

INTERVIEW STORYTELLING

Master the "Painting the Pain" Framework

Turn good STAR stories into unforgettable ones

✗ THE MISTAKE

Most candidates rush through their interview stories.

They speed through the **Situation** like it's a boring intro... then wonder why their "amazing results" don't land.



The **bigger** the monster you slay,
the **bigger** the hero you become.

Your results are only as impressive as the problem they solved.

✗ WEAK SITUATION

"We had a project running behind schedule, so I helped get it back on track..."

- ✗ No stakes. No tension. No reason to care.
- ✗ The interviewer has no context for why your actions mattered.

✓ PAINTED PAIN

- "Our flagship product launch was 6 weeks behind"
- "The CEO was reviewing our progress daily"
- "Every week of delay cost \$200K in market opportunity"
- "Two team leads had already quit from the pressure"

THE FRAMEWORK

3 Ways to "Paint the Pain" in Your STAR Stories

Quantify

Tension

Contrast

STEP 1

Quantify the Stakes



Revenue at risk



Customers or users affected



Team members impacted



Timeline pressure & deadlines

STEP 2

Show the Tension

- ? Who was watching?
(Executives, clients, board?)
- ? What was the consequence of failure?
(Lost contract, layoffs, reputation?)
- ? Why couldn't the "obvious" solutions work?
(Constraints, failed attempts?)

STEP 3

Create the Contrast

- The **bigger** the problem you describe...
- The more **impressive** your solution becomes...
- Without changing a **single fact**.

TIME SPENT ON SITUATION

Most People

10%

Rush to solution

Top Performers

40%

Paint the pain

They let the interviewer *feel* the weight of the problem before revealing how they solved it.

Before you explain what you **DID**...
Make them understand why it
MATTERED.



Slay bigger monsters.

Become a bigger hero.



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