

THE SECOND INTERVIEW

POWER INTERVIEWING

PROFESSOR P



Preparing People for a Competitive Workforce.



Make a bold statement as you begin the interview

It's the day of your face-to-face interview. You just got out of the shower, you're sopping wet, and you begin shadowboxing in front of the mirror to get excited for your big moment. But before you finish and head out, I have one question for you. When you meet the hiring manager for the first time, will you be able to complete the following statement? "After giving much thought to our initial interview and doing my research, I believe I can add shareholder value by _____," and now you fill in the blank.

If you can't fill in the blank with examples of adding shareholder value, you're not ready for the interview! Now that I have you thinking about what you might say, try making the statement by addressing what the hiring manager needs and what their life would look like if they got the job.



Note the following examples:

Mr. Smith,

After completing the first interview and doing my research, I believe I can add shareholder value by using all the sales techniques I have learned over the years and all the knowledge I gained with my MBA designation.

Now compare that with this statement:

Mr. Smith,

After completing the first interview and doing my research, I believe I can add shareholder value by addressing your need to increase sales in the independent broker-dealer market. Last year, I did \$65 million in sales throughout the independent broker-dealer channel, and with your product line, I could exceed \$100 million.

In the first example, the candidate merely provides an obfuscation and offers minimal value. In the second example, the candidate has hit on the hiring manager's pain point and then describes how great the business will be when he gets hired. Again, make a great first impression and separate yourself from the competition by starting with the problem and stating how to provide the solution.

The second interview is pivotal! This is where you either get the job or you don't. The strategy behind this stage of the interview process is simple. You can get the job you want if you show the hiring manager they can get what they want. But of course, don't just be the candidate the firm wants to hire, be the candidate they have to hire.



Turn the hiring manager into your advocate.

You will want to outflank your competition a few days before your interview by implementing an interview tactic. Remember, the hiring manager already holds you in high regard and has identified you as a qualified candidate. They wouldn't have asked you to come in for a face-to-face meeting and meet other people in the organization if they did NOT want you to be successful and get the job. This gives you a significant advantage. So take advantage in a few simple ways:

- Call the hiring manager before your interview and ask them for their advice.
- Prove to them that you have been doing extra research by asking salient questions.
- Ask the hiring manager what they know about the individuals you will meet.
- Tell them how you prepare for the interview and again express gratitude for the opportunity.

By doing this, you achieve three things: The hiring manager will give you insights and information you could not obtain elsewhere. Next, you are continuing to ingratiate yourself with the hiring manager. Lastly, you get an opportunity to associate yourself with the hiring manager.

Building on your association with the hiring manager is crucial. **People are tribal in nature.** Those who went to the same university share a bond. Those who share similar hobbies or those who experienced similar life experiences are part of a tribe. You have gotten to know the hiring manager to some degree. Is there anything you share in common, such as acquaintances or experiences? See if you can draw a connection between yourself and the hiring manager that allows you to create an association between the two of you.

If you don't make contact with the hiring manager, make sure you leave them a voicemail that involves thanking them for the upcoming opportunity to meet. Within the voicemail, tell them you want their advice regarding a specific question that proves you are doing extra homework.

You're not at a loss if they don't return your call. Chances are your voicemail made the right impression and has allowed you to stay top of mind.

Be the candidate they have to hire!

The key to the face-to-face interview is to prove to the hiring manager that you understand what they are trying to accomplish while demonstrating that you have the skills, best practices, and experience to step into the role and make an impact. Your goal is to create such an overwhelming value proposition that the hiring manager recognizes there is more risk in NOT hiring you.

Before we begin, let's start by quickly dispelling the myth that this face-to-face interview has to be intimidating. Don't get me wrong; I understand that even the word "interview" creates anxiety for many people.

But the fact is, you should be very excited to take part in the process. This could be a fantastic new chapter in your life. Think about other professionals you know. If Tom Brady of the New England Patriots were interviewing with another team, would he be intimidated? If Jony Ive, the former Chief Design Officer at Apple, were interviewing with another tech giant, would he be intimidated? Chances are, no and no.

