



Module 8

THE AIRLINE INTERVIEW





Welcome to home study Module 8 of the Flight Attendant training program from The Flight Attendant Academy.

If you have any questions as you go through this module, please feel free to reach out to me anytime via email at: carolyn@theflightattendantacademy.com

I look forward to seeing you in person for our 5-Day hands-on portion of the program.

Carolyn Dillon,
Executive Director of The Flight Attendant Academy

In Module 8 we will continue with the hiring process by getting into the specifics of “**The Interview**”. This will include the STAR method, body language, situational/scenario questions and more...

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THE INTERVIEW

NIGHT BEFORE INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

1. Suit pressed and ready; nails manicured.
2. Directions printed and studied, interview location, flight information.
3. Printed resumes – 2 copies.
4. Practice your “elevator pitch” (you will develop one in class) - go over interview questions.
5. Get some rest.



FIRST IMPRESSIONS AND BODY LANGUAGE

It's not just what you say.

Scientists have proven that we form our **first impression** about someone within the **first** 7 seconds of meeting them, and 55% of the **first impression** is based on appearance.

During an interview, your body language can tell more than words to interviewers, letting them know more about you than simply what you say.

Not everyone that looks good or says the right things will get the job; non-verbal communication can betray you if you are not careful.

These are 7 factors that constitute a first impression (positive or negative):

1. Wardrobe
2. Face
3. Hair
4. Body shape
5. Teeth
6. Fingernails
7. Body language



Body Language:

Integration of the following concepts can spell success and confidence:

- Use your eyes to express yourself. Maintain good eye contact, for 3 – 5 seconds.
- Always stand when meeting someone and use a firm handshake – shake with your whole hand, but no bone crushers. (*We will practice this in class.)
- Maintain good posture.
- No fidgeting or other nervous gestures.
- Use mild gesturing to be interesting – do not keep hands clasped.
- Lean forward while listening; nod to show understanding; always be positive.

Airlines evaluate applicants on several different attributes.

They will take note of your sense of humor, content of responses, energy, decisiveness and whether you present a professional personal appearance.

GROUP INTERVIEW



When recruiters ask you to do something in a certain order, follow the pattern they set for you. If they say, “Do not go until the previous person sits down” Do not go until the person sits down.

Examples of what might be asked. We say “might” because recruiters change their routine.

1. **State your name, where you’re from, and a couple of your most recent jobs. Example:** My name is Susan Smith. I’m from Fresno, CA, and my experience includes _____ years working as a _____ and I have also _____.
2. **State why these jobs have made you qualified to be a flight attendant for this airline. Example:** I enjoyed interfacing with customers, and I love the energy of working in a fast-paced airport environment.

I am a good listener and I am calm in the face of emergency situations and I manage stress well.

I have also taken and passed the Flight Attendant Academy preparation course to increase my chances of success. You can also talk about any awards or promotions you have had in your past jobs.
3. **Give an example of how you demonstrated good customer service skills.** You want to tell how you regularly displayed these skills.
4. **Close by thanking them. Example:** Based on what I have learned here and in researching the job, I know I am qualified for this job and I would love to work for you! Thank you for your time.



Recruiters are looking for not only what you say but how you handle what you said. Now that probably does not make sense.

They are not looking for you to be perfect. If it was a perfect world, we would not have emergency landings and there would not be a need to prepare for them.

Recruiters are looking for how you handle yourself in the face of an emergency or perhaps a mistake.

If you mis-speak, if you spill your water, if you feel you answered incorrectly- handle it. Do not try to hide or cover up.

Own it, fix it and move on. We will practice this in class.



PA Announcement

Participants may be asked to read a PA announcement or a portion of the announcement in the group interview.

Recruiters are interested to see how well you articulate your words, how professional you come across, how well you project your speech and how poised you are when performing before a group.

The following PA announcement is representative of one which you may be asked to read:

“Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Charlotte, where the local time is 2:15. For your continued safety and comfort, the captain would like to ask that you remain seated until the aircraft has come to a complete stop at the gate and the passenger door has been opened.

Please be sure that you have collected all your belongings in the proximity of your seat and open overhead compartments with caution as contents may have shifted during flight.

We’d like to thank you again for flying with us today and have a wonderful time in Charlotte or wherever your final destination may be.”



PRACTICE IN FRONT OF A MIRROR!!

