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Interview Skills

Tips & Tricks

e·on

Workshop Rules

Interactive – you'll get the most out of this short training by participating

All questions are welcome – we'll try our best to answer them

Have fun! - It's almost the weekend.

KEEP CALM AND TAKE PART

KEEP CALM AND ASK YOUR QUESTIONS

KEEP CALM AND HAVE FUN

About us

Marisela Aguilar

- E.ON since 2014
- Employer Branding & Talent Relationship Mangement
- Executive Recruitment

Iulia Burg

- E.ON since 2013
- Executive Recruitment
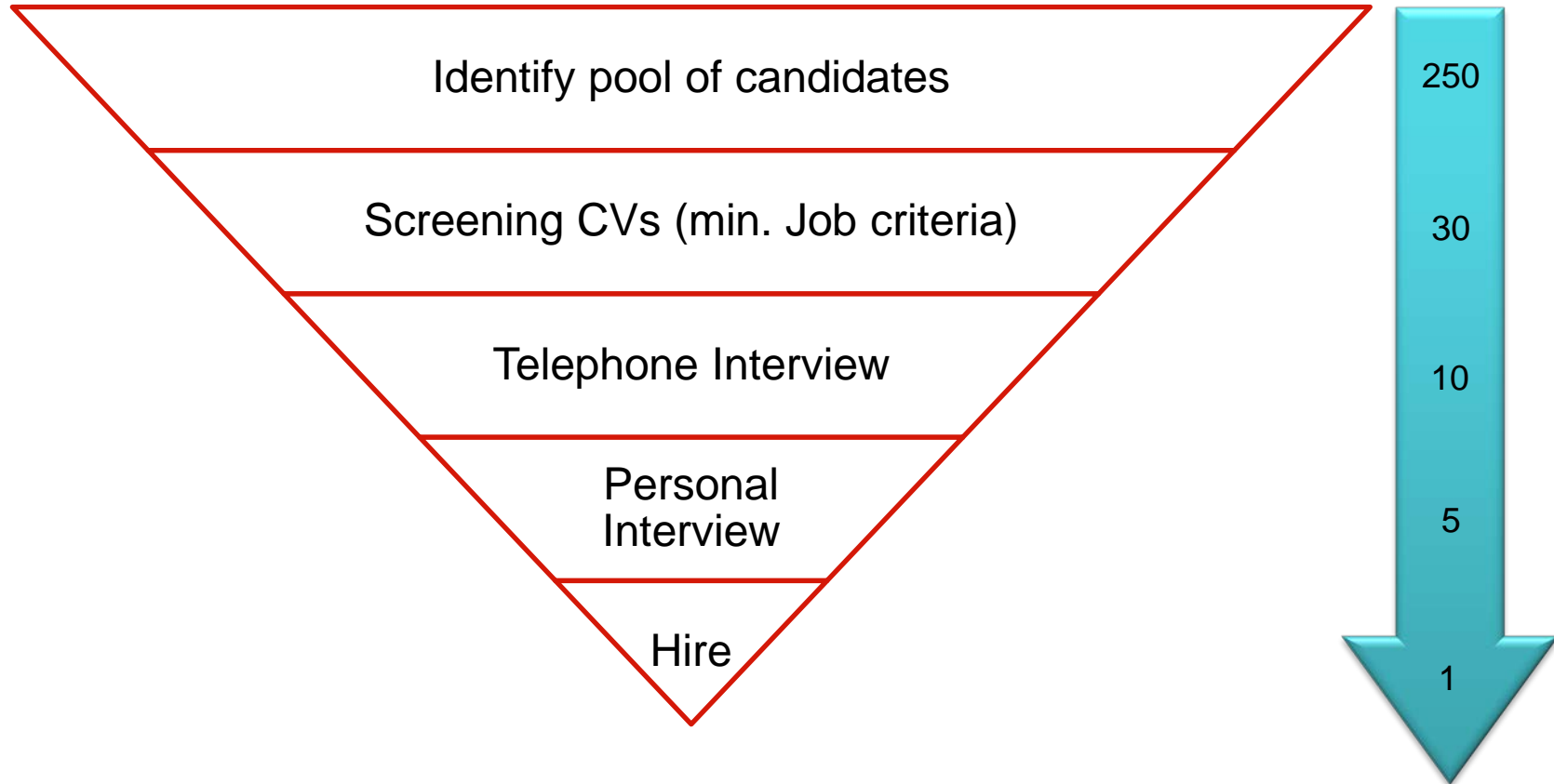- Senior Recruiter
- Graduate Recruitment

Imagine…

- You have one position to fill and 250 people apply for it.