Don't be nervous, be excited!

Tom and Jony should be excited for many reasons: they are passionate about what they do, understand their business, and can articulate and summarize their value. So instead of worrying about what could go wrong, they would focus on the opportunity and spend the day connecting with new people, learning new things, talking about the business they love, and describing how they can add value to make that business even stronger. That sounds like an exciting day, not an intimidating one. So why should your outlook be any different? When you stop losing sleep over your success and focus on how to help the company succeed, you know you are ready to interview.



*Use the X-Y-Z format
during the work history review.*

Inevitably, those you meet will want to probe you with questions about your past. Instead of simply stating your major achievements, take a more advanced approach.

Consider the following: If the NFL's all-pro quarterback Tom Brady was to interview and explain his resume, would he say he won six Super Bowls and leave it at that? Of course not! He would be able to explain that he has a record nine Super Bowl appearances, three league MVPs, and is a four-time Super Bowl MVP.

He did this by winning 17 divisional titles, 30 playoff wins, and setting a record 11,000 playoff passing yards. He would explain that he attained these results by implementing the TB12 training method.

This training program is designed to build sustained peak performance through a mix of traditional Chinese medicine and a diet that has him drinking almost half his body weight in water daily.

Were you able to find the equation buried in there? It's subtle, but let's break it down so you can take a similar approach in your interview. Here's how that sounds:

Accomplished (X), as measured by (Y), by doing (Z). Now let us make that relevant for you. When discussing your past positions, explain what you accomplished, how those accomplishments were measured, and what you did to achieve those results. This formula is the perfect way to introduce an answer, followed by a **STAR Model** response which will clearly show the hiring manager that you know how to perform and produce results.

Also, before the interview, print out as much information about the firm and its products and services. Put this in a folder and bring it to the meeting. Throughout the work history review, the hiring manager will put you on the defensive and ask you questions. You will naturally want to answer all their questions, but you can begin to counter by pulling out the folder and asking YOUR questions. Hiring managers love to talk about themselves and their firm. They also have a bias toward well-prepared candidates.



STAR & PAR Models

You will likely face the STAR interview model along with the work history review. One of the toughest things about going into an interview is that most do not give you the questions ahead of time. But fortunately, most of the questions you'll be asked can be successfully answered by following the Situation, Task, Action, and Results (or STAR) Model. This model is used by many companies both nationally and globally. One of the world's most successful privately held companies, Koch Industries, uses this interview tactic religiously. The key to facing the STAR Model is to answer each part of the question thoroughly.

Let's break down the STAR Model with an example: "Tell me about a time when you failed." This question can be surprisingly simple to answer—if you know what the hiring manager wants to hear. Let's put the STAR model to work. First, paint a picture of the situation and the role you had. Then, discuss your situation and actions to reach the solution or outcome. Finally, explain how your actions produced a successful RESULT.

It's as simple as that. When you use the STAR model, you're not anticipating the questions... you're focused on your career history and articulating your value based on what you know about yourself.

Challenge yourself to answer a few of these common questions using the STAR model and see how it goes.

- What is your greatest career achievement? If you have reported to multiple supervisors at the same time, how did you juggle conflicting priorities?
- What would your previous boss say is the area where you need the most improvement?
- Tell me about a time you exercised leadership.

Simply respond by asking for more information as you assess the situation. Show how you would attack the problem and state how you might produce a successful answer.

No matter your question, the formula is the same: describe how you assessed a problem, implemented a game plan with a positive attitude, and produced a successful outcome.

S

SITUATION

Start your story by painting a specific picture of the situation you faced.

- What was the exact situation?
- Who was involved? (Address them by name)
- Why did the situation happen?

T

TASK

Use this opportunity to explain your specific role in the task.

- Why were you involved in the task?
- What is the background story?

A

ACTION

Discuss, very specifically, the actions you took to resolve the situation.

- What steps did you take to resolve the situation?
- Why did you choose to complete tasks this way?

