

CRITICAL INCIDENT INTERVIEW

Past behavior predicts future success

In a critical incident interview, recruiters don't ask what you would do – they ask what you did. Based on the Critical Incident Technique, interviewers identify key situations for the role and ask candidates for examples from their past. The goal: to understand how someone behaved in real-life challenges, rather than relying on textbook answers or socially desirable statements. This structured format has high predictive validity and is widely used, especially in leadership and competency-based hiring.

Show, don't tell – use the STAR method

To succeed in a critical interview, candidates must prepare real stories. The job posting might call for «leadership skills» – but it won't name the exact scenarios. You must identify such situations yourself and prepare responses using the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result). A well-told story makes your past performance visible – and gives recruiters a clear sense of how you work under pressure.