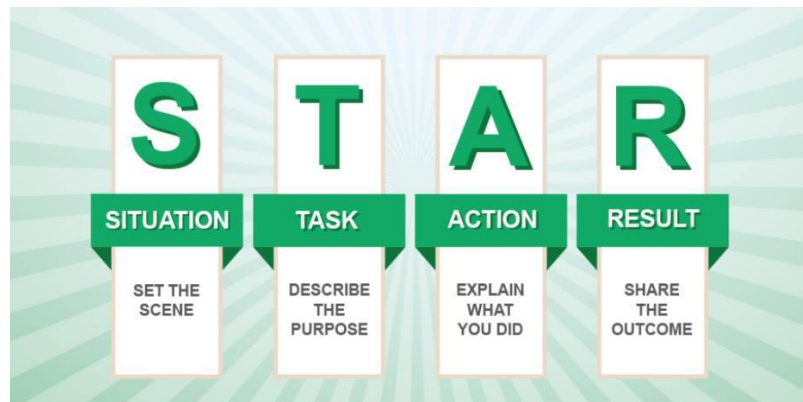


S.T.A.R. METHOD FOR INTERVIEWING

Most airlines now interview using behavioral questioning techniques involving a system referred to as the STAR Method.

Your ability to respond to these questions in a clear, concise and informed manner that relates your background and experience to the questions posed will better prepare you for the interview, giving you an edge over other applicants who are stumbling over the questions.

The STAR Method consists of a logical approach to answering any questions by providing a guided approach to using one of your past successes to respond to the question.



The four steps of the STAR Method are:

1. S – Situation (Describe the situation: general/specific)
2. T – Task/Technique (What approach did you use? Comforting, firm, etc.)
3. A – Action (What action did you take?)
4. R – Result (What was the result of your action – always positive!)

Plan to develop a detailed list of your many successes, especially the ones that relate to workplace activities such as:

- Related experience
- Technical interests
- Leadership examples
- Teaming activities
- Communication skills
- Work experiences

Develop short examples that illustrate your successes in these areas.

S Situation or Task: Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish. You must describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. This situation can be from a previous job, a volunteer experience, or any relevant event.

T Technique: Explain your approach. If you took charge of the situation, reassured, stepped in to calm everyone down by assessing the area,

A Action You Took: Describe the action you took and be sure to keep the focus on YOU. Even if you are discussing a group project or effort, describe what you did – *not* the efforts of the team. Don't tell what you *might* do; tell what you did.

R Results You Achieved: What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn?

A few examples of STAR behavioral questions:

- Tell me about how you worked effectively under pressure.
- **How do you handle a challenge? Give an example.**
- Have you ever made a mistake? How did you handle it?
- Describe how you successfully handled a difficult or stressful situation.

“Reach high, for stars lie hidden in your soul. Dream deep, for every dream precedes the goal.” - Mother Teresa



MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

We have carefully researched and found a varied sampling of the most frequently asked airline interview questions; if you can prepare your answers ahead of time, you should be able to tackle any question given to you.

Keep answers short and straightforward and offer to expand the answer if you feel the need or asked.

Airlines will evaluate your honesty, integrity, skills, background and ability to do the job, making sure you will be a good fit in their organization.

Remember, no stories and do not ramble. Short and Sweet.

Own what you say- passion goes a long way. It is often not what you say but how you say it.

Practice these questions with a friend or family member before that big interview:

- 1. Why do you want to be a flight attendant?** Be creative. Do NOT say that you like to travel and meet people – that is the answer most people give!

You should state that “The job is perfect for me, since I enjoy a change in environment and hours” or that you “have flown on their airline and have always enjoyed traveling on it and you’re really excited about being a part of that.”

Emphasize your passion for airplanes and flying! " Include 3 things – the people, the work and the product!

- 2. Describe how you successfully handled a difficult or stressful situation.** If you can relate how well you have managed a problem in the past, you will stand out considerably.

They want to know how you positively impacted the situation.

This is an especially important and a very commonly asked question so make sure you have an outstanding response with a positive ending!

- 3. What are your major strengths and weaknesses?** You can give the impression that even your weaknesses can be an asset to the airline; ex: that you are an over-achiever; be sincere with this answer, though.

You can also say a weakness is something innocuous like “I am not good at art” or “I can’t sing”. (You do not need to be good at those things to be a flight attendant, do you?)

