

## Behavioral Interviewing

Behavioral interviews are increasingly used by employers to identify the best candidate for a position. Behavioral techniques help reveal how a candidate behaves and acts under certain circumstances.

Behavioral interviewing is designed to determine how a candidate will perform in a specific position. The techniques can improve your hiring decisions by minimizing the interviewer's subjective impressions. Instead, behavioral interviewing allows the interviewer to focus on how the person will actually act in the job.

The behavioral interview differs from traditional interviewing in several important ways. To execute the techniques well, you need to:

- Define the behaviors necessary for the candidate to succeed in the position
- Write questions to reveal whether a candidate possesses the necessary skills
- Methodically evaluate all of the candidates's answers to determine the best fit for the specific job

Here are the steps: Analyze

Evaluate the job so that you can define the behaviors and skills required to do the job well. Then, you need to identify how those skills are used within the position and the kinds of knowledge necessary for a candidate to demonstrate those skills. Develop Questions

This is the heart of the behavioral interviewing technique. Once the skills needed to do the job are identified, you need to write questions to reveal whether a candidate possesses the necessary skills. Instead of asking, for example; "can you do this?," ask the candidate to describe a situation where the skill is required to solve a problem. Then, have the candidate describe the problem and the solution.

It is likely that you will need to ask more than one question to identify a candidate's mastery of a skill. Prepare follow-up questions to probe after each answer so that you can be satisfied that the candidate actually possesses the skills you need. The Interview

Ask the questions in order and keep detailed notes of the candidate's responses. Evaluate

Develop a scale to rank the candidate's answers and assign a ranking for each answer. You now have a quantitative tool to compare each candidate to your desired goals and to compare each candidate to other candidates.

### Example of Behavioral Interview Questions

Here are some examples of the types of questions you should be asking during a behavioral interview:

- Suppose you are in a situation where deadlines and priorities change frequently and rapidly. How would you handle it?
- Tell me about a time when you were part of a great team. What was your part in making the team effective?
- Give me an example of a time when you had to deal with a difficult co-worker. How did you handle the situation?
- Can you tell me about a time during your previous employment when you suggested a better way to perform a process?
- Give an example of a time you were trying to meet a deadline, you were interrupted, and did not make the deadline.

How did you respond?

- Tell me about a situation you wish that you had handled differently based on the outcome. What was the situation? Given what you know now, how would you handle a similar situation?
- Suppose your supervisor asked you to find information that you know is confidential and of which they should not have access. What would you do?

- Describe a time when you performed a task outside your perceived responsibilities. What was the task? Why did you perceive it to be outside your responsibilities? What was the outcome?

- It's 4:30 on a Friday afternoon. Your supervisor gives you an assignment that needs to be finished by 8:00 Monday morning. You have already made plans to be away the entire weekend. What would you do?

- If you observed a co-worker who made inappropriate sexual or racial remarks to another employee and it was obvious to you that the situation was creating an uncomfortable environment, what would you do?

### Example of Probing Questions

- Describe what you would say if asked to talk about yourself in a group of 15 people.
- If someone told you that you made an error, describe how you would react and what you would say in your defense.
- If someone asked you for assistance with a matter that is outside the parameters of your job description, what would you do?
- You are a committee member and disagree with a point or decision. How will you respond?
- Describe what you would classify as a crisis.
- You are angry about an unfair decision. How do you react?
- How do you know when you are stressed? What do you do to relieve the tension?
- How do you think your co-workers would respond if you were absent from work?

- Tell me about a personal or career goal that you have accomplished and why that was important to you.
- On what strengths did you rely in your last position to make you successful in your work?
- What do you do when you know you are right and your boss disagrees with you? Give me an example of when this has happened in your career.