Behavioral Prep

Agenda

1. **Elevator Pitches**
2. **S.T.A.R. Model**
3. **Five Key Stories**
4. **Behavioral Questions**
5. **In-Class Activity**

"Behavioral questions are important to include in interviews because past behaviors are most predictive about future behaviors."

- Nancy Branton, the CEO of the Workplace Coach Institute

Note: PM Interviews place a heavier emphasis on behavioral questions than Technical Interviews do.

1.

Elevator Pitches

How to form Elevator Pitches

What are elevator pitches?

A short description of yourself, your skills/interests, and how a company will benefit from hiring you for a position. It is your chance to make yourself memorable to recruiters and interviewers.
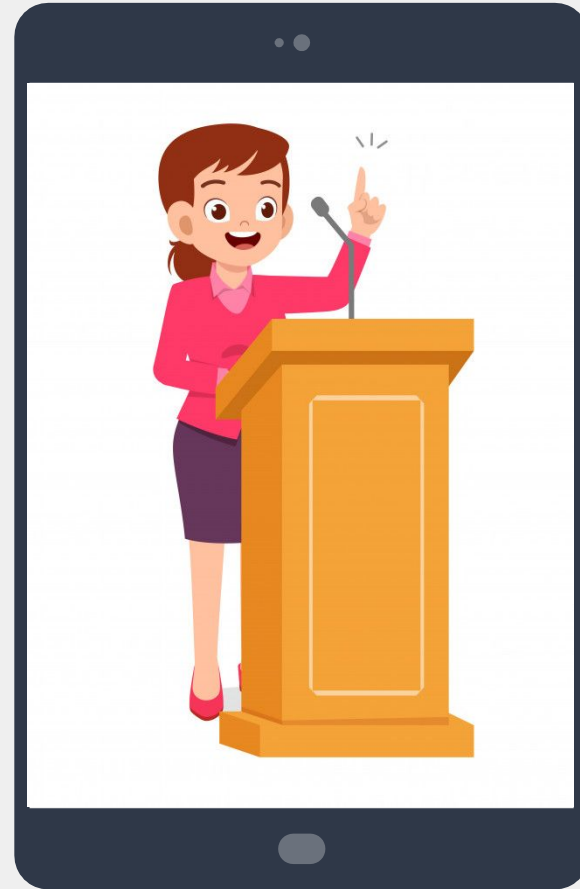
Start with an Introduction

- Begin your elevator pitch with an introduction of yourself
 - Full name, major, year, and what your interest is in the company
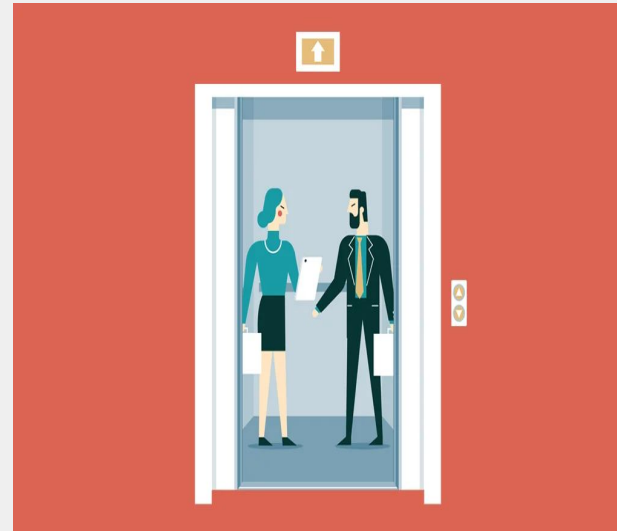
Hello!

My name is Casey Frey

- I am a **senior Computer Science Major** and **Spanish Language Minor** at the University of Maryland

- I am interested in pursuing **Product Management roles** at your company

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Provide a Summary of your Experience

- Provide a brief summary of your background
  - Work experience and your strengths/skills
  - Essentially a summarization of your resume
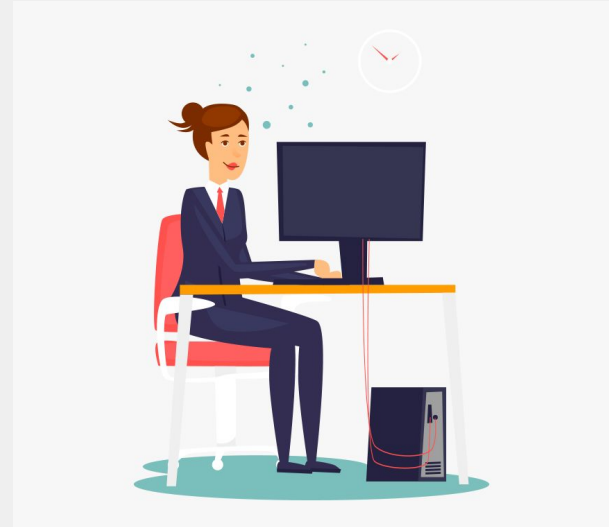
Sample Elevator Pitch

- I've previously interned at **Microsoft** my junior year as a **PM** where I …

- During my freshman year I interned at **LTS** which was not PM focused but had **PM aspects** to it such as …

- Through these internships I was able to expand on **[insert skill]**

Discuss your Interests

- Discuss your interest in a role at the company
  - In other words, let the company know what *you* are looking for
 - Mention how you will be a good fit for the company

Sample Elevator Pitch

- I am really **interested** in the work your company does **[insert what company does]**

- I believe that I will be a **great addition** to the team as a result of my **past experience**

- The **skills** I acquired from **[insert past internships]** will be transferable to **[insert company]**

- I am passionate about **[PM related activity]** and will bring that to **[insert company]**

- **[Close with memorable statement about yourself]**

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Elevator pitch during COVID-19!

