

STAR INTERVIEW PRACTICE SESSION

Turn your experiences into structured stories



Upcoming MinT workshops

Live Session Topics (dates posted to MinT dashboard 2-3 weeks before)

November	Overview of Tech Roles
December	Resume Review Workshop
January	Tech Interview Practice Sessions LinkedIn Best Practices (mentor-led)
February	Screening/Behavioral Interview Prep Immigration Info Session (optional) Recruiter office hours
March	Tech Sales overview (mentor-led) Recruiter office hours STAR Interview Practice Session
April	Career Paths Panel Recruiter office hours
May	Working in Tech Recruiter office hours
June	Program wrap-up Recruiter office hours

Also available:

- Recordings of past workshops
- 1-on-1 resume review and interview practice with experts (Spring 2023)

What we'll cover today

- Meet our panelists
- Types of behavioral questions
- STAR method
- Mock interview questions
- Q&A

Meet Our Panelists

Charles Mendelson



Associate Data Engineer,
Data Operations at
PitchBook Data

Interview tip: Voice warmup exercises "Thomas Attatamus took two tees to tie two tops to two tall trees"

Lezlie Browder



Chief Solutionist,
Eugene Alexander Research
& Response

Interview tip: pre-interview "mellow-out" including breathing, stretching, reading Self Summary Sheet out loud (see Appendix)

Ling He



Senior Program Manager,
Microsoft

Interview tip: Take a shower and then pray, feel that I am blessed

Nick Nesbitt



Cloud Technical Recruiter,
Google

Interview tips: 1. Do a mock interview with someone with little/no knowledge of your field—are your answers descriptive enough?
2. Know your resume well; be ready to speak to each responsibility!

Types of Behavioral Questions

Getting to know you

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your career goals?/Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- Share a time when you set a goal for yourself and achieved it.

Working with others/Communication

- Give me an example of a time you faced a conflict while working on a team.
- Tell me about a time when you made a mistake that affected others. How did you handle it and what was the outcome?
- Tell me about a time when you went above and beyond to deliver an excellent outcome for a colleague, manager, or customer.

