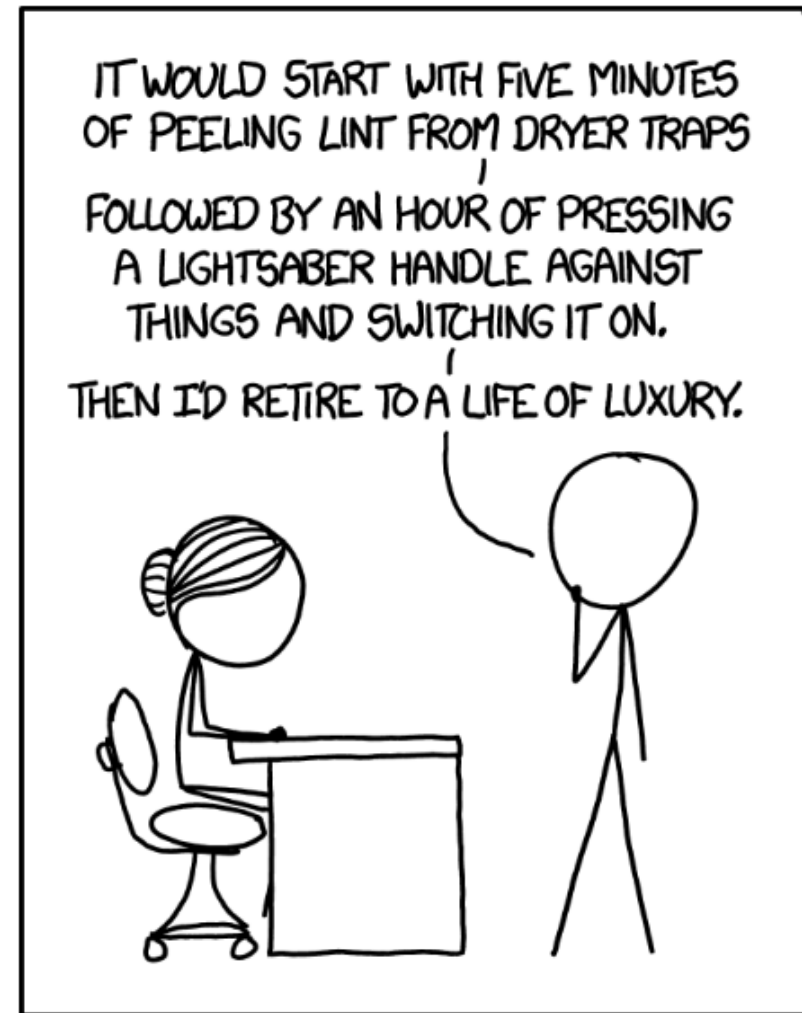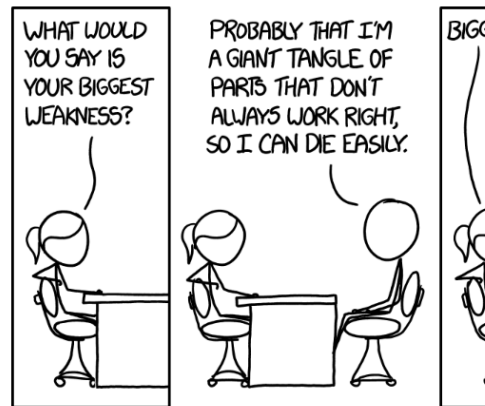# Interviewing skills

JULIE HOGAN

7/28/22

Outline

▶ Types of Interviews

▶ What to do before the interview

▶ Behavior-based interviewing

▶ Practice!!

▶ Resources

Types of interview

▶ Early stages:

- ▶ Screening

- ▶ Phone interviews

▶ You passed! What's next:

- ▶ Zoom interviews

- ▶ In-person interviews

▶ Structures:

- ▶ Rounds of interviews

- ▶ "Whiteboard" interviews

- ▶ Campus visits

When does your interview begin?