- Keep your camera ON (if you can)!!
  - Online conversations are painful if you're just talking to a screen
- Keep your surroundings distraction free
- Have a notepad for noting down anything your interviewer says you want to get back to
- Keep your eyes on the camera -> not on your monitor or yourself
  - No matter how good you look :)
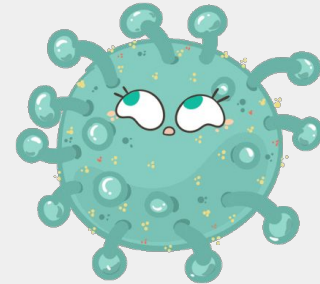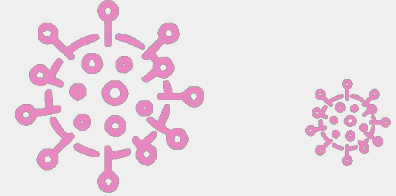
2.

S.T.A.R Model

Situation, Task, Action, Result

Breakdown of S.T.A.R Model

Situation

Set the stage for the story by sharing context around the situation or challenge you faced. Share any relevant details.

Task

Describe your responsibility or role in the situation or challenge. In other words, explain the task you had to complete.

Action

Explain how you handled the situation or overcame the challenge. If the action was carried out by a team, focus on your efforts.
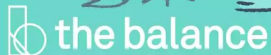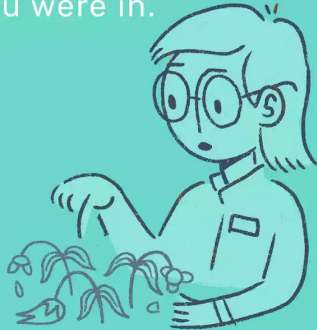
Result

What was the outcome you reached through your actions? If possible, quantify your success or provide concrete examples of the effects of your efforts.

STAR Technique
★ ★ ★ ★ ★

(Prepare)
Listen to the question and think of an event.

Result
Close with the result of your efforts.

Situation
Describe the event or situation that you were in.
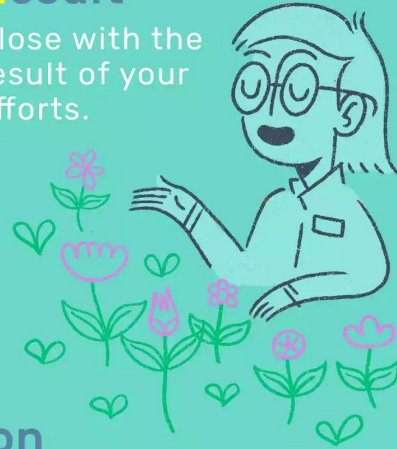
Task
Explain the task you had to complete.
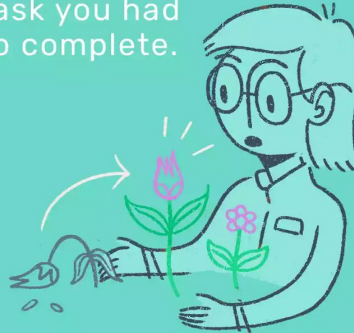
Action
Describe the specific actions you took to complete the task.

the balance

Sample Interview Questions where S.T.A.R can be used

Work Problem

Share an example of a time when you faced a difficult problem at work. How did you solve this problem?

Under Pressure

Describe a time when you were under a lot of pressure at work. How did you react?

Mistake

Tell me about a mistake you've made. How did you handle it?

Difficult Decision

Share an example of a time you had to make a difficult decision. What did you do?

Failure

Share an example of a time when you failed. What did you learn from the experience?

Set Goal

Tell me about a time when you set and achieved a specific goal.

Example of S.T.A.R Model being used

Situation

In my last **internship** my team was at a **disagreement on how to structure our project**. My team members and I had different approaches and perspectives to this project which caused stress for our team and affected our morale.

Task

As a team leader, it was my role not only to **ensure my team met our deadlines** but also to **keep my team motivated** and **communicate goals** for the project.

Action

To get my team on the same page, I **allowed everyone to list their ideas** and as a team we went over the pros and cons of each. I decided to **prioritize** our pros and cons list based on our most critical customer requirements.

Result

By creating a pros and cons list with my team, we were able to **select the best idea** for our goal. This allowed us to come to an agreement while still being **able to hear everyone else's perspectives**.

3.

Five Key Stories

Leadership, Teamwork, Successes, Challenges, Mistakes/Failures

The Master Stories

Leadership → Teamwork → Successes → Mistakes/Failures → Challenges

Homework: Should have a different story prepared for each of these categories.

PM Terms

- **Stakeholder consensus**
  - If you worked for a client
- **Customer empathy**
  - Being close to users in general of a project you worked on
- **Cross-functional teams**
  - Working alongside different teams

- **Requirements & Documentation**
  - Gathering requirements and documenting them
- **Agile/Scrum**
  - Keeping track of your progress
- **KPIs**

4.

Behavioral Questions

Example PM Behavioral Questions

Example Behavioral Questions

1. Tell me about a time you had to influence someone.
2. Tell me about a time you used data to make a decision.
3. How do you spend your free time?
4. Tell us about a time when you overcame failure.
5. How do you approach telling someone "no?"
6. How would you prioritize resources when you have two important things to do but can't do them both?

AMA with Desiree, Sriv, & Annie

When: Thursday, Sept. 17th from 4-5PM

Where: Zoom link will be posted on Slack & Elms

Class Activity: Elevator Pitches