- 4. What do you consider to be the greatest challenge of this job?** Turn a challenge into an asset for them. For example, you can say that you will find it a challenge waiting to be called frequently for trips while on-call, or that the greatest challenge to you would be making sure you succeed in airline training.

- 5. What would be your favorite destination and why?** Choose a place that is quite different from your home and explain that you are choosing that because it seems exciting, with a different culture.

Choose somewhere different, so you do not have the same choice as others in the room.

- 6. Describe a time when you had to change your plans to accommodate your job.** You should tell about a situation in which you went out of your way and may have had to come out of your comfort zone, such as canceling some plans and making other arrangements.
(This question serves to assess your level of flexibility.)

- 7. Why are you leaving/what do you dislike about your current job?** DO NOT badmouth or show negativity about any of the people you work with; mention things such as dislike of routine hours, a desire to be out of the office and work with people more, things that relate to the FA job.

Turn a negative into an asset, such as “I liked my last job, but if I could change anything, it would be that I didn’t get to work with people as much as I wanted”, or “I was stuck doing a 9-5 schedule when I prefer variable hours”; be positive - never badmouth the people that work there!

8. **Give an example of when you did more than required in your job.** Tell about how you went above and beyond the call of duty, not just what you HAD to do as part of your job.
9. **Describe a situation in which you had to take control without a supervisor.** Think of a time that you took control of a situation and make sure you choose one that had a positive outcome.
10. **If you never had to work again, what would you do?** Make sure you don’t describe anything superficial or illegal – the best approach is to say something about helping other people, such as volunteer work or the PEACE Corps, etc.
11. **Describe a time when you did the right thing when nobody was looking.** Honesty is a highly valued commodity with airlines, so think of a time when you demonstrated this quality.
12. **Tell me about a time when you received good customer service.** Talk about a place where you received good customer service and tell why.
13. **Tell me why we should hire YOU for the job.** Convince them of qualities that are unique to YOU.
14. **What would you do if you saw a co-worker steal something?** Again, honesty is at a premium. You should first take the employee aside to confront them, then report the incident if unresolved.
15. **Will our salary work for you?** ALWAYS say that the salary is open, as most airlines are unionized. Never name a salary; state that you are fully aware of the salary they are offering.
16. **How many times have you been late for work in the past year/what do you do to ensure you are on time?** “I am rarely late anywhere; I can’t even remember a time when I was late to work. I always leave so much ahead of time that I allow for any unforeseen problems”.

- 17. What long-term career goals do you have?** Relate where you would like to be in 5 years, whether it is simply continuing your fabulous flying career, moving into management, or another department in THAT COMPANY!

State that you want to be the best FA or eventually recruiter, supervisor, etc., that their company has, the expert that others rely on.

This is particularly important – do not talk about going to any job that is not at that company! And do not say you want to go relocate to another country unless that airline has a Flight Attendant base there.

- 18. What is unique about you?** Being sure not to disclose anything you would not want THEM to know, BE CREATIVE.

Everyone has something that makes them interesting, like skydiving or mountain climbing.

- 19. What would you do if a co-worker is not carrying his/her share of the load?** Start by *taking them aside* and ask if there is anything wrong, if the person is having a bad day, and ask if there is anything you can do for them.

If you are unsuccessful with that approach, you can simply ask them to perform the task for which you need help instead of launching an attack on them.

- 20. Who would you most like to sit next to on a transoceanic flight?** Choose someone who has made a major contribution to history and explain why you chose them.

Try to be original, too (i.e., do not use trendy celebs! Everyone picks them – stand out and be different.)

- 21. What are the most important functions of a flight attendant?** First safety and second customer service. Enough said.

- 22. Why do you want to fly for (name of regional airline) instead of one of the larger airlines?** You need to convince the recruiter that you had rather work for a regional – remind them of things that are better about regionals, such as shorter reserve, ability to move ahead faster, etc.

- 23. What is your greatest achievement?** Make sure this one is an important one, like getting a college degree, saving a life, helping someone who was unable to help themselves, or getting a certain promotion or award.

Do not list frivolous things that will have nothing to do with your career. You can mention raising children but mention something else also.

- 24. What do you consider to be the biggest failure/challenge you have faced in the last year?** Remember, you have no problem working with any of your co-workers, and don't talk about anything that will disqualify you in the eyes of the recruiter.