R

RESULTS

Clearly detail the results of your actions and highlight your strengths.

- What was the outcome?
- How did you feel about the result?
- What did you learn?
- How did this situation influence who you are today?

Another similar format is **PAR (Problem, Action, Result)**. Both are often used. Only you can decide what format will work best for you.

- **Problem:** What was the problem or circumstance?
- **Action:** what steps and or tasks were taken? Who is involved? What work?
- **Result:** what was the outcome? What improved, changed, or it's resolved? How would the results measure? Whether any metrics?

Example #1

- I took over an underperforming department. Needed to improve service and quality
- I recruited new staff and promise to retain service staff, design new quality, and cost controls
- It lowered operating costs, increased productivity by 23%, and earned above-average scores on customer satisfaction surveys

Example #2

- My project deadline changed due to customers modification
- To get on track and finish the project on time, rapid team together, made a list of tasks, brainstormed how to best do the work, and divided the task with the team. Worked after hours, as a group, two nights
- The ad campaign increases sales by 50% during the Super Bowl



ACTIVITY 4.1

TIME: 60 MINUTES (SELF-DIRECTED)

Think about times when you resolved conflict, handled competing tasks, solved problems, took the initiative, failed, overcame an obstacle, achieved a big goal, worked under a deadline, worked on a team, and made decisions. These are common topics that could be discussed during an interview.

Write eight stories from your past that will allow the interviewer to imagine the following areas: **Leadership & Influence, Communication, Relationship Management, Stress, Project Management, Business Acumen & Innovation, Collaboration, and Policy & Procedure**. Use the STAR Method model on the next page to help organize each story.

Email your draft to your coach 48 hours before your next session.

SUCCESS STORY

Type of Story:

SITUATION <i>Using a max of 4-5 sentences</i>	
TASK <i>Using a max of 4-5 sentences</i>	
ACTION <i>Using a max of 4-5 sentences</i>	
RESULTS <i>Using a max of 3-4 sentences</i>	

Practice and evaluate the content and delivery of your STAR stories.

- **Authenticity:** While candidates must prepare to nail these interview questions, it should not sound like you are reading a script when speaking with the hiring manager. Prepare stories, but don't over-prepare and sound like a robot on the interview day.
- **Specificity:** Providing specific details versus general ones is critical to nailing behavioral interview question answers. When hiring manager asks an interviewer how they manage their team members' outcomes, they want to avoid hearing that they take a look at data. Instead, they would prefer a story that shows how you have managed performance in the past.
- **Clarity:** If you tell stories that make no sense to the hiring manager, you may not get the job. Respond clearly, confidently, and concisely (avoid rambling and slang). Being clear while telling your stories is vital in nailing behavioral interview questions, which is why the STAR method is helpful.



ACTIVITY 4.2

TIME: 60+ MINUTES (SELF-DIRECTED)

Once you receive feedback and your coach approves your pitch, you can begin to practice. You can use a mirror to practice your responses or make a mock conversation with your friend. Practice your answers until it sounds natural, not rehearsed. You should be ready to present your pitch to your coach over Zoom during the next session.



ACTIVITY 4.3

TIME: 20 MINUTES (WITH COACH)

Present your responses to your coach and discuss delivery feedback.



ACTIVITY 4.4

TIME: 15 MINUTES (WITH COACH)

Review the *Common Interview Questions* document. Explore how you could apply your stories when asked questions in this document.



ACTIVITY 4.5

TIME: 10 MINUTES (WITH COACH)

Discuss the best way for you to organize and recall your stories and questions for the interviews.

Navigating Questions.

Before you answer a question:

- Concentrate on the entire question
- Mentally prepare your answer
- Ask for clarity if the question is not clear
- Keep quiet and don't fill the silence before you answer the question (avoiding audible pauses such as um, ah, like, you know)

If you need a little bit more time to process or answer the question:

- Paraphrase or restate the question
- "Buying time" statements

"I don't know," responses

- Be Honest
- Deflection

"Checking in" with the Interviewer

Bill Smith

Tom Arnold

Amy Boyd

Sara Sanders

Jason Hart

1. *Prof. Dev - How do you invest in your employees to make sure they have the best tools at their fingertips?*
2. *Autonomy - How do you promote and empower your leaders to make creative and innovative decisions in your hybrid work environment?*

Leverage one interview off another.

