

Nursing Interview Prep Sheet

Common questions, the STAR method, and questions to ask them

Interviews for nursing roles lean heavily on behavioral questions ('Tell me about a time...'). The best answers are specific stories with a result — the same quantified wins that are on your resume, told out loud. Use the STAR method to keep them tight.

STAR, in one line each

- Situation — set the scene briefly (unit, acuity, what was happening).
- Task — what you needed to do or decide.
- Action — what YOU specifically did (not 'we').
- Result — the outcome, with a number if you have one, and what you learned.

Questions to rehearse

1. Tell me about a time you caught or prevented a patient-safety issue.
2. Describe a conflict with a physician or colleague and how you handled it.
3. How do you prioritize when several patients need you at once?
4. Tell me about a difficult patient or family and how you built trust.
5. Describe a time you made a mistake — what happened and what changed after?
6. Why this unit / this hospital? (Have a specific, researched answer.)

Clinical / situational you should be ready for

- Walk me through your response to a patient going into a rapid response or code.
- How do you perform a focused assessment for [chest pain / shortness of breath / altered mental status]?
- What is your process for safe medication administration and the five rights?
- How do you give an SBAR handoff?

Ask THEM (shows you are serious)

- What does the nurse-to-patient ratio look like on days vs. nights?
- How is the unit's orientation / residency structured, and who precepts?
- How does the team handle a nurse who is drowning in a heavy assignment?
- What are the biggest challenges the unit is working on right now?

Bring copies of your resume and references, arrive early, and follow up with a brief thank-you email within 24 hours. This kit includes a matching references page so you can hand it over on request.