When does your interview begin?
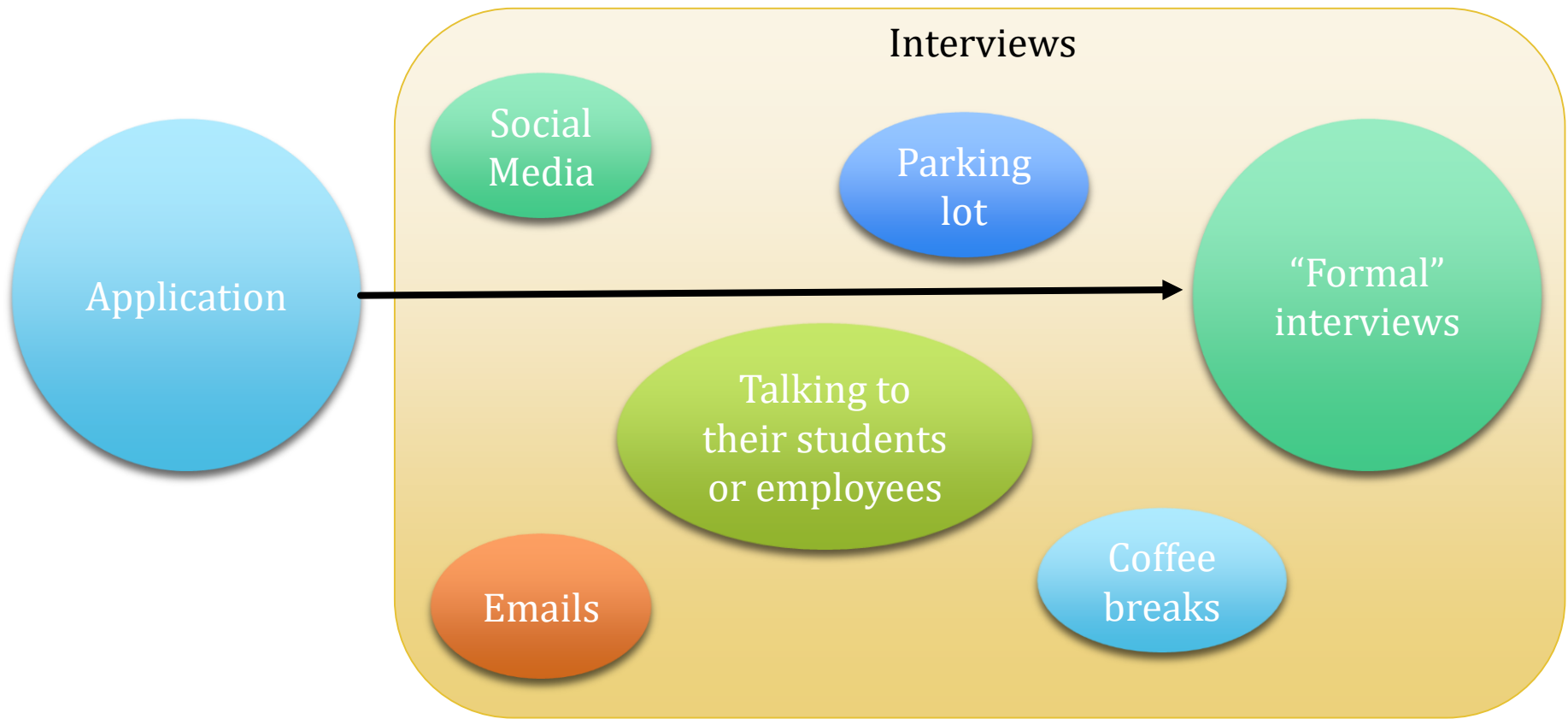
Prepare

- Study a company (university, research group's...) mission, vision, and/or values

  - Websites!

