DISTRIBUTION SERVICES LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

INTERVIEW PREP
PARTICIPANT GUIDE



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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on moving to the interview phase of the DS Leadership Program! We believe developing our Associates is key to our success. We maintain our talent pipeline by preparing our Associates for advancement.

The purpose of this guide is to not only prepare you to interview for the DS Leadership Program, but to prepare for any position you may interview for in the future.

After completing this guide, you will have the tools to be able to

- ✓ Discuss the 3Cs of our culture.
- ✓ Create an Elevator Speech to introduce yourself to the interview panel.
- ✓ Describe interview tips you will apply and the interview panel's expectations for you during your interview.
- ✓ Highlight your accomplishments and results during your interview using the STAR technique.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

In this guide, you will be provided information and engage in activities that will help you practice and succeed in your interview.

This guide is divided into the following sections:

- ✓ Interview Preparation
  - 3Cs
  - Elevator Speech
- ✓ Interview Tips and Expectations
- ✓ STAR Technique
- ✓ Interview Prep Practice
  - Practicing using the Interview Tips and Expectations and STAR Technique

Feel free to reach out to your Supervisor, your Human Resource Business Partner (HRBP), and/or Learning & Development (L&D) for any assistance.

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

The following information and activities will prepare you for interviews for DS and in the future.

THE 3CS

During your career, our goal is to help you perform the best of your ability. The 3Cs Toolkit will help you identify leadership behaviors that reflect our inclusive culture. The 3Cs will enable you to succeed in your current and future roles.

ELEVATOR SPEECH

An Elevator Speech is a clear and succinctly prepared speech that explains your value add. This brief speech will also leave a unique impression that you are open and competent which in turn will lead the listener to want to interact with you more. The speech should last no longer than one to two minutes (the time of a short elevator ride) and be about 4-5 sentences.

YOUR ELEVATOR SPEECH

Directions: Write your Elevator Speech and practice presenting it with a peer or Supervisor.

INTERVIEW TIPS AND EXPECTATIONS

PREPARATION

- ✓ Familiarize yourself with our 3Cs
- ✓ Partner with Supervisor and/or Learning & Development Team
- ✓ Create or update resume
- ✓ Research and practice interview questions
- ✓ Describe how you overcome challenges
- ✓ Prepare questions to ask the interview panel

WHAT TO EXPECT

- ✓ Panel Interview, consisting of Managers, Human Resources, & Supervisors
- ✓ Questions that are based on the 3Cs.
- ✓ Behavioral based questions that focus on past experiences and behaviors, phrased as
    - "Tell me about a time when…" or "Describe a time when…"
    - Include follow up questions such as "What did you do next?"
    - Seeking how candidates cope with challenges and find solutions
- ✓ Utilize the STAR technique to respond to the questions
- ✓ Make eye contact with the interviewer and look at the other panel members as you finish the rest of your comments, so each person feels included in the conversation

- ✓ If you do not understand the question, ask the interviewer to repeat or re-phrase the question
- ✓ If you need a moment to think about your answer it is ok to say 'that is a great question, let me think about that for a moment'

POST INTERVIEW

- ✓ Thank each interviewer for their time
- ✓ Ask any program relevant questions you may have
- ✓ Incorporate any feedback you receive

STAR TECHNIQUE

The **STAR Technique** is an excellent tool to help you present your best self in an interview. Using this technique will help you organize your thoughts when highlighting your relevant experience and abilities. This technique can be used in both resumes and interviews.



Situation/Task	Action	Result
Explain the event that took place/the task that needed to be completed.	What action(s) did you take to respond to the situation/task?	What was the result of your action(s)?
e.g., We needed to select 1,000 units in one hour.	e.g., I strategically reorganized the lanes so we could flow units more quickly.	e.g., We were able to select the units in the needed time frame.

STAR SENTENCE STARTERS

Use the following to clarify your statements and make a cohesive and clear response to the interview questions.

SITUATION/TASK

Useful sentence starters are

In my previous role as a _____, I was responsible for…
During a project, I worked on…
My supervisor gave me the task of…

Example: Last year during peak when I was a trainer, my Supervisor gave me 8 new Associates to train within a month.

