PFL Academy

Teacher Guide: Chapter 15.4 — Interview Skills and Workplace Readiness

OVERVIEW

TIME	MATERIALS	PREREQUISITES
45-50 Minutes	Student Activity Packet, Interview Simulator	Chapter 15.3 (Job Application)

LESSON FLOW

5 min **THE CHALLENGE**

- Read Jamie's interview success story aloud or have students read silently.
- Discussion prompt: "What's the difference between saying 'I'm good under pressure' and actually demonstrating it with a specific example?"
- Preview how the STAR method creates compelling, memorable responses.

10 min **CORE CONCEPTS**

- Review the 5 key terms. Walk through each component of STAR with a simple example.
- Discuss different interview formats and how preparation strategies vary.
- Quick check: Have students identify which STAR component is often weakest (typically "Result"—emphasize including metrics).

25-30 min **APPLY IT**

- **Part A (12-15 min):** STAR Method Practice. Give students time to complete all four components. Walk through one strong example as a class before they write.
- **Part B (8-10 min):** Interview Format Strategies. Students identify strategies for different formats. Discuss body language behaviors to avoid.
- **Part C (5 min):** Questions for Interviewer. Emphasize avoiding salary/benefits questions initially.

10 min **CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING**

- Complete in class or assign as homework.
- Review Q3 (why STAR is effective) and Q5 (anxiety management) for deeper application.
- Preview Day 2 Learning Lab: Mock interviews and workplace professionalism scenarios.

DIFFERENTIATION

Support

- Provide a completed STAR example for reference during writing.
- Offer sentence starters for each STAR component.
- Allow students to work in pairs on the STAR practice.
- Create a checklist of interview dos and don'ts for reference.

Extension

- Have students create STAR responses for 3 different behavioral questions.
- Research industry-specific interview questions for their field of interest.
- Write a complete post-interview thank-you email.

Part A: STAR Method Practice

Responses will vary. Evaluate for: Specific, detailed situation (not generic); Clear explanation of personal task/role; Multiple specific actions taken (not just "worked hard"); Measurable result or concrete outcome. Deduct points for vague language like "It went well" or missing any component.

Part B: Interview Format Strategies

1. Virtual Interview strategies: Test technology beforehand, choose quiet/well-lit location, professional background, look at camera (not screen), dress professionally, minimize distractions.

2. Panel Interview strategies: Make eye contact with person asking question, include other panel members in responses, note each interviewer's name/role, address answers to full panel, build rapport with multiple people.

3. Body language to AVOID: Fidgeting/playing with objects, checking phone/watch, slouching, crossing arms, excessive hand gestures, avoiding eye contact, nervous laughter/filler words.

Part C: Questions for the Interviewer

Good questions demonstrate research and genuine interest. Examples: "What does success look like in this role after the first year?" "How would you describe the team culture?" "What are the biggest priorities for this department?" Avoid salary/benefits questions in initial interviews.

Check Your Understanding

1. B (Action)

2. B ("How much vacation time do I get?" - Save salary/benefits for later in process)

3. STAR is more effective because: (1) It provides concrete evidence of abilities rather than claims, (2) Specific examples are more memorable to interviewers, (3) It demonstrates how you actually handle situations, (4) It shows the results/impact of your actions with measurable outcomes.

4. Thank-you email elements: (1) Express appreciation for the opportunity, (2) Reiterate interest in the position, (3) Reference specific conversation points, (4) Address any questions not fully answered, (5) Keep concise and professional.

5. *Responses will vary. Look for specific strategies such as: thorough preparation/research, mock interview practice, deep breathing techniques, positive visualization, arriving early, having materials organized, pausing before answering questions.*

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

Misconception	Clarification
"I should memorize perfect answers."	Prepare key points and examples, but deliver naturally. Memorized responses sound scripted and don't adapt well to follow-up questions.
"Nervousness makes me look unprepared."	Some nervousness is normal and shows you care. Interviewers understand this. Focus on channeling nervous energy into enthusiasm.
"The interview is only about them evaluating me."	Interviews are two-way—you're also evaluating if the position and company are right for you. Asking thoughtful questions demonstrates this understanding.