

Slides 7.4: How to Talk About Yourself in an Interview

Slide outline for Lesson 7.4. Thirteen slides, one day. Slides 1, 2, and 4 are the sequence from Sal's own version of this lesson and they stay in that order. Slides 6 and 10 stay up for the rest of the unit if you can leave them projected or printed; the three-part frame and STAR are used again in Lessons 7.5, 7.9, and 7.11.

Slide 1: You are the CEO of a million-dollar company

- You are hiring ONE person
- What qualities, skills, or traits must that person have?
- Write for two minutes Image: a single empty chair on one side of a plain table. Notes: This is the do now and the hook at once. It is Sal's own opening and it works because it flips the student from applicant to decider. Cold call eight students fast and write every repeated word on the anchor chart.

Slide 2: What makes one candidate stand out from another?

- How does somebody prove they actually have those skills? Notes: Two questions, ninety seconds, no writing. This is the bridge. The chart is full of traits; the question is how anybody demonstrates one out loud.

Slide 3: What a boss is looking for

- (the class anchor chart, written in their words)
- Circle the three that came up more than once Image: chart paper with handwritten words, deliberately messy. Notes: Write what they say, not a cleaned-up version. If a student says "not lazy," write "not lazy." You may add "reliable" next to it. This chart stays up through Lesson 7.11.

Slide 4: "Tell me about yourself."

- Write how you would answer that right now
- One minute
- I am not collecting it Notes: Leave the slide blank except the question, and say nothing for five seconds first. This is the before picture; students compare it to their own answer at the end of the period.

Slide 5: I am going to answer that twice

- Once badly
- Once well
- You tell me what changed Notes: Do the bad one badly and commit to it. Ramble. Look at the ceiling. Start with where you were born. End on a hobby. Forty seconds. Then ask: "What did you learn about whether to hire me?" Then do the good one in thirty seconds, three parts, and ask: "What changed?"

Slide 6: The three-part frame

- **1. Who you are now.** Name, grade, what you do
- **2. What you are good at.** One or two skills, and where you can PROVE them
- **3. Why you fit THIS job.** The connection Notes: This is the floor and every student walks out with it. Say each part as one clean sentence and pause, because students are copying your sentences onto the handout.

Slide 7: Part 2 has to be provable

- “I am responsible” is not provable
- “I cooked for thirty people on a written time plan” is provable
- Your folder is on your desk for exactly this reason Notes: The one question that fixes a list of adjectives: “Where can I see that?”

Slide 8: Pick a job. Write your answer.

- The pizza shop counter
- The animal shelter, weekend volunteer
- The summer camp helper
- Three to five sentences. Underline the skill in part 2. Write where you can prove it
Image: three simple signs, one per job, of the kind taped to a wall. Notes: Point at the two posted job descriptions on the walls. Circulate with one question: “Would that sentence be true for anybody in this room, or is it only true for you?”

Slide 9: Let us look at two answers

- Which part is who you are?
- Which part is what you are good at?
- Which part is why you fit?
- Which one is missing or weakest? Notes: Two volunteers, or two anonymous answers read by the teacher with permission. Do not fix it from the front; ask the class for the fix. Then students revise their own.

Slide 10: The other kind of question

- “Tell me about a time when...”
- Those need a story
- A story needs four parts Notes: Name it: a behavioral question. The employer is asking for evidence instead of a claim.

Slide 11: STAR

- **Situation.** Where were you, what was going on
- **Task.** What was your job, what had to get done
- **Action.** What **you** personally did
- **Result.** What happened because of it. A number, a time, or what somebody said
- **The part everybody skips is the Result** Notes: Write the four letters on the board as you say them.

Slide 12: A STAR story from this class

- **S:** Feed the Class cook day, my station, pasta for 30 people
- **T:** every plate down by minute 29
- **A:** the water was not boiling at minute 12, so I moved the sauce step ahead of the pasta step and asked the Prep Cook to start the plates early
- **R:** we served at minute 30, one minute late, and nothing was cold Notes: Deliver it out loud as a story, then let the class point at each part. Then say the thing that matters: this story is about something going wrong, and that is why it is a good story.

Slide 13: Your STAR story, and the exit card

- Open the folder. Find one moment this year when something went wrong, or something had to get done under a clock
- Fill the four boxes. Four to six words each is enough
- **3-2-1 exit card:** 3 qualities that make you a strong candidate. 2 interview questions you could answer. 1 question you still have or one situation you want to practice tomorrow Notes: Three or four volunteers read one line off the card, standing. Then the closing lines, spoken not read: "I have sat on both sides of the interview table. What makes somebody sound confident is not the right words. It is that they practiced. The way you talk about yourself is a skill, not a personality trait. It is yours. Same as everything else in this room: you work at it, it gets better."