ACTION

Useful sentence starters are

I partnered with…
I demonstrated _____ by doing...
I researched…

Example: I partnered with my Supervisor to observe me to ensure I was training the new Associates effectively. I demonstrated I was able to receive/apply the feedback and use my skills to teach new Associates.

RESULT

Useful sentence starters are

As a result, I was able to…
I achieved…
Next time, I would…

Example: As a result, I successfully trained new Associates. They remained in our department and our team's performance was above expectations. From this experience, I am confident in my ability to develop others.

INTERVIEW PREP PRACTICE

The purpose of this activity is to help you apply what you learned to be successful in your interview. Follow the directions for the solo activity and partner activity.

SOLO ACTIVITY

Read the first interview question on the next page and write your individual response as if you were in an interview. Remember to use the STAR technique.

PARTNER ACTIVITY

You will participate in a mock interview after you and your partner completed the solo activity.

Interviewer tips:

- ✓ Ask the interviewee the interview question from the solo activity.
- ✓ Give the interviewee time to respond.
- ✓ Feel free to use any additional questions if more information is needed such as “What did you do to resolve the problem?” or “How did you approach the situation?”
- ✓ Take notes.
- ✓ After the interview is completed, give the interviewee feedback on
    - How well they utilized the STAR technique in response to the question.
    - Any additional interview feedback such as body language or tone.

Interviewee tips:

- ✓ Answer the question to the best of your ability.
- ✓ Use the tips we provided in class (e.g., making eye contact).
- ✓ Take your time. You can ask the interviewer to repeat or rephrase the question.
- ✓ Remember to reflect on the responses you wrote utilizing the STAR technique.

MOCK INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Directions: Use the STAR method to respond to these questions. This will help you prepare for your interview.

Describe a time when you had to seek your peers for support to solve a difficult problem.

S-Situation **T-Task**	
A-Action	
R-Results	

Interviewer Notes

ADDITIONAL INTERVIEW PREP PRACTICE QUESTION

Directions: Use the STAR method to respond to these questions. This will help you prepare for your interview.

Describe a time when you made a mistake with a negative impact. How did you resolve the issue?

S-Situation **T-Task**	
A-Action	
R-Results	

Interviewer Notes

ADDITIONAL INTERVIEW PREP PRACTICE QUESTION

Directions: Use the STAR method to respond to these questions. This will help you prepare for your interview.

Discuss a time when you had conflict with a peer. How did you resolve the conflict?

S-Situation **T-Task**	
A-Action	
R-Results	

Interviewer Notes

Notes

Notes

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT



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PRE-WORKSHOP PLANNING/CONSIDERATIONS

Time: Approximately 1 hour-1.5 hours

- It depends on how many Associates are attending each workshop session.
- It's best to add buffer time in case of questions/request for additional practice.
- Give at least 30 minutes to complete the Interview Prep Practice activities.

Number of workshops: approximately 2-3 workshops (accounting for all shifts if needed)

Room: A large enough space free of distractions with chairs/tables to allot for number of participants. Make sure it's not cramped because it can be noisy with Interview Prep practice activity, especially in a small space. No presentation equipment is required.

Attendees:

- Limit the number of Associates (under 10 per workshop) if possible to allow for the best experience.
- Invite the Associate's Supervisor to attend the workshop. They can work directly with their Associate(s) in session and learn the interview techniques to support their Associate(s) after the workshop.
- *Optional*: Invite the Associate's Manager if they'd like to attend. They can serve as a mock interview panel in session and reinforce what was learned in session.

Materials:

- *The DS Leadership Interview Prep Guide* should be printed and given to each Associate and other participants (preferred).
- *The DS Leadership Interview Prep Facilitator Guides* and *DS Leadership Interview Prep Guides* (for facilitators' reference)
- Pens and highlighters
- Sign in sheet (if required)
- A copy of the 3Cs toolkit or copies of the 3Cs toolkit for each Associate (preferred)

INTRODUCTION

DS Interview Prep Guide Reference
Page #: 4 **Section #: 1**
Facilitator Notes
Discuss an overview of the introduction and goals. **Say**: “This workshop will prepare you to interview for this program and any position within _. In this workshop, we will discuss an overview of _’s 3Cs. You will create an Elevator Speech to introduce yourself to the interview panel, discuss interview tips and expectations, and use the STAR technique to highlight your accomplishments during your interview.”

