



## Breaking the Interview Code

Question Asked	What they actually mean	What they definitely do not mean
Tell me about yourself	Talk me through your CV and tell me how your experiences relate to this particular job.	Tell me your life history, hobbies and interests and take 20 minutes to do so.
What do you know about the company?.	Are you up to date with what our company is currently doing, our main successes and where we plan to go in the future. Prove you want to work here.	Please recite the first page of our website like everyone else and show you have done no original research.
What skills do you have for this job?	Give me a summary of your top three skills and make sure you've taken them from the Essential Criteria. Prove you know the job.	List me over 20 skills and make sure 90% will not relate directly to the job.
What is your main strength?	Pick something from the Essential Criteria that you believe to be most relevant to the position and give me an example of how you have used it. Prove you can match your skill to the job.	Tell me something totally unrelated to the job and don't explain it. Or tell me the heaviest weight you can lift in the gym.
What is your main weakness?	Tell me about something work related you struggle with and how you have been taking steps to overcome this. Show me you are proactive and looking to progress. Prove you have self-awareness	Tell me something critical to the job that you can't do or that you have no weaknesses. Or tell me about a health condition you have.
Can you give me an example of a time when....	Talk me through a practical, relevant example that will show me you have experience in this area. Tell me the Situation and set the scene, explain the Task, detail Action and what YOU did then tell me the Result (STAR). Prove you can transfer your previous experience to this job.	Please spend 20 minutes rambling about a story and with as much excess and unnecessary information as possible so that I forget the question.
Why should we hire you?	Give me a summary of your key skills and how they fit this position. Prove your suitability and your passion.	Give me an arrogant answer that will negate anything good you have previously said.
Do you have any questions?	Ask me something original and relevant that shows you are serious about wanting to work here. Prove you can use your initiative.	Tell me I answered them all in the interview without saying what you had planned to ask.

# Make Your Story Effective - focus, be specific, make it a positive outcome, make it personal



- **Listen** to the question asked
- **Pause and Prepare**
- Think of a **SPECIFIC** event
- **Organise** your thoughts
- Plan your answer in four stages using the **STAR** technique



## Situation

- Explain the background and context
- Set the scene
- Use Details
- *'When I was working at X ...'*



## Task

- Describe the problem or the task at hand.
- Use numbers wherever possible
- *'The planned delivery didn't arrive.../We were three people short...'*



## Action

- Explain what YOU did and how YOU did it
- Don't say what the team did, all about you
- *'I used my initiative to.../ I contacted.../ I calculated...'*



## Result

- Be specific with the outcome, benefits, results.
- *'The project was completed ahead of time and 30% under budget. / Sales increased 15%'*