

## Behavioural Interviewing

A large percentage of organisations now use **behavioural interviewing** to some degree.

Behavioural interviewing emphasises **past** performance and behaviours. A complete answer to a behaviour-based question, you must explain the task or problem for which **you** were responsible for, the specific action **you** took, and the results of **your** actions.

Ensure you talk about **your** action, avoid using “we”. The interviewer wants to learn about you, not your team. If a team was involved, highlight **your** role in that team.

### How do I prepare for a behavioural interview?

- Companies that use behavioural interviewing have predetermined the behavioural competencies required for a particular position. These could include:
  - decision making
  - problem solving
  - leadership
  - motivation
  - communication
  - interpersonal skills
  - planning and organisation
  - critical thinking skills
  - team building and the ability to influence others
  
- Analyse the type of positions for which you’re applying for. Try to get an actual job description. What skills are required by the employer? What are the key competencies of the role?
  
- Identify specific examples from your past experience where you have demonstrated those skills. How can you "tell a story" about your use of particular skills or knowledge? Remember that a good story has a beginning, middle and end.
  
- Wherever possible, quantify your results. Numbers illustrate your level of authority and responsibility.

**Once you have landed the interview, keep in mind the following points.**

Be detailed and specific. You should have prepared at least three examples that illustrate your past performance. Remember that the interviewer will be operating under the premise that "past performance predicts future behaviour."

The best way to accomplish this is to use the three-step **CAR** process:

1. Context
2. Action
3. Result or Outcome

For example, you might recount a time when communication within your work group had broken down (context). To resolve the problem, you organised an informal lunch meeting for people to discuss relevant issues (action). Morale then improved, as did the lines of communication (result).

Using this three step CAR process is a powerful way for you to frame your experiences and accomplishments for the interviewer.

- Limit rambling and tangents. While you can't control what is asked, you can control what you say.
- Listen carefully to each question. If you are unsure ask for clarification. When you respond, be sure to recall your past accomplishments in detail, whilst being concise.
- Practice your behavioural stories using real-life examples. By practicing, you will be able to recall with confidence your past accomplishments and tweak them to be relevant to the question asked.

## **Sample Behavioural Interview Questions**

### **Decision Making and Problem Solving**

- Give me an example of a time when you solved a complex problem.
- Give me an example of a time when you had to be quick in coming to a decision.

### **Leadership**

- Give me an example of a time where you had an under performing employee and how you managed this situation.
- Give me an example of a time where you had difficulty getting others to accept your ideas? What was your approach? Did it work?

### **Motivation**

- Give me an example of a time when you went above and beyond the call of duty.
- Give me an example of a time where you used your own initiative or were pro-active.

### **Communication**

- Tell me about a situation when you had to speak up (be assertive) in order to get a point across that was important to you.
- Give me an example of a time where you had an unhappy customer/client and how you rectified this situation.

### **Interpersonal Skills**

- What have you done in the past to contribute toward a teamwork environment?

### **Planning and Organization**

- Tell me about a time you had to juggle a number of work priorities. What did you do?

### **Other behavioural Questions**

- Give me an example of an important goal which you had set in the past and tell me about your success in reaching it.

Before starting the interview process, identify 2 to 3 of your top selling points / key professional achievements and determine how you will convey these points (using specific examples from your past) during the interview.

### **Questions you can ask at interview**

Remember, job interviewing is a two-way-street. By asking questions, you can get a much better sense of the organisation you're interviewing at, and if you want to work there. Asking a couple of well thought out questions, show that you are invested and interested. The more research you do in advance, the more you can ask specific questions about the company's recent news, blog posts, product launches, plans, etc. Some examples could be:

1. Who would make the ideal candidate for this position?
2. How would you define "success" for this position?
3. Is this a new role or a replacement, if a replacement, what were the best things about the last person who held this position?
4. What do you see as the biggest challenges of working here and how can I overcome those challenges?
5. What is your vision for where the company or department will be in one year? In 3-5 years?

**Remember: Ask questions that demonstrate your genuine interest in the organisation and how you can fit in to their success.**

## Dress to Impress

### Tips for Men and Women to follow

- Wear your smile, a smile projects positive energy and sets the stage for the interview
- Be neat, clean and well groomed
- Fresh breath
- Skip the perfume, after shave and cologne – you never know what scents can remind someone of someone they don't like or some scents are over powering for some people and the interviewer can be allergic
- If you have a lot of piercings leave them home
- Cover tattoos where possible
- All clothing needs to have wrinkles ironed out
- Ensure your clothing fits correctly, nothing too big or too tight

**\*\*Items not to bring into an interview – Gum – Cell phone – iPod – any type of beverage\*\***