- How would you select the best candidate?

The Hiring Process

Identify pool of candidates

Screening CVs (min. Job criteria)

Telephone Interview

Personal Interview

Hire

250

30

10

5

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Screening criteria

- CV Screening:
    - Correct qualifications
    - Completed application documents
    - Required language skills
    - Valid working visa
    - Required working experience
    - Salary Expectations
    - Late submission

CV – Cheat Sheet

- Be clear and concise

- Reverse chronological order

- Oder of relevance (work experience then education)

- Tailor CV to job position

- Quantify and describe tasks (quantify money saved, items sold, deals closed, budgets)

- Use keywords and phrases (from the job description)

- Avoid blocks of text – ease to read rather than too much information

- Show **results** by your actions – ‚Saved €10,000 by using a new procedure that simplfied accouting process'

- 1 to 2 pages

- Make sure someone else proof reads (60 second test)

Cover letter – Cheat Sheet

- Introduce yourself

- Position you are applying for

- Answer: Why this position? Why this company? Why me?

- Aim for a compelling but **logical** structure

- Avoid repeating from your CV

- Pick two main arguments (e.g. hard & soft skills, expertise from different roles & projects)

- Decide on specific details to support each argument

- Strong closing - summarize why the employer needs to speak to you

- **Not more than one page!**

Interview – your route to success

Plan

Prepare

Practice

Perform

Interview – Before

- Review and understand the job description and skills being searched for

- Know your own CV thoroughly

- Research the company including

  - business and political insight into the relevant market and industry

  - competitors and trends

  - current developments effecting the company

- Think critically about past situations that you can use to answer questions related to your behavior, abilities, and the value you add to a company/project

- Prepare to give concrete examples and avoid answering vaguely

Interview – During

Telephone Interview

- Block enough time

- Be in a quite area without distractions

- Have your application and the job description with you, so you can refer to the documents if needed

- Stand while talking

- Pay attention to voice and don't rush answers

- If you are making notes let interviewer know

- Treat your telephone interview as you would treat a face to face one

Personal Interview

- Be punctual (not too early, 10 minutes is fine)

- Maintain eye contact

- Pay attention to handshake & body language

- Dress appropriately

- Avoid asking for a special drink (e.g. coffee with caramel flavour and almond milk)

- Prepare questions to ask and ask them!

Interview- After

- Follow up with recruiter/hiring manager

- Thank them for their time and consideration

- If you're not successful, ask for Feedback!

Prepare

Prepare for different types of interview questions & assessments

- Introduce yourself and show your motivation

- Case study/Case questions - "What is your estimate of the German online retail market for personalized cell phone cases?"

- Stress questions & situations

- Brainteasers - "How many Überraschungseier could fit in a VW Golf?"

- Assessment centre - Role play, Presentation

- 90 Day plan/Onboarding plan

- Opinion questions – "What are your strengths & weaknesses?"

- Technical questions/ execute a timed task

- **Behavioral questions - "What were the steps you followed to accomplish that task?"**

- **Competency questions - "Explain a way in which you solved a problem creatively."**

Behavioural & Competency based interview questions

Behavioural interview questions

- Its purpose is to objectively measure past behaviors as a predictor of future results.

- Typically begin with the phrase, "Tell me about a time when…" or "Give me an example…''

