



CAREER TRANSITION WORKSHOPS

INTERVIEWING SKILLS

Interviewing

Preparation is key

- Find out who is on the panel and learn their names
- Research company and role
- Practice your handshake, body language and eye contact
- Print a copy of your resume
- Prepare a great introduction
- Prepare your answers - always give examples
- Prepare some questions to ask the panel
- Find a suitable outfit

First impressions

Turn up or have your technology **ready before the interview**

Address the **panel by name**

Look professional, smile, good handshake and **be engaged**

Show that you have done your research and ask questions

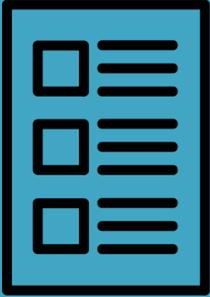


Sample Questions

- Tell me about a time you dealt with a difficult situation or customer. What did you do?
- Tell me about a time you disagreed with a decision that was made. What did you do?
- Tell me about a time you failed.
- What is the most difficult or challenging situation you've had to resolve in the workplace.
- Tell me about a time you've had to assume leadership for a team.



A good way to anticipate what might be asked in the interview is to familiarise yourself with the highlighted capabilities in the Role Description or job ad. You can then prepare examples of when you've demonstrated these capabilities in your career.



PREPARATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

1

PREPARE AN INTRODUCTION

This is one of the questions that throws people, but is asked a lot and right at the beginning of an interview!

- **Start with who you are**

I am a learning and development professional with over five years experience in coaching, support and facilitation for a large organisation.

- **Expertise highlights**

I have spent the last 2 years with State Transit, developing my skills as a Driver Capability Trainer. During that time I lifted the performance of new bus operators and I have been recognised by the operational training team for my commitments.

- **Why are you here?**

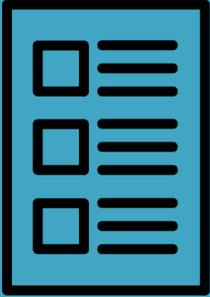
Although I love my current role, I am passionate about getting experience in this area. This position really excites me as I can continue to support and mentor others, yet learn about a brand new industry.

Tips

Use the SHE formula (Succinct, Honest and Engaging) - resist the urge to go line by line through your resume experience, instead provide a short summary of your experience!

Use the job description to prepare for this answer - e.g. are they looking for someone who is a strong problem solver? Then you can describe yourself as having these strengths.

TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF.



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PREPARE FOR BEHAVIOURAL QUESTIONS

"Behavioral interviewing is a job interviewing technique where candidates are asked to describe past performance and behavior to determine whether they are suitable for a position".

The purpose of behavioural interview questions is for the panel to understand who you are, how you think and how you approach real world problems.

Your answers help the interviewer gauge how you may (or may not) complement the current team. You will be asked to provide examples.

Your goal is to position yourself in the best possible light. Each of your answers should highlight your **self awareness, growth, resilience and willingness to help others**.

However ensure your answers are realistic and find a balance between pride and humility. It is OK to be honest about your weaknesses and areas of growth.

3

STAR TECHNIQUE

Situation: describe the situation or scenario you were in or the problem you needed to address.

Task: discuss the task that you needed to accomplish and what goals and objectives you were working towards.

Action: describe the actions you took to address the situation with an appropriate amount of detail and keep the focus on you.

Result: describe the outcomes of your actions and don't be shy about taking credit as well as describing what you would do differently next time.

FOR MORE TIPS GO TO

[HTTPS://WWW.THEGUARDIAN.COM/CAREERS/CAREERS-BLOG/STAR-TECHNIQUE-COMPETENCY-BASED-INTERVIEW](https://www.theguardian.com/careers/careers-blog/star-technique-competency-based-interview)

PRACTICE makes PERFECT

PICK A QUESTION AND PRACTICE ANSWERING IT

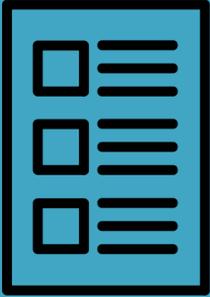
1. Tell me about a time you faced a difficult or challenging situation in the workplace. How did you resolve it?
2. Give me an example of when you had to assume leadership for a team.
3. Tell me about a time when things have not gone to plan. How did you resolve this?
4. Tell me about a time you influenced a stakeholder.
5. Give me an example of a time you faced a conflict while working on a team. How did you handle that?

S -

T -

A -

R -



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WHAT ARE YOUR SALARY EXPECTATIONS?

1. Do not give a specific number instead **provide a range**.
2. Do some **neutral research** and then share that range with the recruiter. "This role based on the research I've done has a range of \$70 - \$80,000."
3. You can **find ranges easily on the internet** such as through LinkedIn Salary Tool or Seek.

5

DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE.

1. Be **authentic**.
2. Know and **own your leadership style**. Pick 3 words to describe your leadership and keep them concise. Refer back to feedback you've received in the past or currently from your team members. If you know that you are tough but fair or more of a team builder say so.
3. **Link it back to an example** that highlights your leadership style using the STAR formula.

6

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST WEAKNESS?

1. **Be humble and self-aware** - communicate an authentic story that shows that you have both of these qualities. It's OK that you are not always perfect. It's more important that you know how to learn and adapt.
2. **Pick a safe weakness** - do not pick a weakness that is going to disqualify you from the job. For instance, if you are going for a project management role you may wish to talk about something that is more creative.
3. **Describe your fix it strategy** - It is important to talk about your plans and how you've been committed to solving this weakness. This is where you talk about actions you've taken to improve in the weakness.