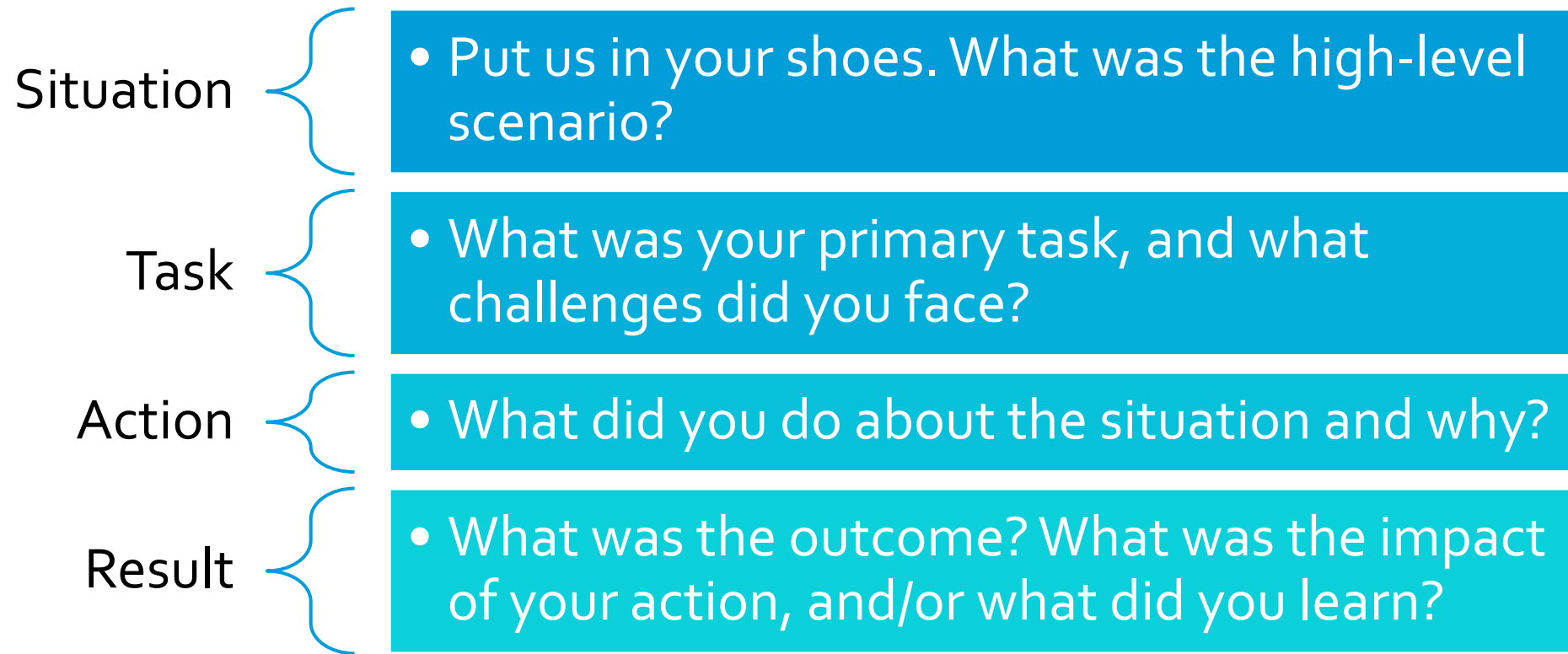
Time management/Flexibility

- What do you do when there's more on your to-do list than you have time to complete?
- Tell me about a time when you had to manage multiple responsibilities.
- Tell me about a time when you had to learn a new skill or a new job. How did you approach this?

Problem solving

- Give me an example of a difficult problem you solved.
- Tell me about a time a project went wrong. What happened and what did you do?

The STAR Method



Expect follow-up questions!

Question 1: Charles

How do you learn new skills?

Situation

Task

Action

Result

Question 2: Lezlie

Tell me about yourself.

Situation

Task

Action

Result

Question 3: Ling

Give me an example of a time you faced a conflict while working on a team.

Situation

Task

Action

Result

Question 4: Nick

Tell me about a time when you made a mistake that affected others. How did you handle it and what was the outcome?

Situation

Task

Action

Result

Resources

- Technical interview workshops – recordings are on the MinT dashboard
- Search “behavioral interview questions” and practice using STAR with your mentors and classmates
- Review job advice sites like askamanager.org (click on “interviewing” under “Topics” or search “behavioral interview questions” in the site)
- Search “interview red flags” for warning signs about company/team culture
- Search “EEOC illegal interview questions” for questions you should not be asked in interviews

Q&A

Appendix: “Mellow-out” routine and Self Summary Sheet

- Credit: Lezlie Browder
- 10 minutes breathing exercise - remove doubt
- 5 stretching - reassure confidence
- Read [in front of mirror; projecting loudly - one-page Self Summary Sheet]
 - Self Summary Sheet (information prepared to speak about)
 - TMAY [present --> past --> --> future]
 - Job Description & Organizational Goals
 - Key Skills - list four with 1 to 2 bullets
 - STAR
 - Overcame a challenge
 - Worked on something significant/interesting
 - Made a mistake
 - Why this position excites me
 - Why do you want to work here
 - CLOSING STATEMENT
 - *** thank you for the opportunity to speak with you: what are the next steps in the hiring process

FYI: Illegal Interview Questions

- In the United States, “it is illegal to discriminate against someone (applicant or employee) because of that person's **race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information.**” (Source: [EEOC](#))
- Interview questions should be relevant to the job and avoid topics that may lead to discrimination.
- Some options for responding to illegal questions:
 - **Answer** if you are comfortable and if you sense positive intent
 - **Avoid** by answering the implied question (can you work the required hours?) instead of the direct question (do you have children?)
 - **Alert** the interviewer to your concern by asking how the question relates to the position
- Follow up with the recruiter if questions made you uncomfortable!
- [Examples of legal vs. illegal questions](#)