Talk about specific steps or actions you took to work through the challenge, the results of the actions taken, and make sure, that it has a positive outcome.

- 25. How do you feel about relocating/working unusual hours/having schedule changes?** You must be willing to do anything they ask you to do. State that you understand that unexpected circumstances arise frequently for flight attendants and are part of the job.

Relate how you can adjust to meet any difficult situations you may encounter.

- 26. Describe why the person next to you would make a good flight attendant.** Talk to the people around you before the interview begins and learn about what qualities they possess for becoming Flight Attendants. Don't be afraid to be chatty and friendly.

- 27. Talk about a time when you had to respond to an emergency.** Whether you have had a life-threatening experience or not, any time you responded in a helpful way to an urgent situation is important. Give the steps you took and the final positive outcome.

- 28. What kind of behavior is most difficult for you to deal with?** The best approach to this question is to say that you intensely dislike any behavior that endangers the safety and wellbeing of others; under no circumstances do you tell them any other behavior that you can't deal with or that you lose your patience.

- 29. Is the customer, always right?** The customer IS always right *except* with safety issues; then the Flight Attendant is right, with respect to the FAR's.

30. Are you a leader or a follower? There are times when flight attendants need to be leaders, as in managing emergencies, but flight attendants also need to be followers when they are not in charge and must follow the directions of the lead flight attendant, the pilot, and airline supervisors.

It is important, therefore, to be able to be a follower as well as a leader.

31. Give an example of how you have fun on the job. Make this one fun. Let your personality show through - talk about things such as playing practical jokes, parties, outings, etc.

32. Who was the most influential person in your life? Talk about a specific person who was a good influence and empowered you.

33. What would your boss say about you? Make sure it is a positive comment and is detailed.

34. What is one word you would use to describe yourself? Keep out superficial words – make it one with depth and meaning.

35. What was your most embarrassing moment? Think of something humorous but *keep it clean!*

36. If you needed to, would you break the rules in order to make a customer happy? There is only one answer here – no you would not – safety is of utmost importance, and rules must be followed implicitly, to maintain safety.

If you are asked to write any of your answers, remember that you will be immediately disqualified if there are errors in your spelling, grammar and punctuation - VERY IMPORTANT!

Answer the question completely (and concise) and be creative with your answers – they want to hear something different from you.



SCENARIO QUESTIONS

Frequently airlines will ask you a scenario question in a 1:1 interview, to appraise your judgment or they may split applicants into small groups and give them a scenario problem to solve.

In this case, the solution to the problem is **not as important** as how everyone participates and interacts within the group.

Recruiters are watching how applicants work together creatively with each other, noting who sits back and lets everyone else do the work, who is a team player, who is bossy or talks over others, or who emerges as a calm but cohesive leader.

A good leader may ask others for their opinions and do things to display courtesy such as serving water to other applicants, helping them find seating, listen to their comments, be agreeable or gently disagree if you need to.

Use people's names and again, give good eye contact.

- 1. How would you handle a customer who is rude and obnoxious or unsatisfied?** Initially, all efforts should be made to appease the customer. Focus should be on customer service, but no one is expected to take abuse. Offering to negotiate with customers is the best advice if safety is not compromised.
- 2. A VIP brings a bag onboard which needs to be checked below, in baggage. However, he/she has work inside the bag and had planned to work on it during the flight. How can you accommodate this customer?** Try to accommodate the customer as much as possible, while adhering to safety rules. Offer the customer a chance to remove their work materials before then checking bag.

3. **You have a customer who is upset because the airline lost his luggage in a connecting flight, and he had medication in the bag; what do you do?** You would communicate this to the Captain, assuring the PAX that you will monitor the situation through communication with the cockpit, make every attempt to accommodate this person.
4. **You have a honeymoon couple onboard a full aircraft and they are seated at opposite ends of the cabin. What can you do for them?** You can first ask if anyone is willing to change seats with one of them, and if no one offers, you would try to give them a lot of attention during the flight and perhaps offer them a complimentary cocktail or other amenity provided by the airline.
5. **During the beverage service you realize that one of your customers appears to be intoxicated and orders another drink; what would you do?** This question depends on the discretion of the flight attendant – you can offer coffee, a soda or food. Do not accuse them of being intoxicated or drunk! You are not required to serve additional alcohol to anyone who appears to be intoxicated!
6. **What would you do if an apparently delusional person's behavior becomes out of control during the flight?** The most important concern here is to protect other customers from any alarm brought on by a delusional outburst. Attempt to de-escalate the customer through distraction; don't try to reason with them. Try to relocate this person to a quieter area of the aircraft, if possible.
7. **Your aircraft has a mechanical delay before departing Newark, making it late coming into Ft. Lauderdale. Passengers are angry and upset because of missed connections.** Reassurance goes a long way in handling these types of situations, anticipating them before they become out of control. Advise customers that the ground agents are working to establish new arrangements for connections.
8. **A woman asks you to change her infant's diaper - how do you respond?** You are providing food and beverage service and handling dirty baby diapers is not appropriate here and is not in your job description. Just be tactful; you can offer to watch her other children and show her to the lavatory.



