



INTERVIEW COACH CHECKLIST

Materials:

- Student's resume, application information, phone screen, Online Learning
- Interview coach checklist
- Interview Tips, Sample Interview Questions
- CliftonStrengths overview

MEETING #1 - PHONE MEETING (45-60MINS)

Provide guidance on the candidate resume

- Layout: Format, consistent, easy to read, perfect grammar and spelling.
- Objective: Specific to the desired job; describes skills and experience as it relates to the job.
- Education: GPA, "Responsible for X% of tuition and expenses", Expected Graduation Date.
- Chronologically accurate - dates make sense.
- ACTION VERBS and KEYWORDS to describe their experiences. Results if possible.
- Relevant experience / activities stand out!
- Includes skills, activities, honors, leadership, projects if appropriate.
- set timeline for the candidate to resubmit resume to coach for final approval.
- Ensure their UpTurnships candidate experience is listed in the Work Experience section (details provided to them in the online learning module)**

Review Field / Job Preference:

- Discuss the fields and jobs that are best suited for their background and interests.

Review of Online Learning

- review online learning and discuss answers to common questions.

MEETING #2 - VIDEO or IN-PERSON MEETING (45-60mins)

Follow up on resume revisions

- ensure the candidate has completed resume following the suggestions you provided on the phone call.
- the student must get interview coach final approval of resume - candidate sends resume to Melanie.***

Prepare Students to Interview (see additional information below)

- Discuss how they will prepare for an interview:
 - o How to research company, job, the interviewer (LinkedIn).
 - o Know the job requirements and how they meet them.
 - o Answers to common questions. Are they prepared?
 - o Practice STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) for framing stories - rewatch video from Online Learning.
 - o Review their questions to ask the interviewer.
- Review CliftonStrengths and how to incorporate their strengths into interview responses.
- Roleplay, provide feedback, **Tell them to keep preparing and to PRACTICE!**
 - o Tell me about yourself (60 seconds to tell their story – past, present, future – this has to be strong!)
 - o What is your greatest strength? Greatest weakness?

- o Why should I hire you?
- o What has been your biggest challenge (or difficulty, or problem overcome)?
- ☐ Coach on making a good first impression:
 - o What will they wear to interviews? Talk about options.
 - o Talk about the importance of a firm handshake. Energy, smile, eye contact!
- ☐ Tell them to review the document called "*I have an Interview*", which will be attached to the email with their interview information.
- ☐ Remind them to send a thank you note after the interview - **MANDATORY.**

Encourage and support them!

Closing and Follow-up

- ☐ Discuss how the two of you will communicate regarding upcoming interviews.



Preparing the Candidate For Interviews

PREPARING TO ANSWER BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS - USING THE STAR METHOD

The STAR method is an effective format for describing your stories that helps the interviewer understand specifically what you have done. Interviewers are familiar with the STAR method, and many will expect you to use it when answering interview questions.

Situation: The backstory—the who, what, where, and when

Task: Describes your exact role in the situation, and your plans to solve the problem

1. What was your exact part, or the expectations, in this situation?
2. How were you able to turn this situation into an opportunity?

Action: What exactly you did as a result of the situation/task

1. What were the steps you took to solve this challenge?
2. How did you think about any problems?
3. How did you overcome roadblocks and follow through to get results?
4. Was there anything unique about your actions/method worth mentioning?

Results: Used to sum up the tangible results of your work

1. How were things better off because of what you did?
2. What lessons did you learn?
3. Try to use numbers that show growth, or scale, or positive change
4. May be a quote from a credible source about how well you handled the situation/task

A SITUATION and a TASK may be the same thing. You can combine them, or use one.

STAR Example #1

A candidate for a marketing role might be asked: “Tell me about a time that you solved a problem within a tight deadline.”

- **Situation** – “We were due to deliver a presentation on our new product to a group of 30 potential customers and Stuart, the guy due to deliver it, got stuck in traffic.”
- **Task** – “It was my responsibility to find an alternative so it didn’t reflect badly on the company and we didn’t miss the opportunity.”
- **Action** – “I spoke to the event organizer to find out if he could change the presentation order. They agreed so we bought ourselves some time. I contacted Susan, another member of the team. She agreed to drop what she was doing and head to the event.”
- **Result** – “Stuart didn’t make the meeting on time but we explained the problem to the attendees and Susan’s presentation went well – a bit rough around the edges but it was warmly received. Stuart managed to get there for the last 15 minutes to answer questions. As a result, we gained some good contacts, at least two of which we converted into paying clients.”

Behavioral Interview Questions (Use STAR method to answer)

*Go over 3-4 with the candidate during your meeting and encourage them to prepare answers to all other questions on their own

- Describe a difficult situation you faced and how you overcame it.
- Tell me about a time you went above and beyond the call of duty.
- Describe a situation where you have used your leadership skills.
- Tell me about a stressful situation you experienced and how you handled it.
- Give an example of a goal you reached and how you achieved it.
- Tell me about the last time something significant didn't go according to plan at work.
- Tell me about the biggest change that you have had to deal with.
- Tell me about a mistake you made and how you handled it.
- How have you prioritized when you worked on multiple projects?
- Describe a decision you made that wasn't popular and how you handled it.
- Tell me about one of your favorite experiences working with a team and your contribution.
- Tell me about the last time you've been satisfied, energized, and productive at work.
- Tell me about a time when you were asked to do something you have never done before.
- Describe a situation in which you embraced a new system, process, technology, at work?
- Give an example of when you worked with someone who was difficult to get along with.
- Tell me about a time you communicated with someone who didn't understand you.

PREPARING TO ANSWER OTHER COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

*Go over 3-4 with the candidate during your meeting and encourage them to prepare answers to all other questions on their own

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What is your greatest strength?
3. What is your greatest accomplishment?
4. How would your professors or co-workers describe you?
5. Why should I hire you?
6. Tell me about a time when you had to establish priorities.
7. Describe a difficult (or stressful) situation you faced and how you overcame it.
8. Tell me about a time you disagreed with someone at work and how you handled it.
9. Tell me about a mistake you made and how you handled it.
10. Give me an example of how you worked on a team.

Develop your answer to "What is your greatest weakness (or failure)?"

There are several strategies for answering this question effectively.

Discuss Non-Essential Skills

Come up with an honest shortcoming which is not essential for that job. If you are applying for a finance position, you might share that you are not particularly good at group presentations, but your strength is one-on-one communication.

Mention Skills You Have Improved (that are not essential to the job)

Describe your initial level, the steps you've taken to improve, and your current, improved level. If being organized isn't your strongest point, explain how you implemented a time management system that really helped your organization skills. Now you can meet deadlines and can manage priorities.

Turn a Negative Into a Positive

A sense of urgency to get projects completed, or wanting to triple-check every item, can be turned into a strength. Use it to show you are a candidate who will make sure that the project is done on time and your work will be close to perfect.

PREPARING QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

*Ensure candidate is prepared with 2-3 questions that they are comfortable asking in an interview.

Appropriate

- Questions about the company and job
- Follow-up questions about yourself
 - How well do my qualifications match those you are looking for?
 - What else I can tell you to provide a better picture of my qualifications?
- Next steps in the process

Sample questions to ask in an interview:

- How would you describe the responsibilities of the position?
- How would you describe a typical day and week in this position?
- Who does this position report to?
- How is the department structured?
- How has the company changed over the last few years?
- What key challenges does the (company, department, this role) face?
- What are the company's plans for growth and development?
- Why did you choose to work for this company?

Inappropriate

- Pay or benefits (first interview only)
- Information that has already been provided or that is on their website