Week 10 Career Homework (Week 11)

Elevator Pitch:

Hello, it's great to meet you! I'm currently looking for a job as a software developer. I have been an educator for many years. I have taught computer applications, science and educational technology. I've just completed an awesome coding bootcamp at Boise CodeWorks and I'm ready to get to work! I speak such languages as C#, JavScript, CSS & HTML. I'm currently working on a couple of full-stack projects that I would love to share with you. I'm looking to join a company that is technologically responsible and environmentally friendly. I love to see technology solving real-world problems. Thank you so much for your time, please keep me in mind for the dev position in your company.

InterviewPrep Summary: I need to work on these behavioral questions! Questions like these often seem irrelevant to my career experiences the past 18 years and so I draw a complete blank. I have taught elective courses which is akin to being on your own island in the school - no one else teaches your subject, so you have no one to prep with or purposefully team with. I will be coming up with talking points for each of these questions and I hope it will help me to stand out from my competitors. After graduation, I will also be working hard on edabit or other free coding classes to keep learning and increasing my coding skills, so I also hope this will help me to stand out in whiteboard challenges. I am not the fastest at picking this stuff up, but I am persistent, so I will do what I need to do to make myself stand out… eventually!

5 Questions:

Q: Give me an example of a time you faced a conflict while working on a team. How did you handle that?

S:In a chemistry class in college I was working with two students to create a mixture that we would use in the next day's lab. We worked long and hard on the mixture and finally got it done. As we were cleaning up and discarding unused chemicals, I grabbed our assignment mixture and dumped it down the drain. We were without any evidence of the work we had done and there was nothing for us to work with in the next lab. The professor said we would receive a zero. I was devastated that my mistake was costing my partners so much.
T: I had to fix the situation.
A: It was a religious school. I wrote a letter to the professor using many of the tenants of the religion - particularly to not punish people for the transgressions of others.
R: He relented and did not give us a zero on the lab assignments.

Q:Give me an example of a time when you did not meet a client's expectation. What happened, and how did you attempt to rectify the situation?

S:A parent was upset with me because her child in my homeroom class had a failing grade in art.
T: She had expected that as his homeroom teacher, I make sure that he didn't have any F's.
A: While it is my job to keep communication open between my home room students' parents and their teachers, I could not have done more for her student than I was already doing. But as a favor to her, I agreed to call home if her child did not return his progress reports with her signature on them.
R: She was less angry at the school (and me) when I suggested this, and was in agreement that after all our communication, passing the class was up to the child.

Q:Tell me about a time you failed. How did you deal with the situation?

S: In my first semester at college, I failed several tests in my chemistry class. I had never failed tests before.
T: I knew I needed to get help.
A: I signed up for free tutoring and felt confident that I was understanding the content; unfortunately, I kept failing tests. I struggled through the class and ended up with a C. A few semesters later, I wanted to erase that C from my transcript, so I retook the class.
R: I aced the class, my GPA went up and I was able to apply for scholarships.

Q:Sometimes it's just not possible to get everything on your to-do list done. Tell me about a time your responsibilities got a little overwhelming. What did you do?

S: As a teacher, you often have more to get done than there is time to do. Responsibilities and workflow get overwhelming towards the end of the year.
T: There are many extra activities going on, things to wrap up, and as a STEM teacher, there are many materials I have to deal with.
A: I often made a list, prioritize items, high, med, low, and get things done according to their priority
R: The most important things were accomplished, I always got a good review from my supervisors, and the less important things get done when there is time, or they are still waiting…
:)

Q: Tell me about a successful presentation you gave and why you think it was a hit.

Situation: I was the brand new ECS(Educational Computing Strategist) at the middle-school. The previous ECS had left a mess and the principal was not afraid to express her disappointment in him.
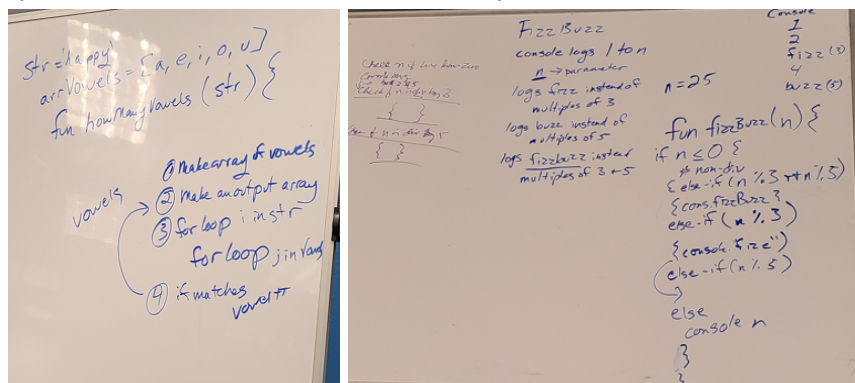Task: I had to deliver a presentation to the teachers about the technology - network accounts, equipment, gradebooks, etc.

Action: I was well prepared, made a Powerpoint, organized the equipment, and gave my presentation.
Results: I heard the principal had commented to her vp that she made the right choice in hiring me. It felt good.

<u>Whiteboard Challenges</u>
Shanker, Sam and I worked on FizzBuzz and VowelCount from <u>here</u>. It is very difficult to get started on these. My mind draws a blank, but once I started thinking about one thing I could do, then other things start coming to mind. It is nice to have a peer to bounce ideas off of - that would be so nice to have in an interview! :) It went well, Shanker knows a lot more code methods than me, but he does a good job of stepping back and letting us try what we think might work. It is good to hear that they are often looking for more of your thought process or pseudo code, because I can do that a lot better than I can write the actual code with perfect syntax.   Good experience - I definitely need to work on more of these to prep for interviews!

5 questions for me to ask them:

1. What is the vision for this company 10, 20 years down the road?
2. What growth opportunities are available in this company?
3. Who does your landscaping, do you have native landscaping, are you interested in having a more eco-friendly landscape?
4. What opportunities for learning new skills are provided?
5. How do I compare with other candidates you have been interviewing? (cringy! But you said we should ask this!) :)