

# **Interview skills**

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# Definitions

- Interview: expectation to have an interaction around the purpose of the interview
- **Inter-view (Exchanging views)**
- An interview is neither a monologue performance nor a simple dialogue where one asks and the other answers
- It means that you would need to ask questions in order to active the exchange of information
- The job seeker wants to know if there is an alignment with the job expectation.  
You cannot everything about the job, you need to get this information in order to visualize the new framework (the skill: the ability to investigate the relation between the job expectation and your profile)



# Passions and desire for the job

- The best skill: to identify your own desire for the job
- You do not only come to an interview to be able to get the job. You want to know if the job fits you. This tension creates an expectation, you have your own questions and your own plan (**balance** between the interviewer and the interviewee)
- You prepare yourself for this interaction and not for a quick dialogue
- This balance is extremely important to show how you can quickly adapt to a new environment and help your potential partners



# How to prepare yourself

- The worst thing for an interviewer is to have the feeling to have many similar interviewees' profiles.
- The best part to highlight is **authenticity**
- You need to flee away from generalities and build your interview on your experience
- During an interview, we exchange **information** and we share **experiences**
- **Sharing** means that you have to be able to cooperate in order to sustain the exchange



# How to create a dynamic

- A dynamic = an exchange of views/experiences/information is happening.
- The philosopher Heidegger talks about ***Da-sein***, which qualifies the situatedness of your interview. Why do you want the job? What is your expectation? How do you visualize the job? Anticipation is important as with the ***Da-sein***, the interviewer wants to see how you connect your own experience (past) to the job (future) in the present (interview)
- Physically, the position of exchange needs to be communicated (open your arms, activate a receptive attitude)



# Create your own narrative

- Carl Jung : when you look outside, you **dream**; when you look inside, you **awake**
- You need to reflect on yourself to structure your past experiences. Could you describe very good memories? Critical incidents? Could you analyze them?
- Of course, you will talk about your past experiences that have a connection to the job
- You need dates, examples, names. When you avoid generalizing, you enter into these examples that can support a discussion with the interviewer. When you think about your narrative, you develop an own **philosophy**



# Writing non-fiction

- How to present facts about yourself
- "By subject-matter we mean the things and people about which an author writes: for example, aviation, the French Revolution, domestic difficulties, young love, animals, seafaring. This *general subject-matter* may be anything, provided the author **loves it, feels at home in it**, is interested enough in it to learn all he can about it, and to take the pains to make his reader enjoy it too"  
(Campbell, 1949: 16)



# Writing non-fiction

- “Thus it appears that *the intimate subject is, as it were, the soul of the author’s work, while the subject-matter is only the flesh and blood*. Both should belong and work together, if the work is to be a masterpiece” (Campbell, 1949: 19).
- The emotion is in the author. “You must always write of what is cooking. Your reader will not accept anything served cold” (Campbell, 1949: 20).
- In an interview, the narrative will highlight your reflection on your trajectory (gaps and hills) (Corfield, 2009: 28)





# Your own story

- "A story is one, not, as some people suppose, if it is about one person, for many – countless many – things are incidental attributes of one person, with no unity taking in some of them" (Aristotle, chapter 8, 2006: 31)
- When you prepare yourself, you create the coherence of the story.
- *Homo narrans* (work on the story-telling dimension)
- "There are many reasons why telling stories is important and why it is satisfying, not just for the enjoyment of the occasion but also for civilization in general and for this civilization in a time of major flux" (Spaulding, 2011: 20).



# The job environment

- In order to prepare yourself for the interview, you need to know more about the background (the formulation of the job announcement)
- What is the language that people share? What are the keywords that will be like a torch
- What is the kind of **discourse** which is used by people in this particular community? This investigation will help you to find a tone and your voice. The job interviewer wants to find your voice



# The best preparation

- Have a **professional portfolio** (dates, experiences, names...). It is not the quantity which makes the difference but the quality. **Pitch** yourself in 3 minutes
- Have some good concrete examples in mind for your narrative. Remember: the narrative is not a speech that you learn, it is also the product of the interaction with the job interviewer
- Identify the discourse shared by the potential community
- The ability to cooperate is really important in *praxis*