FOR MORE TIPS GO TO

[HTTPS://WWW.LINKEDIN.COM/LEARNING/EXPERT-TIPS-FOR-ANSWERING-COMMON-INTERVIEW-QUESTIONS/](https://www.linkedin.com/learning/expert-tips-for-answering-common-interview-questions/)



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CONCERNS ABOUT LONG TENURE

If you're feeling out of place, outdated, or like Robert De Niro in *The Intern*, it's time to talk. You're an asset. Your long tenure isn't a liability. You're a great fit for many positions because of your experience, not despite it.

If in an interview your long tenure comes up in conversation you need to be able to position the experience as something **positive** and that it **was your choice**.

We recommend preparing responses based around these 5 points:

- 1) **Talk to the different, key roles or projects you have experienced.** It's great to talk about all the varied opportunities you have been able to explore in the company.
- 2) **Talk to the different things you have learnt or adopted during your time here.** New technology, new processes, new training, new ways of doing things and improvements - you want to talk to any of these to emphasise the way in which you have remained flexible, adaptable and open to change in your experience here.
- 3) **Talk to the many things you are grateful for.** This is a great opportunity to emphasise how lucky you were to be able to stay and grow with a company for so long. This will show you as loyal, passionate and a stable worker.
- 4) **Talk to the great network and long lasting relationships you've been able to build.** You could be seen as the 'go-to' in your team with in depth experience and knowledge.
- 5) **Talk about how your time here has allowed you to develop your career aspirations.** What did you hope to achieve with your career and how far have you come to achieving them? You need to show that you've been in the driver seat of your career the whole time, and that staying was a decision made by you for particular reasons, not one that was forced upon you because you couldn't leave.



PREPARATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

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PRACTICE

If in an interview your long tenure comes up in conversation you need to be able to position the experience as something **positive** and that it **was your choice**.

1. What different, key roles or projects you worked on since being at STA?
2. What different things you have learnt or adopted during your time here?
3. What things are you grateful for and what have you enjoyed the most at STA?
4. What network and long lasting relationships you've been able to build?
5. How have you been able to develop your career aspirations since being at STA?

Interview presentations, work samples and group activities can now be requested from candidates during the recruitment process.

Recruitment Assessments

Assessments are used in Transport for all TSSM and TSSE roles and on occasion are used at award level. Instructions and guidance will be sent to you in advance by the recruiter, if you are unsure of anything ask them and they will give you as much information as possible .

Assessments will generally go for 10 to 15 mins at the start of the interview and are either group or individual activities that simulate situations encountered in the role to be filled, allowing the recruiter to gather information on a candidate's capabilities and experience. (eg - Change Manager - might be asked to create a Stakeholder Engagement Plan).

Before you prepare for the assessment find out the following information:

- How long will the activity be?
- Who exactly will be present?
- Will the presentation be informal or formal?
- What does the interviewer want you to focus on?
- What's the IT setup like at the location?
- Should you bring your own equipment?
- Should you bring hand outs?
- What else will you need to bring?

Assessments

Presentations

You may be asked to complete a presentation during your interview to assess :

- Your **communication** and **public speaking** skills;
- Your **knowledge** and **expertise** on a particular topic; and
- whether you are the **right cultural fit** for the company.



Group activities

Group exercises involve candidates working together to develop solutions to a problem or to discuss a topic while being observed by assessors.

They are typically used as part of an **assessment centre** process.

Examples of group exercises include:

- a **group discussion** on a particular issue such as a policy or current news item
- a **case study exercise** with a group of candidates given a brief based on a realistic business scenario.

Work samples

Work sample exercises can be **group or individual activities** that **simulate situations** you might face in the role. The business often wants to see you perform the task.

Common work sample exercises are **case studies, written exercises, technical skills assessments** or **role plays**.

Written exercises often involve asking someone to **review written information** and **write a response** in the form of a letter, email, memo, briefing or presentation.



Tips

- **Prepare** - get as much information about what the assessment will be and practice completing a similar task before the day.
- **Be friendly and involve others** - if you are in a group activity try to address others by their name, reference a conversation you had or ideas of fellow participants
- **Speak or write with purpose** - always focus what you say or write on the activity at hand. Ensure you listen to what the assessor is asking you to do.



How to combat interview jitters...

- **Get Pumped Up** - The best way to reduce anxiety and nervous energy is to burn it off. Wake up earlier and exercise with a high intensity workout before the interview.
- **Pick the best time for you** - Try and schedule the interview for a time that works for you. If you are a morning person, why not ask for an earlier interview. Not only will you have more confidence but you'll appear fresher and more alert.
- **Snack attack** - Pick a healthy snack before a meeting that will help settle your stomach and give you the energy you need to remain focused. We recommend avoiding alcohol or (a lot of) caffeine before an interview.
- **The early bird gets the worm** - Arriving early and waiting in a cafe close by or in your car before the interview allows you to collect your thoughts, practice any questions, calm your nerves and familiarise yourself with the building. However, we recommend signing in for the interview 10 minutes before (not earlier).
- **Focus on others** - Anxiety causes us to become very self-focused. Make a point of focusing on others and being empathetic. Greet the receptionist at the interview site. Ask your interviewer how their day is going. Listen and take your time. Smile. Engage with others.

