



Behavioral Interviewing

Behavioral interviewing is a technique used to evaluate a candidate's suitability for a position based on his or her past workplace behavior. The premise is that if a candidate demonstrated particular behaviors in the past, these behaviors serve as predictors of how the candidate will perform in your work environment.

Guideline for Formulating Questions

1. Identify the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs), behaviors and core competencies that are critical to the position. Refer to the job description and career compass template for assistance.
2. Determine which behavioral questions elicit the preferred behaviors for each job. Remember, you are looking for answers that correspond to past performance. Structure your questions with phrases like: "Tell me about a time when..." or "Think of a recent example when..." Use follow-up questions like: "What action did you take to resolve the issue?" or "What was the result?" The candidate should detail actual work experience rather than hypothetical responses.
3. Use a structured format for each interview. Questions should be open-ended; avoid questions that can only be answered with a 'yes' or 'no'. Make sure to ask the same work-related questions of all candidates to minimize legal risks.
4. Devise benchmark responses prior to the interview with examples of "excellent", "acceptable", and "unacceptable" answers to the question. First determine whether the candidate truly answered your questions. Was the candidate able to provide relevant real-life examples, or did they answer in the hypothetical? Determine the quality of the answers given based on the requirements of the job.

Examples of Competency-Based Behavioral-Based Interview Questions:

Customer Service Skills

- Give me a specific example of a time when you had to address an angry customer. What was the problem and what was the outcome? How did you contribute to diffusing the situation?
- Tell me about a time when you made a lasting, positive impression on a customer.
- Tell me about a time when you went "above and beyond" for a customer or client.

Diversity Focus

- What have you done to further your knowledge/understanding about diversity? How have you demonstrated your learning?
- Give me an example that demonstrates your respect for people and their differences; and how you've worked to understand perspectives of others.



Interpersonal Communication Skills

- Tell me about a time when you voice a concern or disagreement to a co-worker or a supervisor. Where did the disagreement originate? What did you say to the other person? What was his/her reaction? What was the outcome of the disagreement?
- Describe a situation where others you were working with on a project disagreed with your ideas. What did you do?

Leadership/Management Skills

- Describe a time when you had to resolve conflicts that arose from managing a team or multi-program department. What did you do -- what did you learn?
- Describe how you foster a highly motivated and productive work environment especially during times of change.
- What experience have you had implementing reorganizations or change in an organization? How did you do this -- what were the challenges and regrets?

Project Management Experience

- Think of a project you participated in over the last year. Tell me exactly what your role was and what you did. What problems or issues were there and how did you handle them?
- Please provide an example of a situation where it was not clear how a project should be handled and you figured it out on your own. What specific actions did you take to assess the situation? What specifically did you do to begin implementation? What was the result?

Technical Knowledge

- What computer applications are you most familiar with? Can you give an example of how you've used these applications in your last job?
- Think of a time when you were asked to utilize brand-new software with minimal training. How did you handle the situation?