QUESTIONS FOR THE RECRUITER

Asking questions shows that you are interested in the position and brings more attention to yourself. It also can help determine if you and the company would be a “good fit”.

Here are a few you can ask:

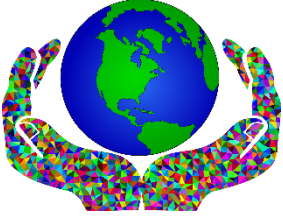
1. What is the length of the probationary period or reserve? (Better than saying “*how long* is your probationary period/reserve.)
2. What are company opportunities for advancement/personal growth within their organization?
3. When do you expect to make a hiring decision?
4. Are you expecting any new planes/routes in the near future?
5. How do you feel about working here? (Everyone likes to have their opinion validated, and recruiters are no exception.)
6. How many flight attendants will be hired this year?
7. What is the growth plan for your company? (Really intelligent question.)
8. What is your next class date? (If they have not already told that.)

Be sure to pay attention and do not ask something that has already been covered!

Do not ask any insulting questions, such as “why do you have so many open positions?” or “is your company still losing money?”

Personality, confidence, enthusiasm and a positive outlook count heavily in the airline interview.

The world depends on you



Ok, that might be a little extreme, but when applying for an airline job, your reliability is a major consideration.

Arriving late to the interview or the job is not an option. plain and simple.

The doors will be closed at the appointed time and no one else is permitted.

No excuses are tolerated – same goes on the job and in training.

Many a hopeful Flight Attendant trainee has been sent home from training on the next flight, after arriving to class late.

Airlines want you to graduate and will do all they can to help you to do so, but there is zero-tolerance for tardiness and absence.

It is no excuse if you have a flat tire; they don't care that your pet got sick, or that there was an accident on the highway coming in to work; their assertion is that you should have allowed enough time in the first place.

Whatever it takes, crewmembers must be on time.

As we said, during the interview process, it is how you handle things. If you are unable to attend an interview.

You must let them know. Be professional. If you fail to attend a scheduled interview, more than likely, you will not be given a chance to reschedule. One strike and you are out in this game.

There are too many other qualified applicants waiting for your slot. If you see that you are not going to be able to make it at the allotted time, call the interviewer with whom you initially made the appointment (as far in advance as possible) and reschedule.

There is possibly no other Flight Attendant requirement as fundamentally important as reliability. For all intents and purposes, no matter how charming, easy going, mature, energetic or accommodating you may be, none of these matters if you are undependable. Erratic work habits infuriate the best of supervisors, especially when it comes to such a tightly controlled and regimented industry as aviation.

Backgrounds

Airlines conduct thorough background checks and drug screenings before hiring any new employees.

When giving airlines this information, you must be completely honest, it will eventually come out.

If you had a speeding ticket, a DUI or any legal issue, chances are they will find out about it.

The Pilot Record Improvement Act passed by Congress in 1996 allows airlines to delve more deeply into an applicant's work history than in any other industry. If you are dishonest about anything and the airline finds out about it, chances are, if it happened a long time ago, they may have overlooked it, but now the issue is honesty.

Only a Federal Crime will disqualify you.

You WILL be drug tested before training.

Summary of Module 8:

You should now know the important attributes of what the airline recruiters are looking for from a Flight Attendant applicant so you can present yourself in the best possible way to Get Hired.



Module 9

Coming up in Module 9 we will continue with the hiring process and interviewing by getting even more specific with the “**Video Interview**”.

We will discuss all the In’s and Out’s of video interviewing.

Carolyn Dillon

Executive Director

The Flight Attendant Academy

<https://theflightattendantacademy.com>

336.268.5450