

# Interview With Evidence

Let's build clear answers from experiences you can explain with confidence.

An interview does not require a perfect story about a perfect career. It requires relevant examples you can explain honestly. Let's prepare your evidence so you can listen, adapt, and have a useful conversation.

**What you will take away:** You will leave with one practiced example, questions for the employer, and a method for preparing more answers.

## 1. Start by understanding the work and format

Read the role description and identify capabilities the employer is likely to explore. Look for the work, not only the adjectives: coordinating a project, explaining information, handling a difficult interaction, or making a decision. Choose real experiences that help someone understand how you approach those tasks.

Confirm the interview format, participants, location or platform, and any task you need to prepare. Ask about access arrangements when needed. If you are invited to present or complete an exercise, follow its instructions and clarify anything ambiguous. Do not assume the employer wants the same format you used in your last interview.

**Your turn:** Choose three relevant capabilities and match each to one experience you could discuss.

## 2. Build a story without writing a script

Use situation, task, action, and result, often called STAR, as an outline. Set enough context for the listener to understand the problem. Explain your responsibility. Spend the most attention on what you personally did and why. Close with what happened and what you learned.

A result does not have to be a dramatic percentage. It can be a completed deliverable, clearer handoff, or an outcome you can describe honestly. If the result was mixed, say what did and did not work and how you adjusted. For a team achievement, separate your action from the collective outcome. Keep brief notes so you can adapt to the question instead of reciting a memorized paragraph.

**Your turn:** Write one sentence for each part. Circle the action that belongs specifically to you.

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### 3. Let's make one answer more useful

#### A worked example · illustrative

**Question:** "Tell me about a time you improved coordination."

**Starting point:** "We had a group project and I made sure everything went well."

**Clearer version:** "Our student team had research in separate files, which made the final draft difficult to assemble. I was responsible for combining the sections. I created a shared outline, confirmed who owned each section, and asked teammates to flag missing evidence in the same document. We submitted a combined draft that identified each section's sources. I learned to agree on a shared structure before dividing the work."

**Why it works:** We can follow the problem, individual action, observed outcome, and learning without an invented efficiency claim.

### 4. Choose evidence that fits your career stage

#### Make it fit your situation

**Starting out:** Projects, campus jobs, service, athletics, and student organizations can supply examples. Explain the actual responsibility and connect the behavior to the role.

**Changing careers:** "Customer support taught me to identify recurring issues and document them clearly. I am applying that foundation to project coordination while building my scheduling skills." Be ready with evidence for the transferable skill and the learning.

**Leading others:** Explain the decision, constraints, tradeoffs, and collaboration. Distinguish the direction you set from the work your team carried out.

If you have not used a requested skill, acknowledge the gap, discuss related experience, and explain a credible learning approach. You do not have to pretend you already know everything.

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### 5. Practice listening as well as answering

Listen to the full question. Pause, choose your example, and ask for clarification if needed. Begin with a direct answer before adding context. For "Tell me about yourself," connect your current direction, a relevant thread in your experience, and why this opportunity makes sense. Keep personal details relevant to what you want to share professionally.

Practice aloud with someone who can tell you what they understood. Ask: "Was my contribution clear? Did I answer the question?" Test virtual audio, camera, and any screen-sharing task. Keep a contact route for connection problems. In a panel, address the questioner while including the group naturally. Follow the process's rules for independent responses and permitted tools; do not rely on an undisclosed live-answer tool.

### 6. Use the conversation to assess the opportunity

You are also learning whether the role fits. Prepare questions about priorities, support, collaboration, and expectations. Try: "What would you want the person in this role to understand first?" or "Where are the most difficult handoffs between this team and its partners?" Adapt to what has already been answered.

Afterward, record the questions, examples you used, and one improvement for next time. Follow the stated next-step process. If you send a thank-you message, mention something specific and keep it accurate. A positive informal comment is not a confirmed offer.

**Check your progress:** Can a practice listener explain your contribution, and can you name what you still need to learn about the role?

## PUT IT INTO PRACTICE / INTERVIEWS

# Your practice worksheet

Use a notebook or a copy of this page. Work with one real situation, then keep your answers for the next time you need them.

**Question and capability:** The question I am practicing is \_\_\_\_\_. It asks me to show \_\_\_\_\_.

**Situation and task:** The situation was \_\_\_\_\_. My responsibility was \_\_\_\_\_.

**My action:** I personally \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

**Result and learning:** What happened was \_\_\_\_\_. I learned or would change \_\_\_\_\_.

**My question:** One thing I need to understand about the opportunity is \_\_\_\_\_.

## Before you put it to use

- I understand the role and interview format.
- My examples show relevant actions from real experience.
- My contribution is distinct from the team outcome.
- I practiced aloud and used specific feedback.
- My materials, technology, and access needs are prepared.
- I have questions that help me assess the role.

## Selected references

Harvard MCS: [Interviewing](#)

CareerOneStop: [Get Ready to Interview](#)

## Make your next move clearer.

For more practical guides and tools, come back to [eriii.com](http://eriii.com). Want feedback on your own situation? [Let us work through it together.](#)