

Behavioral Interviews

Behavioral-based interviewing is interviewing based on discovering how the interviewee acted in specific employment-related situations. The logic is that how you behaved in the past will predict how you will behave in the future, e.g., past performance predicts future performance.

Behavioral interview questions will be more pointed, more probing and more specific than traditional interview questions:

- Give an example of an occasion when you used logic to solve a problem.
- Give an example of a goal you reached and tell me how you achieved it.
- Describe a decision you made that was unpopular and how you handled implementing it.
- Have you gone above and beyond the call of duty? If so, how?
- Describe a time when you had several project schedules overlap.
- What do you do when your schedule is interrupted? Give an example of how you handle it.
- Have you had to convince a team to work on a project they weren't thrilled about? How did you do it?
- Have you handled a difficult situation with a co-worker? How?
- Tell me about how you worked effectively under pressure.
- Are there any projects you initiated at your company? Give me an example. What prompted you to begin that project?
- Tell me about a time when you put in extra effort in order to ensure the success of a project?
- Describe a situation when you saw a problem and took action to correct it rather than wait for someone else to do so.

(<http://jobsearch.about.com/cs/interviews/a/behavioral.htm>)

During a behavioral interview, always listen carefully to the question, ask for clarification if necessary, and make sure you answer the question completely. Your interview preparation should include identifying examples of situations from your experiences on your resume where you have demonstrated the behaviors a given company seeks. During the interview, your responses need to be specific and detailed. ***Tell them about a particular situation that relates to the question, not a general one.*** Briefly tell them about the situation, what you did specifically, and the positive result or outcome. Your answer should contain these four steps, **STAR** - Situation, Task, Action, Result - for optimum success:

- **Situation:** The interviewer wants you to present a recent challenge and situation in which you found yourself. Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish. You must describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. This situation can be from a previous job, from a volunteer experience, or any relevant event
- **Task:** What did you have to achieve? The interviewer will be looking to see what you were trying to achieve from the situation.
- **Action:** What did you do? The interviewer will be looking for information on what you did, why you did it and what were the alternatives. Describe the action you took and be sure to keep the focus on you. Even if you are discussing a group project or effort, describe what you did -- not the efforts of the team. Don't tell what you might do, tell what you did.
- **Results:** What was the outcome of your actions? What did you achieve through your actions and did you meet your objectives? What did you learn from this experience, and have you used what you learned since? What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn?

(http://www.bemidjistate.edu/students/services/career/workshops/behavioral_interviewing/)

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

(<http://www.jjc.edu/career-services/Documents/interview-behavioral.pdf>)