

Answering the Different Types of Interview Questions

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AUGUST 21, 2020 BY SHARON PIDAKALA

Welcome back!

My last post discussed the different types of interview questions you could face during an interview. This week, I will be sharing a few tips on how to answer each of these different types of interview questions.

Practice makes perfect. We’ve heard that a lot, but it’s smart practice that matters most. Practice for interviews in a way that you give the interviewer exactly what they’re looking for.

Unstructured

Unstructured questions are unplanned, spontaneous questions the interviewer asks you. For these questions, it is best that you answer them honestly and just be yourself. There is no right or wrong answer to unstructured questions. What the interviewer is trying to do is just understand you and your application to this job better.

Q: *“I see that you have applied here before, what made you reapply?”*

A: *“From when I first applied till now, I have always been interested in your company. My passion and interests are similar to what the company’s vision and mission statements are. When I first applied, I was rejected perhaps because I had insufficient experience for the job. Which is why, I took the relevant certifications needed to supplement my resume and skill set for me to be better qualified.”*

Structured

It is impossible to predict the questions you’ll be asked during interviews. However, what you do know is that structured questions will be specific to the requirements of the job. By **carefully reviewing the job listing for the knowledge, skills and abilities** that the employer is looking for, you can anticipate the questions you’ll most likely be asked.

There are 2 types of structured questions that can be asked; behavioral and situational. Behavioral questions ask candidates to describe prior experiences and match those to the requirements in the current job whereas situational questions put candidates in a hypothetical situation related to the job.

The key to answering these questions is the **“STAR” interview response technique**. It is a four-step technique for answering structured questions. **STAR refers to : Situation → Task → Action → Results**

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Situation. Describe the situation, set the scene. Explain the place you were working for (Behavioral) or the task given (Situational).

Task. Describe the issue or problem you were/are confronted with.

Action. Describe the action you took/will take to intervene in the situation or solve the problem. Introduce the key asset to address the problem.

Results. Describe the results your action generated/ will generate. Explain how you helped/will help solve the problem and improve the company in some way.

Q: *"What would you do if an angry customer confronted you?"*

A: *"If I was working the register **(Situation)** and an angry customer confronted me **(Task)**, for the sake of clarity and efficiency, I would first ask the customer to explain the problem to ensure that I am the right person to assist them. I would also repeat back the information they've shared, to show that I've understood their concern and am eager to resolve it **(Action)**. There are going to be times when you simply don't have the knowledge or expertise to resolve the problem, and it's better to recognize that early than to waste both the customer's and your valuable time **(Result)**."*

I hope these examples have given you an idea on how to go about answering the different types of interview questions. Remember to practice smart by going about these guidelines in your preparation.

Ultimately, go in and show them why you are the best fit for the job and organization while putting your best foot forward! All the best!

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