You will typically meet several people when you go in for a face-to-face or home office interview. At this point, you'll need to deploy another interview tactic. Use the information you gained from each meeting as leverage throughout your additional interviews.

Let's hear from our sample candidate:

Mr. Smith,

Thanks for taking the time to meet with me. I just had an opportunity to meet your head of marketing, John Doe. John told me how the sales team recently implemented a new sales idea. Handing out remote control cars with the company logo is a good idea, but using the remote control in exchange for a personal meeting with your sales representative is excellent!

As the head of the sales team, can you tell me more about your involvement, how the sales force reacted, and the success of this project? John told me you and your department were instrumental in making all this work. He was very complimentary of you and everything your sales team accomplished!"

The psychology behind this tactic is subtle. First, talking about the high points of your last interview is a great conversation starter. Second, you are giving the sales manager the impression that you had a successful meeting with the head of marketing. Third, you are flattering the sales manager by asking them to tell you more about themselves and their success.



Why would the sales manager NOT want to hire someone who just befriended and had a great meeting with the head of marketing? Why would they not hire someone who complimented them and agrees with the firm's strategies?

Using the relationship and information you gained in the prior meeting is a great way to start and control the conversation and an excellent way to leverage your way throughout the interview process.

While leveraging one interview from another works in this hiring scenario, it can also work if you're interviewing with multiple companies, including the company's competition.

Major companies are naturally competitive and always trying to stay one step ahead of their competition. Let the hiring manager know if you're interviewing with the company's competition. Please note that it's important to do this correctly. If done thoughtfully, this tactic can have a major impact. If used incorrectly, it will backfire, and you can come off looking pompous and arrogant.

As the hiring manager at John Doe Enterprises asks you questions, you might comment that the same subject came up when you were interviewing with Jane Doe Enterprises. Let them know that you are on your second round of interviews, and tell them the nature of the role for which you are interviewing. If you use this tactic successfully, the hiring manager's ears will perk up.

Every hiring manager naturally believes their firm is better than their competition. Halting the interview at this point with the hiring manager immediately making you an offer would be a great way to demonstrate this tactic.



Closing Your Face-to-Face Interview

As you end each interview, make the same aggressive closing statement as you did in the phone interview. Let each hiring manager know your intentions. Ask them, "Is there anything in this conversation that we have not covered that would prohibit me from going forward? If there is something in the back of your mind, please let's discuss that issue because I am interested in coming to work for your company." Don't be ambivalent and don't be shy. Let the hiring manager know you are "all in."

You are looking for the hiring manager to give you an indication that they want to continue to move you through the process. That might mean speaking with them again or requesting that you speak with one of their counterparts.

Maintain contact after the interview.

You will naturally want to send a thank you email to everyone you meet. You will also want to deploy a post-interview tactic. When you leave the interview, please take detailed notes of the topics covered and the high points of the interview. You could talk about a specific product or service and its reception in the marketplace. You could discuss a specific initiative the firm is about to undertake. Talk with some of your clients or industry counterparts or do additional research. Send the hiring manager an email a few days after your interview.

Let's hear from our sample candidate:

Mr. Smith,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me. I learned a lot and am very grateful you are considering me for the regional sales position. After our meeting, I spoke with several of my clients about your actively managed ETF products. The feedback was terrific!

One of my largest clients is a big buyer of ETF products. She told me your products would be a natural fit with her clients. I would like to give you some additional feedback. Please let me know if you have time to talk in the coming days.

Regards,

Parker Jones

Sending the hiring manager timely and respectful emails that attempt to get them to engage in conversation is a great way to stay top of mind. The key to getting hired is staying engaged and keeping momentum in the interview process.