

Redouane 1-on-1 Interview Practice

Quick recap

Mansour conducted a mock interview with Redouane to help him prepare for an upcoming behavioral interview at SEL. They discussed the STAR interview format, emphasizing the importance of painting the pain, being specific about situations, and clearly delineating tasks, actions, and results. Mansour provided feedback on Redouane's mock answer about explaining technical concepts to non-technical customers, suggesting improvements to make the example stronger and more impactful. They also touched on the importance of appearance in interviews and the art of answering behavioral questions effectively.

Next steps

-  [Mansour: Email Redouane the interview preparation notes and competency list by tonight](#)
-  [Redouane: Review the notes/competencies sent by Mansour and prepare examples for key competencies before tomorrow's 2pm interview](#)
-  [Redouane: Send Mansour a text/update after the interview tomorrow to report how it went](#)

Summary

Unresponsive Communication Attempt

Mansour attempted to communicate with Michael but did not receive a response.

STAR Interview Format Preparation

Mansour and Redouane discussed interview preparation, focusing on the STAR interview format. Mansour explained the importance of the STAR format in predicting future behavior based on past performance. They went over the components of the STAR format: situation, task, action, and result. Mansour emphasized the need to spend adequate time on each component and not rush through the interview. They also briefly discussed technical issues with Redouane's camera and audio setup.

Enhancing STAR Interview Techniques

Mansour and Redouane discussed interview techniques, focusing on how to effectively present experiences using the situation-task-actions-results (STAR) framework. Mansour emphasized the importance of spending adequate time on each component of the STAR method, particularly the situation, and advised painting a vivid picture of the challenges faced. He stressed the need to take personal ownership of actions and present them in a sequential order, using numbered steps if necessary, to create a clear narrative. Mansour also highlighted the value of previewing the number of actions taken and practicing storytelling to engage the interviewer effectively.

Enhancing Behavioral Interview Techniques

Mansour and Redouane discussed the STAR method for behavioral interviews, emphasizing the importance of structuring responses with a clear situation, task, action, and result. Mansour highlighted the need to include metrics and specific outcomes to demonstrate the impact of actions and avoid generic responses. He also introduced two additional elements: the biggest lesson learned and the "go back in time" question, which help showcase reflective thinking and process improvement. Mansour advised practicing these elements to enhance interview performance and avoid being prompted for details, as this can impress interviewers and lead to better evaluations.

Five-Star Interview Rating System

Mansour and Redouane discussed a five-star rating system for interviews, where appearance and delivery are important but content and impact are crucial. Mansour explained that a one-star rating is for a poor performance, while a five-star rating is for exceeding expectations and spreading impact beyond the original task. They also touched on the importance of a professional appearance during virtual interviews, such as having a clean background and proper lighting.

Behavioral Interview Strategy Discussion

Mansour advised Redouane on how to approach behavioral interview questions, suggesting that when given a choice between examples with or without the company's product, it's better to use the stronger example, even if it's not directly related to their product. Mansour recommended joining Toastmasters to improve communication skills, which Redouane found interesting but noted he doesn't have issues speaking in front of people.

Engineering Interview Preparation Strategies

Mansour advised Redouane on the engineering interview process, emphasizing the importance of preparation and effective communication. He explained the phone screen's purpose, highlighting

the need to show enthusiasm for the company and avoid mentioning deal breakers until receiving an offer. Mansour also stressed the significance of becoming the top candidate before negotiating any terms, such as relocation, to leverage the offer.

Behavioral Interview Preparation Strategy

Mansour and Redouane discussed behavioral interview preparation, focusing on John Deere's approach to technical and behavioral interviews. Mansour advised Redouane to keep the introduction brief and to emphasize specific experiences during the interview. They practiced several mock interview questions, including ones about customer interactions, technical ownership, and integrity. Mansour provided feedback on Redouane's responses and emphasized the importance of tailoring answers to the company and role.

Technical to Sales Career Transition

Mansour conducted an interview with Redouane, discussing his background in mechanical and electrical engineering, as well as his experience in utility scale protection and control systems for renewable energies. Redouane expressed his interest in transitioning to sales roles, citing his passion for bridging the gap between technical and business aspects. The interview then moved to a behavioral question about explaining complex technical issues to non-technical customers, where Redouane shared his experience with international customers during factory acceptance testing.

Interview Feedback and Improvement

Mansour provided feedback to Redouane on his interview response, highlighting areas for improvement including the need for a clearer structure with specific examples, more detailed explanation of actions and results, and the importance of painting the stakes and impact of the situation. Mansour suggested focusing on one specific incident rather than general job responsibilities, and emphasized the need to make results measurable and tangible rather than vague. Redouane acknowledged the feedback and expressed appreciation for the guidance.

Interview Preparation and Support

Mansour advised Redouane on his upcoming interview, suggesting he focus on 6-7 key competencies rather than trying to answer every question, as this would prevent burnout. Mansour promised to email Redouane notes and guidance within 45 minutes to an hour, and Redouane expressed confidence about his interview scheduled for the next day. They briefly discussed their religious backgrounds and shared plans to meet in person when Mansour visits Des Moines in the future.