  - Links/text in job descriptions

  - In HEP: search for their funding award online and read the summary!
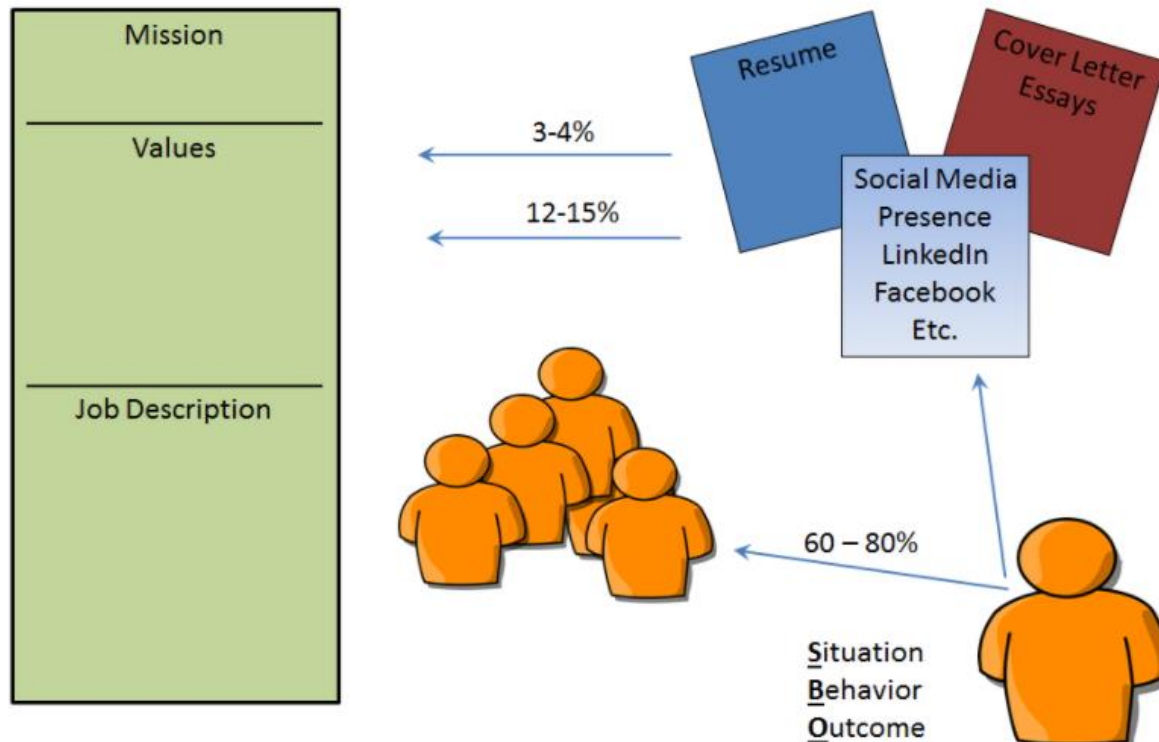
- Study the job posting

- Prepare questions for them

- P.R.A.C.T.I.C.E!

Prepare

▶ Plan:

    ▶ Clothes

    ▶ Route

    ▶ Timing

▶ Do:

    ▶ Arrive early

    ▶ Turn off notifications

    ▶ Smile!

▶ Don't:

    ▶ Overload scent

    ▶ Chew gum or eat

    ▶ Bring extra people

MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION

Behavior-based interviewing

- **History is the best predictor of future success**
- Employers write jobs based on their mission & values
- How do your experiences help you fit their needs?

Mission

Values

Job Description

3-4%

12-15%

Resume

Cover Letter
Essays

Social Media
Presence
LinkedIn
Facebook
Etc.

60 – 80%

Situation
Behavior
Outcome

Behavior-based interviewing

Situation — Describe an episode or situation that relates to the area they want to explore

Task — Your responsibilities and assignments for that situation

Action — How did you react to or handle that situation? What did you say and what did you do?

Response — What was the consequence? How did the situation resolve?

Behavior-based interviewing

Situation

Task

Action

Response

▶ Think about their mission/values

▶ Shine your qualifications and experience in practical ways

▶ Share knowledge/education background

▶ Focus on professional or educational experience

▶ Try to see why they are asking…

Behavior-based interviewing

Situation

Task

Action

Response

Need: Someone who can develop relationships with clients

Q: Tell me about a specific time you've built and nurtured a professional relationship?

