

PM Interview Prep Checklist

Everything you need to walk into your first project management interview prepared — from framing your answers to what to ask when it's your turn.

1. Before the Interview

Research checklist — do this even if the role feels informal.

- Read the job posting twice — list every responsibility and required skill, and match each to a real example from your background.
- Research the company's current projects, recent news, and product or service — know what they actually do day to day.
- Look up your interviewer(s) on LinkedIn — shared background, mutual connections, or their own career path can shape smart questions.
- Identify the team's likely pain points (fast growth, a recent reorg, a messy product launch) — this often maps directly to interview questions.
- Prepare 3–5 stories from your background that show ownership, even if you've never had a formal PM title.

2. Framing Behavioral Answers — The STAR Method

Most PM interviews lean heavily on behavioral questions ("Tell me about a time when..."). Structure every answer using STAR so it lands clearly and doesn't ramble:

S — Situation	Set the scene in 1–2 sentences. What was the context, and why did it matter?
T — Task	What was your specific responsibility or goal in that situation?
A — Action	What did you personally do? Be specific — this is the part interviewers care about most.
R — Result	What happened? Use numbers where you can (time saved, budget, team size, outcome).

No formal PM title? Reframe: a wedding you coordinated, a cross-team rollout you drove at your current job, or a process you fixed all count as "Situation" — the discipline is what matters, not the job title.

3. Common PM Interview Questions

Behavioral

- Tell me about a project that didn't go as planned. What did you do?
- Describe a time you had to manage a stakeholder who disagreed with your approach.
- Tell me about a time you had to say no to a request. How did you handle it?
- Describe a project with a tight deadline. How did you prioritize?
- Tell me about a time you had to lead people who didn't report to you.

Situational

- A key stakeholder wants to add scope two weeks before launch. What do you do?
- Two team members disagree on the technical approach and it's blocking progress. How do you resolve it?
- You realize a project is going to miss its deadline. Walk me through what you do next.
- How would you handle a project with unclear or conflicting requirements?

About You

- Why project management, and why now?
- What's your project management style?
- How do you stay organized across multiple projects at once?
- What tools have you used to manage projects or tasks?

4. Smart Questions to Ask Them

Asking sharp questions signals you're already thinking like a PM. Pick 3–4 that fit the conversation:

- What does success look like in this role after the first 90 days?
- What's the biggest challenge the team is facing right now?
- How does the team currently handle competing priorities or scope changes?
- What tools and processes does the team use day to day?
- What's one thing you'd want to see change about how projects run here?
- What made the last person in this role successful — or what led to the opening?

5. Day-Of Checklist

- Resume and any portfolio materials printed or ready to share
- 3–5 STAR stories rehearsed out loud, not just in your head
- Questions for the interviewer written down and ready
- Company research notes reviewed one final time
- Camera, mic, and internet tested 15 minutes early (for virtual interviews)
- A notepad and pen ready for notes during the conversation