

Question

What types of decisions do you frequently make in your current/most recent position? How do you go about making them?

Strategy

This question helps reveal to the interviewer how much responsibility you carry, your analytical skills, how you prioritize your day, what initiative you take, and what you consider to be important decisions. If you are in management, describe your ability to make both big-picture and detail decisions that align with long-term strategy, such as responsibility for \$300,000 in buying decisions for a “tween” retailer, as well as details regarding trend, fabric, and color direction. If you are not in a supervisory or management role, avoid the misstep of saying that you don’t make decisions, as the *Before* answer illustrates.

“Before” Answer

I don’t have any supervisory authority, so I really don’t make too many decisions.

“After”—the “Magic Words” Answer

As a customer support rep, I make decisions throughout my day, from deciding how to prioritize the processing of Internet orders that are in my e-mail bin each morning to determining whether I need to consult my supervisor on a customer complaint or special order to solving a particular problem related to one of the orders. For instance, just last week there was a situation where the client wanted a one-day delivery on his order. [Tell a SMART Story™ here with emphasis on Action so that the interviewer sees how you go about making decisions.]

The most important decision I make each day is to choose the right attitude and remember that work is about meeting the needs of our clients.

**Question**

What is the most significant project or suggestion you have initiated in your career?

Strategy

Note the last three words: *in your career*. This should be your biggest, most salient initiative. The interviewer is looking for your drive and energy here—what is the most important idea or project you personally set into motion, and what do you deem significant. Depending on your functional position and years of experience, it may be something like a new company or major project launched, or it may be on a smaller scale, such as an idea you suggested that was implemented and adopted by others. This before-and-after answer suggests how a college student applying for a management training program might answer the question.

“Before” Answer

Since I’ve been in college and am just starting my career, I can’t say that there is anything too significant yet. But, I’m looking forward to doing some significant projects.