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

DS Interview Prep Guide Reference
Page #: 4 **Section #: 2**
Facilitator Notes
Discuss an overview of what to expect during the workshop. **Say**: “Today we will first discuss an overview of the 3Cs and how they are essential to _’s values. Then, we will create an Elevator speech, review the Interview tips and the Interview panel’s expectations. After, we will practice the STAR technique and have mock interviews.”

COMPANY CULTURE

DS Interview Prep Guide Reference
Page #: 5 **Section #: 1**
Facilitator Notes
Discuss an overview of the 3Cs of our company culture. You can hand out the 3Cs toolkit to the Associates to view as discussing the 3Cs (or preferably copies for them to keep). As an overview of the 3Cs, emphasize that the Interview Panel will be asking interview questions based on the 3Cs. The Supervisors can review the 3Cs with their Associates and/or the team can hold a separate session for an overview of the 3Cs at a different time. **Say**: “The 3Cs represent _’s values and behaviors of successful leaders. The Interview Panel will be asking behavior-based questions based on the 3Cs. We will discuss an overview of the 3Cs and the 3C Toolkit. Later, we will practice responding to interview questions based on the 3Cs.”

ELEVATOR SPEECH

DS Interview Prep Guide Reference

Page #: 5

Section #: 2

Facilitator Notes

Provide an overview of what the purpose and what consists of an Elevator Speech.

Say: "An Elevator Speech is a speech you will prepare to introduce yourself: who you are, your role(s) at _, and your goals at _. Discuss your value add such as what skills you have that will help you become a successful leader. You may also add an interesting fact or hobby you have (keep it professional) to make your personality stand out. Overall, be mindful of what's it in it for your audience."

Activity 1: Provide an example of an Elevator Speech. Then, ask the class to discuss what are the strengths and opportunities of the example Elevator speech.

You may create your own or use this example.

Example Elevator Speech

Participant: Hello, My name is Bella.

Sr. Leader: Why did you join _?

Participant: Well, I previously worked in _ stores for 5 years as an Associate. I became an MC here because I wanted to understand the distribution side of the business. I enjoy learning a process from the ground up. By joining _ as an MC, I was able to gain an understanding of the business model. The next step for me is to build on my Operations knowledge. I enjoy a challenge, and I look forward to the possibility of leading a team and driving for results.

Answers:

Strengths

- Discussed relevant background: 5 years of being an Associate in the stores is transferable skillset in Distribution Operations
- Last sentence conveys 3Cs:

Opportunities

- Share more about herself individually and be memorable
- Uses jargon, question is: is it value add (does it convey understanding? Or does it sound like reciting?)

YOUR ELEVATOR SPEECH

DS Interview Prep Guide Reference
Page #: 5 **Section #: 3**
Facilitator Notes
Activity 1: Instruct the participants to write their elevator speech and practice with a peer or Supervisor. **Activity 2**: After the class wrote their elevator speeches, have willing participants share their elevator speech and the class can provide feedback.

INTERVIEW TIPS AND EXPECTATIONS

DS Interview Prep Guide Reference
Page #: 6 **Section #: 1 (entire page)**
Facilitator Notes
Review the Interview Tips and Expectations with the class directly from this page.

STAR TECHNIQUE

DS Interview Prep Guide Reference
Page #: 7 **Section #: 1 (entire page)**
Facilitator Notes
Review what the STAR Technique is and its purpose. Then, review the examples from this page. Emphasize here about clear and measurable actions and results. **Say**: “The STAR technique is a great tool to help you organize your thoughts and help you present your best self during your interview. You will be able to highlight your experience, skills, and abilities.” “ST is for the Situation/Task is the event that took place/task that needed to be completed. An example is we needed to select 1,000 units in one hour.” “A is for Action that represents what you did to respond to the task. An example action is I strategically reorganized the lanes so we could flow units more quickly.” “R is for result which is what happened because of the actions you took. An example result is We were able to select the units in the needed time frame.” For additional information, you can provide tips: “Situation/Task: Tip: Be specific what was required (such as task deadline, peers involved (don’t mention names) Action: Tip: Use “I” statements. These statements will show your individual contribution in addition to highlighting your knowledge, skills, and abilities. Result: Tip: If it was not successful, explain what you learned and what you would do differently in the future” **Activity**: You can have the class create their own brief example.

