

A person wearing a cap and glasses is sitting at a desk, looking at a laptop screen. The scene is dimly lit with a strong blue tint, and the background is filled with out-of-focus lights, creating a bokeh effect. Another person is partially visible in the background, also working.

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How to nail your  
interview questions



# S.T.A.R Interview Method



An important part of your interview will involve answering questions posed by the interviewer. Your ability to clearly and concisely respond to questions in an informed manner that relates your background to the question posed will set you apart from others that stumble over questions. The S.T.A.R. method simply provides a logical approach to answering any question by providing a guided approach to using one of your past successes in responding to the question. The four steps are:

1. **S= Situation** What was the situation?
2. **T= Task** What task did you need to accomplish?
3. **A= Action** What action did you take?
4. **R= Result** What was the result of your action?

To prepare for an interview, develop a comprehensive list of your many successes, especially those that relate to non-classroom activities such as those listed below. Develop short examples that illustrate your successes in these areas. And remember to keep it positive!

- // Related experience
- // Technical interests
- // Leadership examples
- // Teaming activities
- // Communication skills
- // Work experiences

## **Situation & Task**

Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish. You must describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. This situation can be from a previous job, from a volunteer experience, or any relevant event.

## **Action**

Describe the action you took and be sure to keep the focus on you. Even if you are discussing a group project or effort, describe what you did—not the efforts of the team. Don't tell what you might do, tell what you did.

## **Results**

What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn? It is always helpful to provide quantitative examples to confirm your results.

# 01

## Tell me about yourself

Prepare a 30 second 'me statement' which you can use to tell the interviewers about yourself. This will help you to articulate succinctly what it is that you are bringing to the company. Your 'me statement' should include:

- a brief personal introduction
- your career objective
- specific career accomplishments that demonstrate how you can meet or exceed the position requirements
- a few character traits or key skills that set you apart from typical applicants.



# 02

## What do you know about us?

Talk about your impressions of the company from the research you have done. If possible, identify any key challenge you believe the company might be facing and try to link the position you are applying to assist to provide a solution.



# 03

## What is your greatest strength?

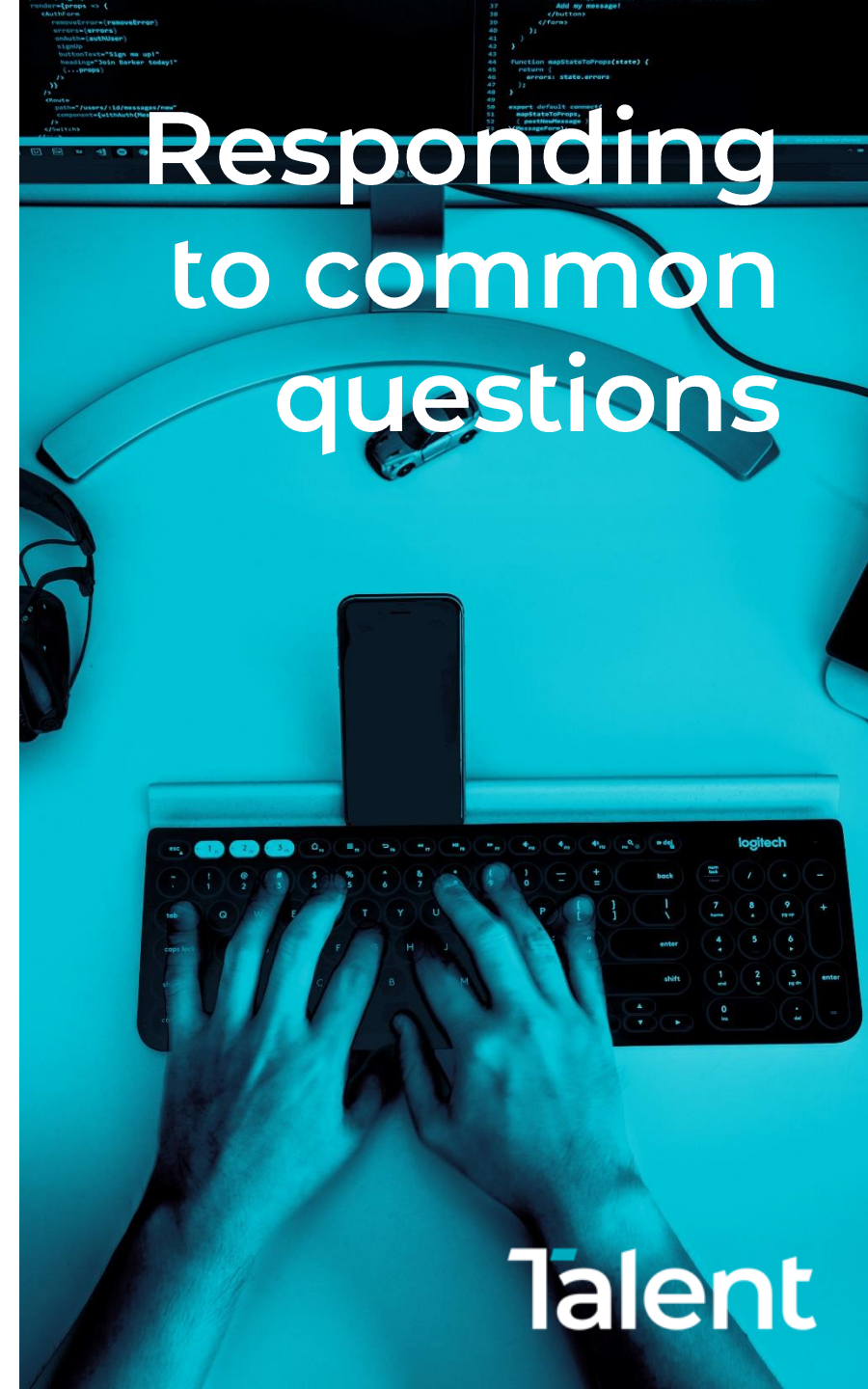
The interviewer is looking for work related strengths that directly align with the position you are interviewing for. Mention a number of your strengths and most importantly be prepared to give examples that illustrate your particular skills.



