Result
- We delivered a well-structured report that identified 3 key service issues and offered feasible solutions. The company implemented 2 of our suggestions, which led to a 12% increase in satisfaction scores the following month.

Video Link: https://youtu.be/WRLF8ULhZmw?si=N_ubo0Hn_Ece6God

Activity: STAR Practice

- Question: "Describe a time you went beyond your responsibilities."

- Draft a STAR-based response

- Discuss in pairs

PEEL Framework

Point	Evidence	Explanation	Link
• State your main idea clearly • Answer the question upfront	• Provide facts, examples, or data • Support your point convincingly	• Explain how evidence supports your point • Clarify relevance to the question	• Connect back to the question or broader topic • Show why your point matters

PEEL Framework

When to Use PEEL

Abstract or opinion-based questions:

- "Why do you want to join us?"
- "What is your leadership style?"
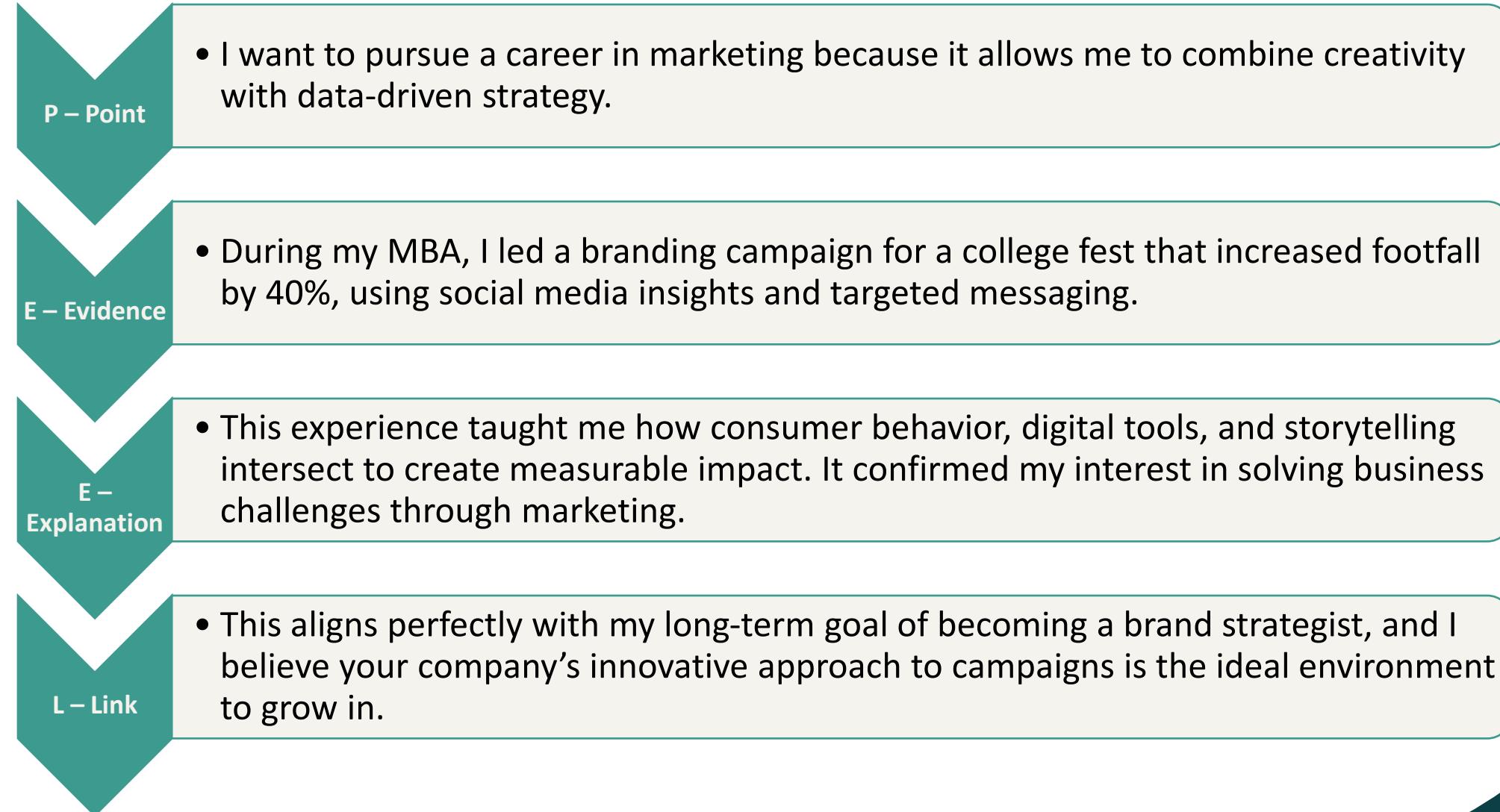
Why Use PEEL?

- Useful for structured verbal & written answers
- Makes arguments persuasive & clear
- Helps connect points logically

Example

- Point: I am a collaborative leader.
- Evidence: In my last internship, I led a team of 5…
- Explanation: This helped us achieve…
- Link: I believe collaboration drives innovation here too.

Example: Why do you want to pursue a career in marketing?

P – Point
- I want to pursue a career in marketing because it allows me to combine creativity with data-driven strategy.

E – Evidence
- During my MBA, I led a branding campaign for a college fest that increased footfall by 40%, using social media insights and targeted messaging.

E – Explanation
- This experience taught me how consumer behavior, digital tools, and storytelling intersect to create measurable impact. It confirmed my interest in solving business challenges through marketing.

L – Link
- This aligns perfectly with my long-term goal of becoming a brand strategist, and I believe your company's innovative approach to campaigns is the ideal environment to grow in.

Activity: PEEL Practice

- Question: "Why should we hire you?"

- Draft a PEEL-based response

- Discuss in pairs

STAR vs PEEL

STAR: Action-based, behavioral

PEEL: Opinion-based, reflective

Both: Structured, professional, impactful

Question Prompts for STAR/PEEL

- Behavioral (STAR):
  - Describe a team conflict you resolved
  - Give an example of a goal you achieved

- Abstract (PEEL):
  - What makes a good leader?
  - How do you handle stress?

Final Interview Tips

Research the company

Practice frameworks

Prepare your own questions

Be authentic

Mock Interview: https://youtu.be/PRuX-SebpbI?si=2GyOteQr2wEhxYci

Platforms for R&D before the Interview

1. Glassdoor

2. AmbitionBox (by Naukri)

3. Indeed

4. LinkedIn

5. Comparably

Conclusion

- Interviews are a platform to showcase your skills, values, and potential.
- Structured answers (STAR/PEEL) create clarity and impact.
- Preparation builds confidence and reduces anxiety.
- Different interview types need tailored approaches.
- Mastering interview skills improves overall professional readiness.
- Practice regularly to refine content and delivery.
- Reflect, prepare, and respond with purpose.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to
- Identify types of interviews and their formats.
- Demonstrate the use of STAR and PEEL frameworks in responses.
- Develop confidence through mock interviews.
- Analyze and critique peer responses using a structured rubric.
- Reflect on their interview preparedness and areas of improvement.

Thank You