**Behavioral Interview Guide**

## Behavioral answer brainstorming practices:

* Go through your resume and tell a story about each experience on your resume that you could use for a common job question like overcoming a challenge, strength/weakness, leadership, failure, etc.
* Imagine you just finished your behavioral interview and absolutely killed it. Write a half a paragraph from your interviewer’s perspective about the interview. Think about how you want them to describe you and how they would see you fitting in at the company. Now think about what you want to share about yourself to get that review
* If you wanted someone to describe you in three words after your interview, having never met you before, what would you want those three words to be

## Guaranteed questions:

* Tell me about yourself/walk me through your resume
  + Absolutely guaranteed you will get this question in every interview so you should be a pro at answering this
  + Keep it 60-90 seconds
  + Cover your educational background (college, grade, major)
  + What led you to where you are today
    - Include the skills that you enjoy utilizing or the experiences that brought you here that are relevant to the job
  + Why you’re excited about this role and this company
* Why [company name]?
  + Do your research and be specific
  + If applicable and it seems natural, mention people you spoke with, but don’t force it
* Why [industry]?
  + I think the best thing you can do is to not immediately respond with what you think they want to hear. Before your interview take the time to reflect on why you’re pursuing this career path. If you can’t come up with a good reason that feels honest to you, you might want to consider something that is more aligned with what you’re interested in
* Strength/weakness
  + Have the strength be something that either you think people wouldn’t expect, that relates to the job description, or fits the “theme” of your behavioral answers
  + Don’t pick things that are incredibly basic like hard-working because everyone applying is hard-working, so really think about what makes you unique

## Common questions and how to approach them:

* Questions
  + Time you experienced failure and how you dealt with it
  + Time you were on a team and one of your teammates wasn’t pulling their weight
  + Time you showed leadership (formal or informal setting)
  + Time you worked on a team
  + What role do you typically play on a team
    - If you say leader you better be able to describe your leadership style
  + Time you experienced success (academic or not academic)
  + Time you were in conflict with a superior
  + Why did you decide to go to CU
  + Tell me something about you that’s not on your resume
  + How do you handle pressure
* Your answer
  + Remember the STAR method
    - S - situation (set the scene)
    - T - task (what needed to be done)
    - A - action (what did you do)
    - R - result (what impact did your actions have)
  + Show don’t tell → share a story, but make sure you keep it succinct and related to the question
  + Have some variety to your answers
    - Utilize different situations (student orgs, class, sports, work, etc) and different skills (hard-working, leadership, perseverant, etc)
  + Summarize the question and your answer as your last sentence
    - This is especially good if you’re stuck on how to end something or you accidentally went on a tangent and you’re worried you didn’t properly answer the question
* The way you deliver your answer
  + Keep answers to 30-60 seconds
  + Don’t be stiff as a board → be animated, change your tone, show emotion, use hand motions, smile
    - Don’t force it, but the more you look like you’re having a normal conversation and enjoying yourself the more engaged they will be

## Tips for behavioral interviews:

* Fake it ‘til you make it
  + If you’re uncomfortable they’re going to be uncomfortable. Body language and tone are very important with this, so film yourself on your laptop giving answers and see how you answer questions.
  + And if you’re giving an answer to something, behavioral or technical, don’t end what you’re saying in a higher pitch as if it’s a question. Keep your voice even and say it with confidence.
* Don’t memorize
  + Imagine trying to get to know someone and they’re giving memorized answers about themselves and their experiences, you want it to feel like a conversation
* Practice on zoom and in person
  + Record yourself presenting to your computer camera
    - Make sure you have good lighting, a neutral background with no distractions, somewhere quiet, and speakers that work
  + Practice interviewing in person with anyone you can who can give good feedback
* Be early to your interview whether it’s in person or online
* Don’t lie
  + Should be obvious, but this is just a stupid idea, don’t do it
  + You can change some minor details to make a story more succinct or better communicate a point, but don’t make up a story
* Show your personality and interests
  + One way to have the easiest interview ever is to connect with your interviewer on a personal level. Some of it is up to chance, but talk about your interests if it seems appropriate and if you have a common interest then talk about it. Trust that the interviewer will redirect the conversation when necessary
* Ask unique questions at the end
* Send a thank you email afterward
  + Try to reference something specific from the interview, if applicable