PG Essentials: Beyond the Basics
Presenting yourself in person

Elizabeth Wilkinson
Careers Consultant (Postgraduates)
What we’ll cover

• All change!
  Interviews: the new orthodoxy

• Find the feeling

• Thinking in bullets

• What’s in shot?
Revision: a test

What do the following stand for?

- **CAR**  Context  Actions  Result
- **STAR**  Situation  Task  Actions  Result
- **STARR**  Situation  Task  Actions  Result  Reflection

**Principle:**
Best predictor of future performance is that you’ve done something similar in the past
Interview fashions – follow cultural trends?
The search for authenticity

- Work experience & internships
- Assessment Centres – expensive
- Immersive environments – how you react
  - Game based scenarios
  - Virtual reality exercises
- Situational judgement tests
- Strengths based interviews
What are “strengths”?  

- Bit of a mixture?  
  - Things you love doing  
  - Behaviours that come naturally to you  
  - Values  
  - What motivates you  

- Examples:  
  - Optimism; Resilience; Attention to detail; Curiosity; Pride; Courage; Authenticity; Creativity; Writer; Enabler; Humour …
## Your strengths profile

### Realised Strengths
Strengths you use and enjoy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perform well</th>
<th>Energising</th>
<th>Higher use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use wisely</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Unrealised Strengths
Strengths you don’t use as often

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perform well</th>
<th>Energising</th>
<th>Lower use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use more</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Learned Behaviours
Things you’ve learned to do but may not enjoy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perform well</th>
<th>De-energising</th>
<th>Variable use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use when needed</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Weaknesses
Things you find hard and don’t enjoy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perform poorly</th>
<th>De-energising</th>
<th>Variable use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use less</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who is using strengths?
Strengths based interviews

• Lots of quick paced questions
  – 20+ per hour; looking at 8-10 strengths, 2 questions each

• *Won’t* be prompted by interviewer to expand on answers – but offering examples is good

• Warm up questions – get you talking

• Forced response:
  – Do you prefer to start a task or finish it?
  – Do you keep your promises?

• Scenario based questions:
  – Imagine you’ve started a new job and have a lot to learn quickly. How would you feel and what would you do?
What are they looking for?

- Ability *plus* energy and motivation
- Type of language you use - express yourself!
  - I love to…; I really enjoy…; I get real satisfaction from…
- Body language
  - Face to face?
    - Lean in, smile, use hands, eye contact
  - Phone based?
    - Still smile, use hands, stand up?
Example of scoring

- Calibration – those warm up questions
  - What’s high and low for *you*?
  - Don’t have to be an extrovert

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strength-based scoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score 0: answers the questions but lacks interest, does not give examples. Struggles to find the right words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score 3: shows some interest and energy their answer and gives perhaps one example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score 5: clearly energised by the question and fills their answer with lots of examples, can’t stop talking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preparing for strengths based interviews

• Understand your strengths:
  – What drives you?
  – What comes naturally to you?

• Mine your life for examples
  – Show how you have used your strengths
  – Enlist support of friends and family to remind you

• Understand your own history
  – Any formative experiences which underpin your strengths
Your Most **Visible** Strengths

Your realised strengths are the things you enjoy doing, do well and use often. Explore your realised strengths below. See how you can use these strengths to help you get your next job, or to perform better in what you’re doing already.

**Keep Doing These**

- **Change Agent**
  Change energises you.
  [Learn More](#)

- **Counterpoint**
  You love to bring an alternative perspective to any situation.
  [Learn More](#)

- **Creativity**
  Creativity is at your core.
  [Learn More](#)

Your **Invisible** Strengths

Your unrealised strengths are the things you enjoy doing and do well, but that you use less often. Explore your unrealised strengths below. Use these strengths more to help you get a job, or to perform better in what you’re doing already.

**Use These More Often**

- **Enabler**
  You tend to enjoy developing people so they can do things for themselves.
  [Learn More](#)

- **Mission**
  You enjoy doing things that give your life meaning and purpose.
  [Learn More](#)

- **Optimism**
  You tend to see the best side of any situation, with a steady belief that things will work out well in the future.
  [Learn More](#)
Thinking in bullets

Avoiding brain-fade needs prep!

- Revise
- Organise
- Focus

Revise your life - note form, not verbatim answers

- Lists, if they work for you
- Post-it notes useful for phone interviews
- Mind maps – also useful for organising
Make it memorable and visual for easier recall

- Life examples main branches
  - skills & strengths are sub-branches

or

- Skills/strengths main branches
  - life examples are sub-branches
Focus your examples

For each skill or strength:

- Get to the point first
- Add a “micro-example”
- Be prepared to expand if they want more detail

Examples – STAR? RSTAR works better:

- Result
- Situation, Task
- Actions
- Reflection
Example:

“I like pushing boundaries. For example, recently I opted to create completely new materials for an interview skills course, instead of relying on tried and tested - but old - materials. I think this better reflects current and emerging recruitment practice.”
Think in threes

• Helps with structure and recall
  – Three key strengths/skills
  – Three reasons why you should get this job
  – Three key questions you would want answered for this job
What’s in shot?
The rise of the video interview

The share of employers using specific selection instruments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection Instrument</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CV/application screening</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychometric tests</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone interviews</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video interviews</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final face-to-face interviews</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment centres</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rise of video interviewing

- Live video – Skype/Facetime, video conferencing
  - Often used in academic interviewing, across distances (reduces costs!)
- Recorded video …
Recorded video

- Get invited, within (often short) timescale
- Log on to platform – SONRU, Launchpad …
- Tutorials, instructions, practice
- Pre-recorded questions – you have to record answers … in real-time
  - Once you start, for each question:
  - Get to review question for 30 seconds (no recording)
  - In the following 2 minutes your response will be automatically recorded
  - Generally no chance to change or edit
What the employer sees
Set yourself up for success

Check the technology beforehand

• [https://manunicareersblog.com/2013/02/20/skype-interviews-look-good](https://manunicareersblog.com/2013/02/20/skype-interviews-look-good)
Set yourself up for success

• Remove potential for noise
  – Flatmates, children, pets, phones
• Dress for an interview
  – All the way down (in case you do get interrupted and have to stand up)
  – Wear light colours to enhance contrast
• Review what’s in shot behind you
• Plug in or charge your laptop; turn off notifications; close applications
• Light your face - smile - ACTION!