# 04

## What is your greatest weakness?

This is a challenging question, but every candidate has areas they need to develop. Highlighting your areas of weakness and outlining how you are actively trying to improve them is what the interviewer is looking for. Choose a development area that is not a core requirement of the role. Place emphasis on what you've done to overcome your development area and not on what your weakness is. This could include training or seeking out a mentor or reskilling.





05

### **Why do you want to work here?**

Speak honestly and tell the interviewer's what you find appealing about working for the business? Explain to the interviewers how your goals are aligned with the objectives of the business and the position you are interviewing for. It's always good to offer a compliment about an area of the business you feel is impressive and better than others in the industry.

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06

### **Where do you see yourself in 5 years?**

Discuss your career goals and how this position and company relates to you achieving your goals. Include specifics on how you plan to accomplish these goals, this could include tertiary study, networking, or aligning with professional bodies. This demonstrates that you have a plan and you are personally motivated to take the initiative to successfully reach these goals.

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07

### **What is your biggest career accomplishment to date?**

Prepare an example of something you accomplished that is directly related to the job you are interviewing for. Use the accomplishment to highlight your skills and experience to demonstrate will benefit this company.



Responding  
to common  
questions

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# 08

## Why should we hire you?

Your 30 second 'me statement' will cover this question as you have prepared a summary of your key achievements and capabilities that meet or exceed the requirements of the position.

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# 09

## Do you have any questions for us?

Be prepared to ask incisive questions about the department, company or job during the interview. Prepare questions that will help you determine what will make you successful within the position and if this is an organisation that you want to work with.

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# 10

## Why did you leave your last position?

Focus on keeping this about yourself (rather than your previous employer) and staying positive. For example, your decision to move is to progress your career goals, or the company was moving in a different direction to where you wanted to take your career. Alternatively, you could state your role was restructured due to downsizing and you are now taking your career in the direction of *<an area relating to the company>*.