Need: Ability to handle stressful people

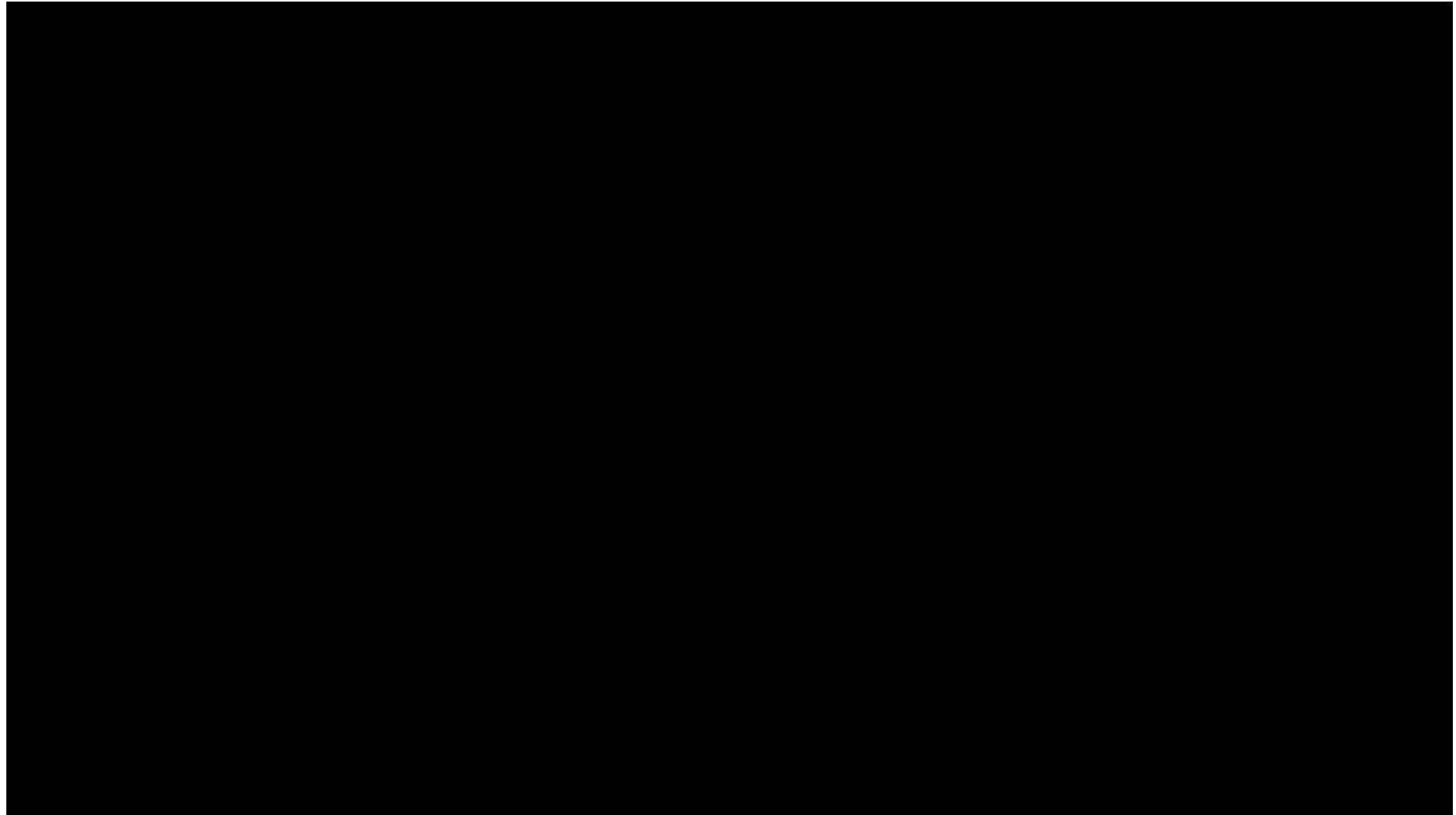Q: Tell me about your worst customer / client / coworker / boss

Need: Team player

Q: Tell me about how you get along with fellow students?

▶ What did he do well?

▶ What was weaker?

Sample

What is wrong with this interview story? Choose all that apply.

"My lab group decided to use the ping pong cannon for our lab project. We studied the muzzle velocity of the cannon by using a laser and photodetector to determine the speed of the ball as it left the cannon. We then went to the football field to take range measurements. By doing some computational modeling with MATLAB we could match the ranges we observed to drag coefficients. It was a great team experience."

Select one or more:

- ☐ a. Too much "we" language instead of "I" language.

- ☐ b. The scientific description is too technical for most interviewers.

- ☐ c. The results of the project are not mentioned.

