

EDITORIAL GUIDE

STAR Story Bank

Build a reusable library of behavioural stories that prove your capability before you walk into an interview.

INTERVIEW ESSENTIALS

tenure.law

What You Get

A structured framework to develop 6–8 concrete, interview-ready stories. Not vague anecdotes. Not "we achieved X as a team." Stories where you, specifically, made a decision, owned an outcome, and handled real complexity.

Why This Matters

Behavioural interviews test pattern-matching. Interviewers ask "tell me about a time you..." because they want to see how you actually think, handle pressure, and make tradeoffs. Most candidates fail not because they lack experience - they fail because they tell weak stories: generic, too long, or missing their actual contribution.

When you come in with a prepared story bank, you answer every question calmly, with details, in two minutes. That's confidence. That's hire-able.

How to Use This

- 1 Start with story templates**
Fill in 6–8 stories using the worksheet. The prompts force specificity.
- 2 Mark competency coverage**
Use the Story-to-Question Map to identify gaps.
- 3 Record both versions**
Practice 60-second and 2-minute versions aloud. Timing matters.
- 4 Review before interviews**
Review stories most relevant to the role. Not to memorise - to prime memory.
- 5 Adapt in real time**
Listen to the question, then pick the story that best answers it.

What Makes a Strong Story

A strong story has six elements that prove you can think and act:

1. Specificity

Names. Numbers. Timelines. Departments. Real constraints.

STRONG

I was managing operations for three GCC offices - Abu Dhabi, Riyadh, Dubai. Each had a separate P&L. By October, we had three different procurement processes.

WEAK

I managed a difficult team situation.

2. Ownership

Show YOUR decisions, YOUR actions.

STRONG

I identified our hiring cycle was averaging 8 weeks. I modeled what a 4-week cycle would require. I ran a trial with one team.

WEAK

We streamlined the hiring process.

3. Stakes

Why did it matter? What was the consequence of failure?

STRONG

If we didn't align by Q4, we'd lose the discount tier - worth roughly \$200K a year.

WEAK

This was an important project.

4. Judgment

Show your reasoning. Why that approach?

STRONG

I could have mandated the process. But regional heads were protective of autonomy. So I framed it as cost-saving, not control.

WEAK

I made the decision and it worked.

5. Measurable Outcome

Numbers stick. Impact, not activity.

STRONG

We captured \$187K in savings in year one. Vendor onboarding dropped from 15 days to 4 days.

WEAK

The project was successful.

6. Reflection

Self-awareness and growth mindset.

STRONG

Looking back, I spent too much time on the proposal deck before talking to office heads. I'd have three conversations first next time.

WEAK

I nailed it.

Competency Coverage

Competency	What It Tests
Leadership	Influenced direction? Led through ambiguity?
Conflict / Difficult People	Managed competing interests? Pushed back?
Failure / Setback	Something didn't work - how did you recover?
Prioritisation / Tradeoffs	Chose between two good options with consequences?
Influence Without Authority	Persuaded someone who didn't report to you?
Ambiguity / Uncertainty	Operated with incomplete info and moved forward?
Execution Under Pressure	Delivered on a compressed timeline?
Cross-Cultural / Cross-Regional	Bridged different regional or cultural expectations? (GCC-critical)

Pick one story per competency area. You want 6–8 that show range and depth. Pick stories where you own the decision, stakes are real, and outcome is measurable.

Adapting One Story for Multiple Questions

Example: You inherited a team of five with low morale and 40%% turnover. Over 18 months, you created feedback cycles and a development budget, reducing turnover to 12%%.

Leadership question: Lead with the diagnosis and systematic approach.

Challenge question: Lead with constraints - inherited problems, no budget, sceptical team.

Influence without authority: You couldn't remove underperformers, so you created conditions where good people stayed.

Failure / setback: Lead with your first attempt that people rejected, what went wrong, what you did differently.

Common Mistakes

Stories that are too long

If it takes more than 2 minutes, you're over-explaining.

"We" did the work, not "I"

The interviewer has no idea what you did. Say: "I led a team of three. I prioritized features. I made the call."

No measurable outcome

"It was better" is not hire-able. "Cycle time dropped from 8 to 4 weeks" is.

Stories without stakes

"I managed a project." Why did it matter? What if it failed?