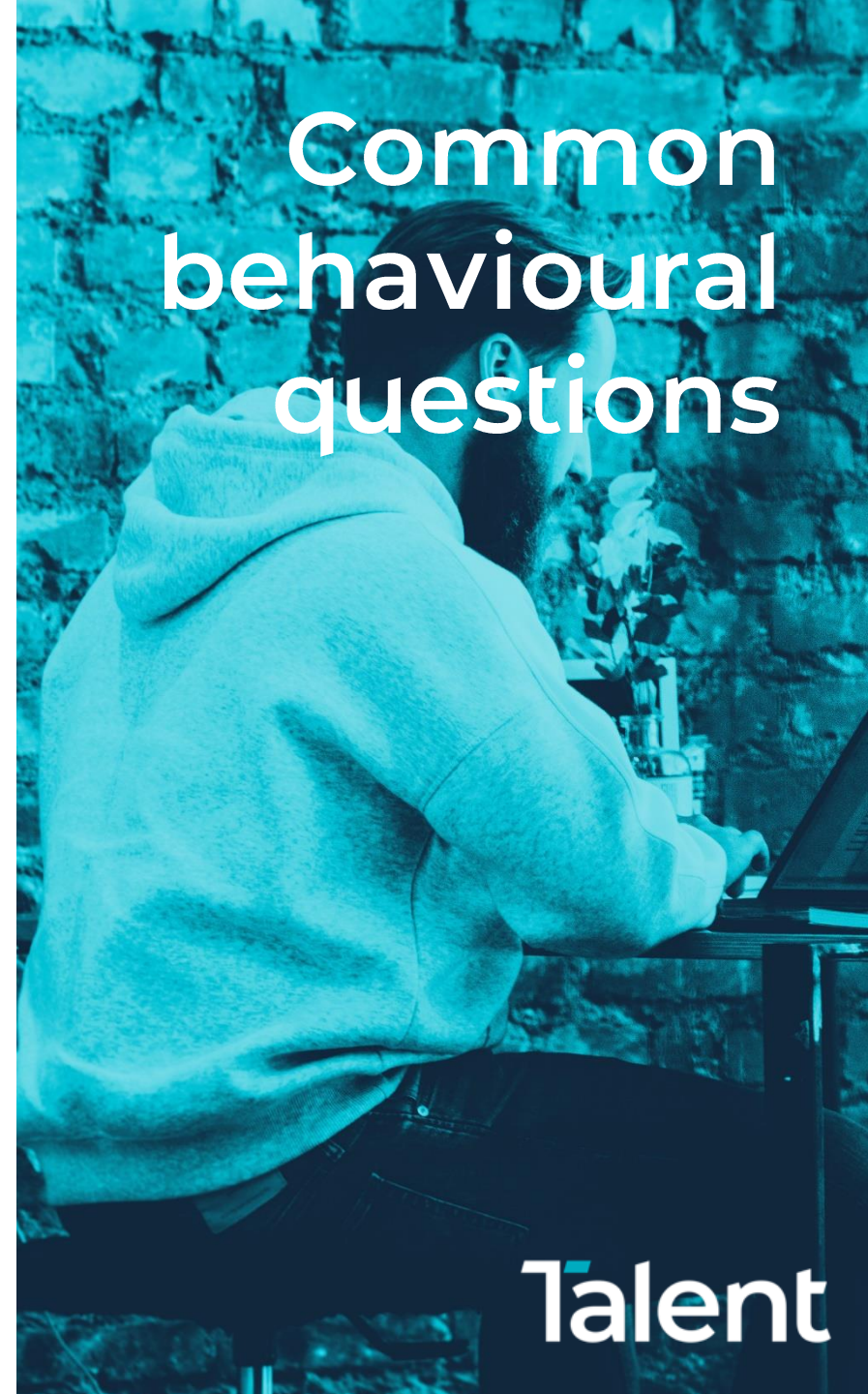
# Responding to common questions

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1. What are some of the most imaginative or innovative things you have done in your present position?
2. How have you motivated yourself to complete a task that you did not want to do? Talk us through an example.
3. What is the biggest problem that you faced in the past 6 months? How did you handle it?
4. Tell me about a time when you had to abruptly change what you were doing. How did you approach this?
5. Summarise a situation where you successfully persuaded others to do something or see your point of view.
6. Describe a situation where your work and personal priorities conflicted. How did you resolve this issue, take me through your process.
7. When have you had to introduce a new policy or idea? Take us through an example.
8. Tell us about a time when you have had to communicate with a range of stakeholders.
9. Describe a complicated problem that you have had to deal with on the job. How did you identify or gain a better understanding of the issue?
10. Tell me about one of the toughest teams you have had to work with. What made it difficult and what did you do?

# Common behavioural questions



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# Common behavioural questions

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- 11.** Tell us about the manager who was able to motivate you to do your best work? Provide an example of to show why their process worked for you.
- 12.** Can you give me an example of a team decision that you were involved in recently? What did you do to help the team reach the decision?
- 13.** Tell us about a difficult customer or client and how you were able to work with them to achieve a good outcome.
- 14.** Describe a situation when you went out of your way to ensure customer / client satisfaction.
- 15.** Tell us about a time when you had competing work demands. How did you manage this situation to the meet all deadlines?
- 16.** Tell us about a recent business problem that you solved. What actions did you take to solve it?
- 17.** Describe a recent occasion when you felt that your level of specialist knowledge was insufficient. What made you think this? What action did you take? What are your current strengths and weaknesses in this area?
- 18.** Looking back in your career, when were you most satisfied with the work you had completed? What was most satisfying about it?
- 19.** Tell us about a time when you have used creativity in the workplace to implement an improvement?
- 20.** Describe a situation when you were working under limited supervision.



**21.** Talk us through a situation when you were leading a team and had to manage a team member's poor performance.

**22.** Outline a situation where you have had to develop a budget and manage this throughout the financial year.

**23.** Provide us with an example of when you have built relationships within the business.

**24.** What are some of the biggest obstacles you have had to overcome to get where you are today? How did you overcome them?

**25.** Walk us through a situation that involved you having a key role in leading change.

**26.** Describe a situation when you have had to adapt to change within the workplace.

**27.** Can you provide us with an example of a difficult negotiation that were involved in?

**28.** Tell us about a time when you were involved in a conflict in the workplace.

**29.** Talk us through a situation when your integrity was compromised. What did you do?

**30.** Tell us about a project that you have been involved in that did not turn out as planned. What would you do differently in the future?



# Common behavioural questions

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# Talent for a better world of work

Lead the way  
Strive for better  
Give a damn