**Interviewing Exercise**

**What Employers Want**

Let’s begin by looking at the top 10 Qualities employers seek:

* Communication Skills
* Honesty and Integrity
* Teamwork
* Interpersonal Skills
* Strong Work Ethic
* Motivation and Initiative
* Flexibility
* Problem-Solving Skills
* Technical Skills
* Organization Skills

Your interview preparation should include examples from experiences where you demonstrated these qualities. Most interviewers will use behavioral style questions (past behavior is a good predictor of future success) to get these qualities. For example: *“By providing examples, convince me that you can adapt to a wide variety of people, situations and environments.”* (interpersonal skills).

Here is another behavioral interview style question: “*What steps do you follow to study a problem before making a decision?”* (analytical or problem solving skills). Begin by citing a past situation that relates to the question. Can you talk about a time when you defined a problem, how you planned the solution, what obstacles you encountered, and the outcome? Tell what you did specifically. Your answer should contain these parts: Situation, Task, Action, and Result or the STAR method.

**STAR Method**

**S** – What was a **Situation** that relates to the question?

**T** – What were your **Tasks**?

**A** – What **Action** did you take?

**R** – What was the **Result**?

**Situation:** Give an example of a situation where you had to study a problem before making a decision.

**Task:** Describe your process and the tasks involved.

**Action:** Talk about the various actions that you used.

**Result:** What were the results that followed because of your actions?

It is helpful to frame your answer as a story. Expect follow up questions to center on the specific behaviors the interviewer is looking for. *“Tell me more about your thoughts at that point?”.* Whenever you can honestly quantify your experience (I supervised 5 lifeguards, increased distribution by 20%), this will add depth to your explanation.

Your résumé will serve as a guide to the interviewer asking you the questions and it should serve as a guide to the examples you can cite from past experiences. Use examples from internships, previous employment, classes, team projects, community service, sports, campus activities, work study, etc.

**The Exercise**

**Interview Preparation Exercise:** Under each heading, cite examples of your own using the STAR method. Develop short stories around your experiences to describe your strengths and possible obstacles you had to overcome.

**Teamwork**

S

T

A

R

**Communication Skills**

S

T

A

R

**Problem Solving/Research Skills**

S

T

A

R

**Strong Work Ethic**

S

T

A

R

**Motivation and Initiative**

S

T

A

R

**Interpersonal Skills**

S

T

A

R

**Technical Skills**

S

T

A

R

**Organizational Skills**

S

T

A

R

**Flexibility/Adaptability Skills**

S

T

A

R

**Integrity/Honesty**

S

T

A

R

**Leadership**

S

T

A

R

**Multi-Tasking**

S

T

A

R

**Time Management/Prioritization**

S

T

A

R