- ☐ d. People outside Bethel might not know what "the ping pong cannon" is.
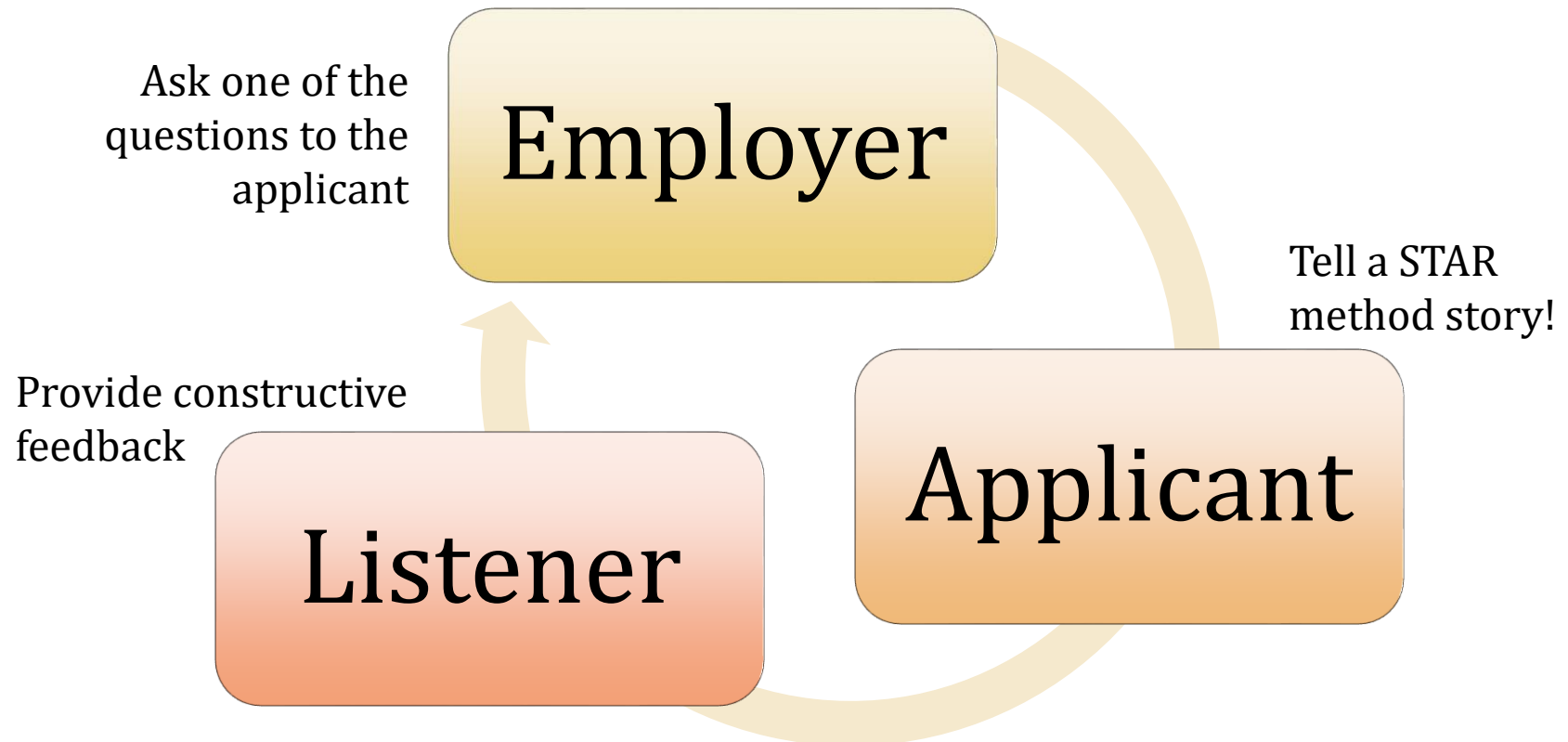
Sample

What is good about this interview story? Choose all that apply.

"My lab group decided to use the ping pong cannon for our lab project. We studied the muzzle velocity of the cannon by using a laser and photodetector to determine the speed of the ball as it left the cannon. We then went to the football field to take range measurements. By doing some computational modeling with MATLAB we could match the ranges we observed to drag coefficients. It was a great team experience."

Select one or more:

- ☐ a. It shows experimental design skills.

- ☐ b. It shares details of the measurement techniques and programming skills used in the project.

- ☐ c. It highlights teamwork, so it doesn't sound too boastful.

- ☐ d. It gives good details about the soft skills acquired during the project.

Practice!

▶ On Indico: example questions

▶ Breakout room assignment: rotate through these roles

Ask one of the
questions to the
applicant

Employer

Tell a STAR
method story!

Provide constructive
feedback

Listener

Applicant

Other common Q styles

▶ Contrary information

　　▶ Strengths/weaknesses

　　▶ Good/bad customers, group members, bosses

　　▶ Good/bad encounters, experiences

▶ On-the-spot coding

　　▶ Practice quick code flow diagramming in classes/research

　　▶ "Think out loud"

　　▶ Edge cases? Tests to pass?

　　▶ Quick pseudocode → actual language

▶ No interview at all! "Personal statement"

　　▶ See extra slides on Indico

Following up

▶ "How should I follow up with you about this position?"

▶ Thank-you email (phone call, card)

Choose the best example of a "thank-you" email:

Select one:

○ a. Hi Bob. thanks for interviewing me today it was awesome

○ b. Dear Mr. X,

Thank you for your time this afternoon. I appreciated the chance to interview for the mechanical engineering internship -- I believe this role at Company Z would be a good fit for my skills and will equip me to meet my future goals. I look forward to hearing back from you about this position.

Sincerely, Jason Y

○ c. Dear Mr. X,

I am intensely grateful for the condescension you showed in agreeing to interview me today. I have never had such an amazing interview experience! I felt like we had a deep connection that would be enhanced if I were to come and work for Company Z as a Mechanical Engineering Intern. I am sitting by the phone and will answer at any moment when you are able to call. Please do not keep me waiting! I am confident that I am the strongest candidate you will interview and that I will not disappoint you when you bring me onto your team.

Enthusiastically, Jason Y