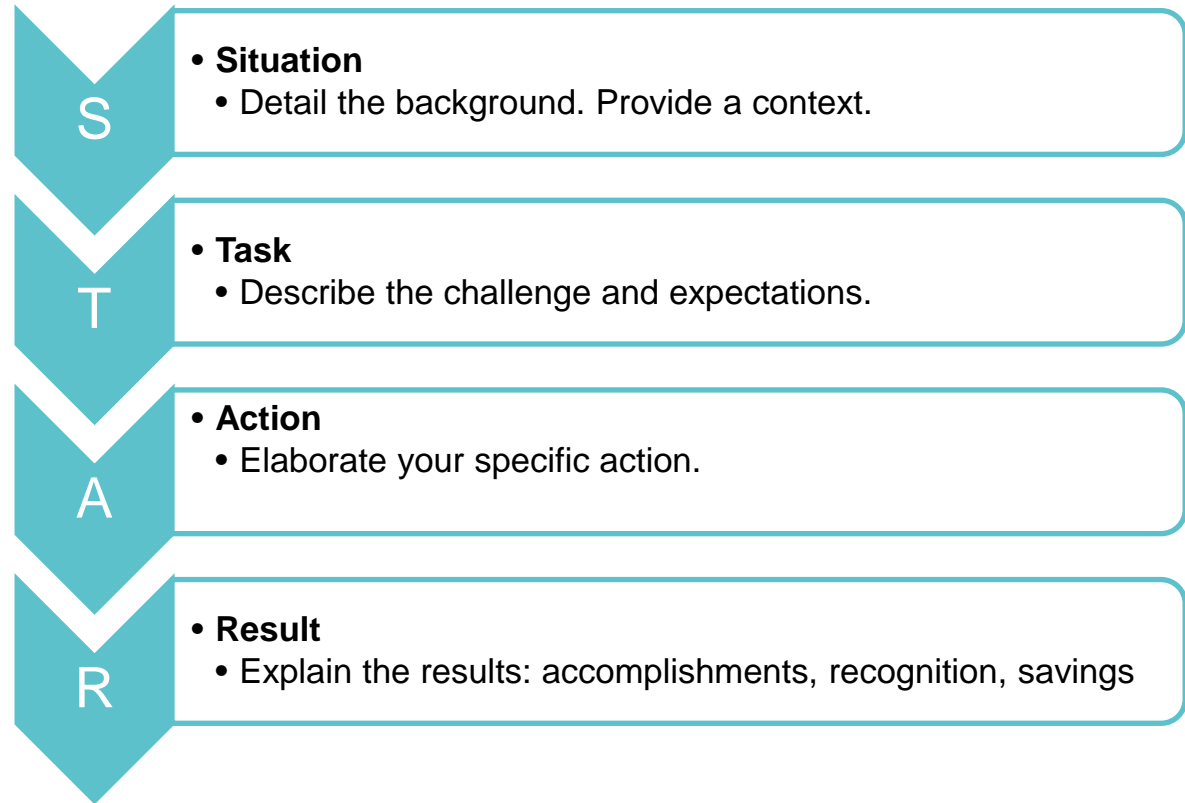- How to prepare: understand the specific requirements of the role before your interview.

Competency based interview questions

- Its purpose is to align your past behaviors with specific competencies which are required for the position.

- Your answer is matched against pre-decided criteria and marked accordingly.

- They are systematic, with each question targeting a specific skill.

- You need to back up your answer with concrete examples.

- How to prepare: understand what skills are required.

The Good News: you can prepare!

- STAR Model
- CAR Model
- SOARA Model

S
- **Situation**
  - Detail the background. Provide a context.

T
- **Task**
  - Describe the challenge and expectations.

A
- **Action**
  - Elaborate your specific action.

R
- **Result**
  - Explain the results: accomplishments, recognition, savings

STAR Model

Why use a model to prepare?

- It helps to tell your story in a **structured** and **engaging** way.

- It is easier for the interviewer to **follow your answer**.

- It is easier for your to **remember the story elements** – every part S-T-A-R is important.

- It helps you to **simplify and focus** your answers.

- It helps you to be **more confident** in delivering your answer – you will have **examples prepared** and not be searching for a good example.

- It helps you to showcase your **strengths**.

How to prepare using the STAR Model

Collect your best stories

- Think about your **achivements** in your daily job and in projects

- Think about professional **accomplishments** that you can proud of

- Think about tasks you've gotten **positive feedback** for

- Think about times you have implemented change, had to lead a team, or **succeeded in a difficult situation**

- These can be used for a variety of different questions as they can be used as examples for multiple competencies

Identify the required competencies

- What is listed in the job description?

- What skills could you imagine are needed for the role?

- Example of competencies:

  - Leadership

  - Creativity

  - Innovation

  - Working under pressure

  - Teamwork

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Build your story using STAR

Build your story for a chosen competency using bullet points

Situation – Background & context, avoid too much information, just what needs to be known to set the scene

What was complex about the situation? What was the difficulty here? What was the size/ budget/ resources involved?

Task – Describe the challenge and expectations in your task. What was your role in this situation? Was it part of your job or did you take on a task? What were you trying to achieve and why?

Action – What action did you take the solve the problem or improve the situation? Why did you use this approach? What was the strategy behind this action? What tools did you use? (project plans, hard skills, negotiations etc.)

Result - Either a positive outcome or lessons learned. End positively!

