

GET THE JOB

Learning How to Tell Your Story

Employers want a narrative to go with experience and qualifications.

A comprehensive resume and well-crafted cover letter might get you in the door, but what happens in the interview will secure the job.

Hiring managers closely watch how candidates answer certain questions for clues on everything from maturity to leadership qualities. Discussing your journey and aspirations can help put it all in perspective.

INSIDE THE NUMBERS

Applicants take an average of 24 weeks to go through the hiring and interviewing process to find a new job. But it's not easy to get to that point: Just one in six completed applications typically leads to an interview request. One study found that the average job seeker applies to some 27 companies before securing an interview. So the pressure is on to do well.

WHAT TO SAY

Telling your story helps break the ice, but be careful not to reveal information that is too personal. Work on giving concise answers that draw a straight line to your point. A common problem is letting



difference between being hired or shown the door. Rambling, unfocused storytelling could point to a number of possible issues as their employee, from indecisiveness or a tendency to be unprepared.

FINDING FOCUS

If you having trouble figuring out where to edit an anecdote, consider using the so-called STAR model. Interview coaches swear by this process, which focuses on the situation, the task, the action and then the result. First, find a situation that best illustrates how you'd address the job requirements of this particular position within the company. Then focus on five factors in that situation: the challenge, the people involved, where and when it happened, and how you resolved the issue.

Next, discuss the task, specifically your plan to overcome this obstacle. A discussion of the actions taken to complete the task should follow, including those handled by others. Conclude your remarks by outlining the results, highlighting how the measures you took led to the positive outcome. At the same time, however, don't be afraid to discuss what went wrong, and how you might address any negative outcomes next time.

the middle portion of your anecdote drag on too long. Don't say two sentences when

one works just as well. Don't be afraid to recall moments where you weren't the main

character. Those times when you led a team or mentored someone could also be the

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