



Prepare Your Interview Questions



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Preparing the right interview questions can be tricky. Use the following strategies to create questions that successfully measure candidates' technical, behavioral, and communication skills in a well-rounded way.

TAPR Method (Target, Ask, Probe, Reflect)

	Description	Example
TARGET	Every interview question should have a purpose. We call this the "Target". What information are you targeting? A piece of knowledge? A skill? An ability? A behavior? A motivation? An experience? A Competency?	Let's say that you're hiring a "Sales Representative". One of the target pieces of information you might want to collect could be: "Does the candidate have the tenacity necessary to chase down leads, deal with rejection and close sales?" (So, our Target in this case is the competency "Tenacity")
ASK	Once you know your "Target", don't ask "Give me an example of how tenacious you are." Start by asking the candidate to give you an example that illustrates a time when they had to exhibit a high level of tenacity.	Can you give me an example of a time in your career when you received repeated rejection during your sales process? i.e., candidate is average for someone in this role, but can do the job
PROBE	Don't stop with just a behavioral question – make them back up their answer with details! Ask follow-up questions that probe deeper into a candidate's response looking for details, results, problems, challenges, feedback, etc.	What wasn't working? How did you adjust your approach to improve results? What results did you achieve? How did this compare to your peers? What techniques did you use to stay motivated? Did they work?
REFLECT	Consider adding a question that forces the candidate to reflect on their answer. Ask how it could have been done differently, how they would approach it again in the future, what they learned or how they've applied it since, etc.	How have you applied your learnings from this situation more recently?

The finished question would look like this:

Can you give me an example of a time in your career when you received repeated rejection during your sales process? (What wasn't working? How did you adjust your approach to improve results? What results did you achieve? How did this compare to your peers? What techniques did you use to stay motivated? Did they work? How have you applied your learnings from this situation more recently?)

Tip: Use (Parenthesis) around the Probe and Reflection questions to indicate that these are to be used as follow-up questions.

Prepare Your Interview Questions cont.

Use this STAR Method to expand on competency and behavior-based questions.

The STAR method comes in handy during interviews because many candidates have trouble focusing their stories on information that will help them impress the interviewer. It helps candidates walk through their stories in a logical, clear manner with fully-formed beginnings, middles, and ends.

STAR Method (Situation, Task, Action, Result)

Situation

- What was the background or context of the situation?

Task

- What was the purpose, expectations, and/or challenges?

Action

- What did they do?
- Who was involved?
- What decisions did they make and why?
- How did they behave to and overcome challenges?

Result

- What did they accomplish?
- What was the impact?
- What did they learn and how would they do it differently, if applicable?

Prepare Your Interview Questions cont.

Examples of STAR interview questions

- What was your relationship with the best boss you ever had?
- What's been the toughest criticism you received so far in your career? What did you do with it?
- Can you tell us about a time you took initiative on a project or a task at work?
- How do you approach a task that you've never done before?
- Have you ever unintentionally offended or upset somebody? Can you describe the details?
- Can you tell me about the last time you had to act and there was no formal policy or procedure on how to do so?
- Can you tell me about a time that you let someone down? How did you handle it?
- Can you tell me about a time when it was especially important to impress a client? What did you do differently than normal?
- Was there ever a time you had to work with someone who's personality was very different from yours? Can you tell me about how that affected your work?
- Describe a time when you struggled to build a relationship with someone you work with. Did you overcome that?
- Describe your first job to me. How did you learn the ropes at the company?

These additional behavior-based questions assess for culture add

- How do your colleagues benefit from working with you specifically, as opposed to one of your coworkers?
- Tell me about a time when understanding someone else's perspective helped you accomplish a task or resolve an issue.
- What is your impression of our company's culture, values, and mission? How do you think we could improve?