Quantify & qualify the result – money saved, sales earned, promotion, feedback, realtionships

Match your stories to various competencies displayed – make them multi-purpose!

Story 1:

Tell me about how you worked effectively under pressure.

S

T

A

R

I was working on an important project that was scheduled for delivery to the client in 90 days. My line manager came to me and said that we needed to speed it up and be ready in 65 days, while keeping all our other projects on time and keeping it within a certain budget. I made it into a challenge for my team. I re-prioritized some aspects of the project and added a few hours to everyone's schedules. By sharing the task my team was able to get the job done in 60 days.

Of course, I had skilled and motivated people to achieve this, but I think that my effective allocation of tasks was a major component of the success of the project.

Example could also be used for:

- Dealing with unexpected change
- Motivating others
- Setting priorities
- Project management

Practice saying your stories out loud!

- Evaluate your answers
- If possible, do mock-up interviews with a colleague or partner
- Practice in the mirror ☺
- Remember to use "I" instead of "we" when answering questions

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Practice

Use the STAR Model

- Split into pairs
- Pick two questions
- Prepare your answers in 5 minutes
- Interview each other
- Give feedback –
  - Was it clear and structured?
  - Is it understood what was done & achieved?
  - How was the body language?

Interview Questions

Change management: Tell me about a time you led a change effort.

Coping with stress: Think about a time when you felt overwhelmed or stressed when working on a project.

How did you handle it?

Dealing with conflicts: Think about a time when you were involved in a group project or activity
where the   others involved were difficult to get along with. What did you do about it?

Continuous improvement: Tell me about something new or different that you did in your department that
improved   customer service, productivity, quality, teamwork, or performance.

Customer focus: Please give me an example when you behaved in a very customer-oriented way?

Analytical skills: Describe a situation where you had to interpret and synthesize a large amount of
information or data.

Communication: Tell me about a time when you had to give someone constructive critici

Leadership: Tell me about a time you led a group to achieve an objectiv

Deadling with mistakes: Have you ever made a mistake? How did you handle it?

Integrity: Give an example that demonstrates your professional integrity

S • Situation
T • Task
A • Action
R • Result

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Interview Fragen (DE)

- Was war das letzte Projekt, an dem Sie gearbeitet haben und zu welchem Ergebnis sind Sie gekommen?

- Schildern Sie uns Ihre Erfahrungen, wie Sie Kundenbeziehungen gestalten.

- Bitte nennen Sie uns ein Beispiel für eine Situation, in der Sie etwas in Ihrem Arbeitsbereich optimiert haben. Wie haben Ihre Kollegen reagiert?

- Beschreiben Sie eine Situation, in der es wichtig war, Rat/Unterstützung aus einem anderen Team einzuholen.

- Welche Schritte unternehmen Sie, um Vielfalt innerhalb eines Teams zu fördern?

- Wie verfolgen Sie den Zielerreichungsgrad Ihrer Mitarbeiter? Was unternehmen Sie, wenn dieser Zielerreichungsgrad unter Ihren Erwartungen liegt?

Review: Preparation checklist:

Prepare strong answers for "Tell us a bit about yourself?" and "Why do you want to work for us?" ☐

Review the company website and the job description: what are the main competencies that define the company & the job? ☐

Think critically about your past experience and projects ☐
- •Project & project steps
- •Milestones & bottlenecks
- •Your role & working in a team
- •Outcome & results
- •Feedback, lessons learned & what would you do differently

Build your stories based on your past experiences and practice saying them out loud ☐
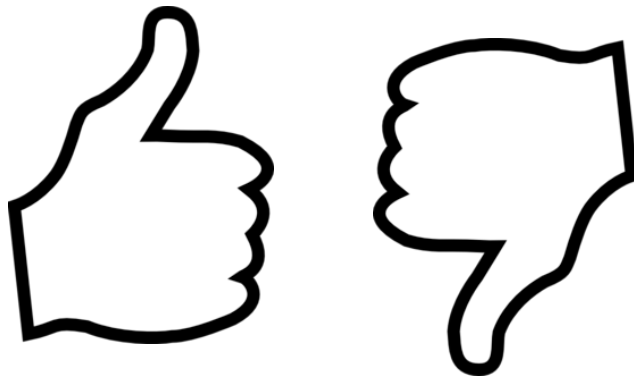
Prepare the questions you will ask the interviewer. ☐

Wrap up & Feedback

Will you use this model to prepare?

Was this training useful for you?

Keep in touch

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Thank You

and good luck!