# Positive communication

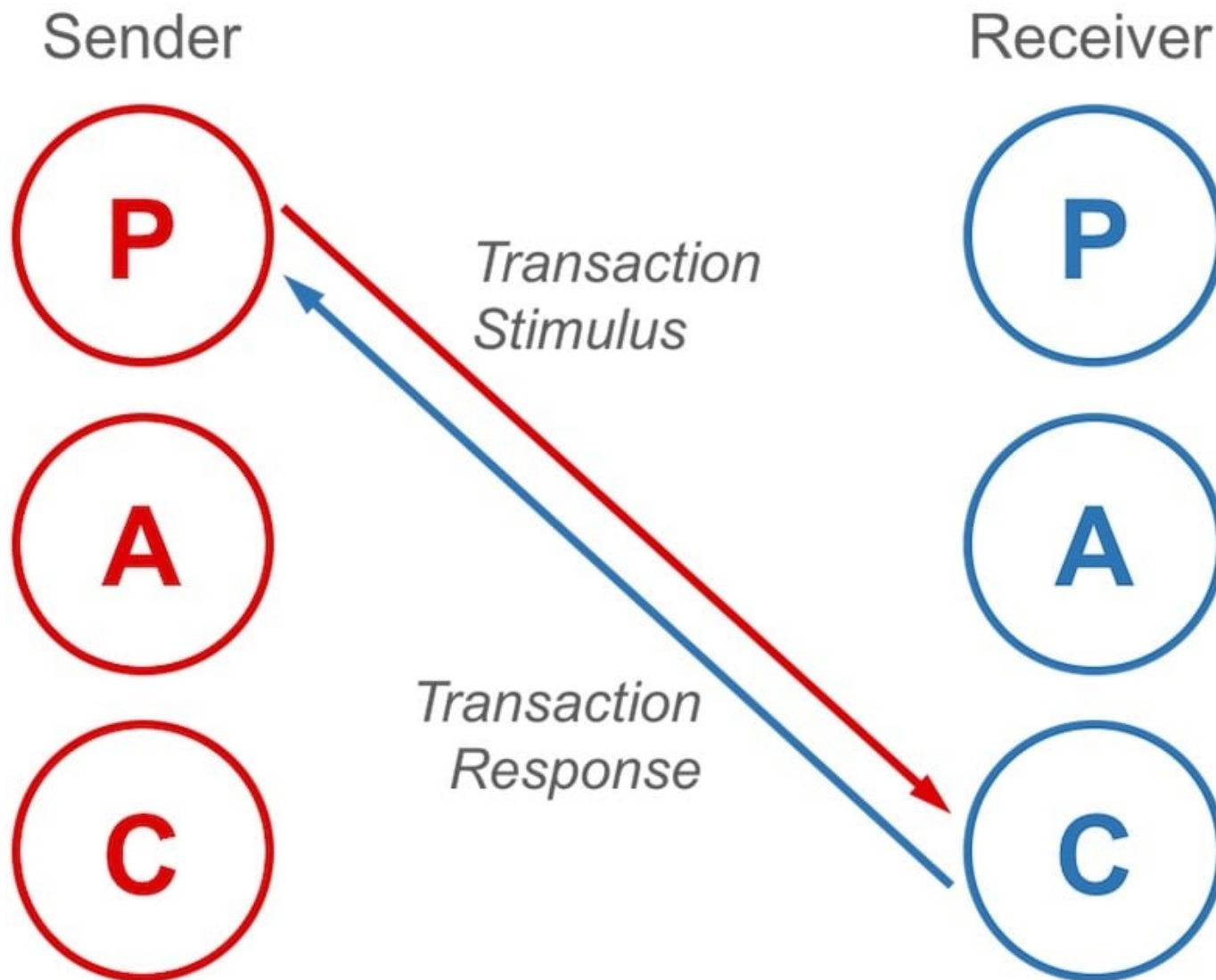
- Positive communication is not necessarily enthusiastic communication, it is the ability to create an atmosphere of discussion (valuing the words of others)
- Avoid negative formulations, rephrase them into positive ones.
- For instance: "I do not know anything about the job" has to be replaced by "I would like to know more about the job"
- The brain does not like negativity and the negative detail could be the only one that the job interviewer remembers
- Transform **difficulties** into **challenges**. Use adverbs, train the positive communication that will be able to capture the narrative that you would like to present



# The conquest of autonomy

- Integrity / authenticity. Accepting a job = looking for the part of autonomy.
- The interview is a *transaction* of views (exchange of facts, information and feelings). The interview re-empowers your *ethos* (Your positioning in a potential team)
- The principles of transactional analysis (Berne, 1972): calibrating the exchange between two persons
- The interview is a face-to-face situation where your ability is to rebalance the discrete power relation





**A Basic Parent-Child Interaction  
Transactional Analysis**  
Originated by Eric Berne

# Structure the interview

- You can summarize but do not forget the basic elements of an interview
- The introduction (background) – personal narrative- methodology of **hey, you, see, so**
- The qualities that are looked for by the job interviewer (here, you can ask and exchange)
- At the end of the interview, ask some information about the job and avoid total question/answers (yes/no)
- The best interview: when you reach the inter-view, which means when you balance the relation with the job interviewer and when you are a part of the interview



# References

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