STAR SENTENCE STARTERS

DS Interview Prep Guide Reference
Page #: 8 **Section #: 1 (entire page)**
Facilitator Notes
Review the STAR sentence starters on this page. You can provide more examples. **Activity**: You can give the class or ask the class for a situation/task example using one of the sentence starters. Then, have the class complete the Action and Result using the sentence starters.

INTERVIEW PREP PRACTICE: SOLO ACTIVITY

DS Interview Prep Guide Reference
Pages #: 9-10 **Section #1 (page 9) and Question 1 (page 10)**
Facilitator Notes
This solo activity is required. However, you may complete the activities in a variety of ways based on your time, attendees, and resources. Options are provided. **Say**: "The purpose of this activity is to help you apply what you learned to be successful in your interview." "First, we will complete a solo activity on our own. Then, we will practice a mock interview." **Activity**: (instructions are also provided in their guides). **Say**: "For this solo activity, you will respond to the first Mock Interview question on the following page as if you were in an interview. Remember to use the STAR technique." "The first question is '**Describe a time when you had to seek your peers for support to solve a difficult problem.**'" **Activity Options**: Once the Associates are finished with this activity, they can start practicing with their partner if they have time. If the Supervisors are present, they can assist their Associate with this activity.

INTERVIEW PREP PRACTICE: PARTNER ACTIVITY

DS Interview Prep Guide Reference
Pages #: 9-10 **Section #2 (page 9) and Question 1 (page 10)**
Facilitator Notes
This partner activity is required. However, you may complete the activities in a variety of ways based on your time, attendees, and resources. Options are provided. Ensure time for partners to conduct the interview and provide the interviewee with feedback. **Say**: "In this partner activity, you will participate in a mock interview. One participant will be an Interviewer and the other an interviewee. We will review the directions and interviewer and interviewee tips." Review the interviewer and interviewee tips on this page. **Note**: Based on which options you decide, alter your directions accordingly. **Activity Options**: If Supervisors do not attend, you can have the Associates swap roles as an interviewer/interviewee. Supervisors can interview their own Associate or another Associate. If there are less Supervisors than Associates, facilitators can participate.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

To enhance the Interview Prep Practice experience, with additional time/resources

- ✓ Allot time for extra practice and answering questions.
- ✓ Ask the participants to discuss their comfort level with the practice. They may request to continue practicing.
- ✓ Encourage the class to continue conducting their mock interviews by answering the additional interview questions on pages 11 and 12.
- ✓ Conduct a mock interview in front of the class. You can use one of the additional interview prep questions provided in their guide.
- ✓ Have an Associate volunteer to be interviewed or you can volunteer.
- ✓ Ask the class to provide feedback to the interviewee after their mock interview. Remind them to identify the interview tips and STAR technique methods that the interviewee did use or should use.

OPTIONAL MOCK INTERVIEW PANEL: PREP PRACTICE

A mock interview conducted by a mock interview panel can give additional practice and a feel for what the interview experience may be like.

To enhance the Interview Prep Practice experience, with additional time/resources, you may

- ✓ Create a mock interview panel for the class consisting of at least three people (Supervisors, Managers, HRBP, Building Champion, L&D).
- ✓ You may use one of the additional interview prep questions or develop your own. **Note: Do not use any of the interview questions provided in the Leadership Interview Guide.*
- ✓ Have a volunteer from the class be an interviewee or volunteer yourself.
- ✓ Ask the interviewee to introduce themselves using their Elevator Speech.
- ✓ Add another layer of informal questions to break the ice such as “Why did you apply to the Leadership Program?”
- ✓ Ask the class to provide feedback to the interviewee after their mock interview. Remind them to identify the interview tips and STAR technique methods that the interviewee did use or should use.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT



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