

Behavioral-Based Interviews

Behavioral-based interviews focus on the applicant's past actions and behaviors in order to make more accurate hiring decisions. Employers often use this type of interviews to avoid generalizations and theorizations that create subjective impressions, which may be misleading. This type of interviews also predict more accurately the applicant's future performances based on their past actions and behaviors in similar situations.

Responses for these interviews focus on situations applicants were involved in to highlight their accomplishments/achievements and to show how well one handled challenges, even if the situation did not work out as planned/expected. Applicants are expected to give accurate information and to be honest, without embellishing examples or omitting important facts.

S.T.A.R. Responses:

The S.T.A.R. model is the best way to respond to behavioral-based interview questions.

Situation: Describe a specific situation

- ◆ Use recent situations that show favorable behaviors, actions, or skills
- ◆ Do not generalize about several events
- ◆ Prepare short descriptions of each event
- ◆ Ex: Coursework, projects, work experience, leadership, teamwork, volunteering, customer service, and extra-curricular activities

Task: Describe the task you needed to accomplish so that the interviewer has a sense of what you were trying to accomplish/achieve. In other words, what was the goal?

Action: Describe the action you took within the situation and keep the focus on what YOU did

Results: Explain the result(s) of your action(s), i.e. what did you achieve/accomplish?

- ◆ Be sure the outcome/result reflects positively on you (even if the result itself was not favorable)
- ◆ If the outcome/results were not positive, discuss what you learned and how you would do things differently in the future

CATEGORIES & QUESTIONS

ADAPTABILITY/FLEXIBILITY

- Tell us about a time you had to branch outside your comfort zone
- Describe a time when you adjusted your behavior to meet the needs of different people
- By providing examples, convince me that you can adapt to a wide variety of people, situations, and environments
- Describe a time you had to completely change your plans because something unexpected happened. How did you handle the change in plans and what was the result?
- Tell us a time when you reacted quickly to changing conditions. What was the impact of the change on you?
- Describe a time when you worked effectively in an environment in which the parameters and expectations changed frequently

COMMUNICATION

- Give me an example of a time when you had to use good communication skills in dealing with a difficult or upset client/coworker/peer
- Tell us about a time when you had to use persuasion to see your point of view
- Give an example of a time when you had to use your presentation skills to influence someone's opinion. What was the end result?

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

- Tell us about a time when you experienced a conflict with a coworker or teammate. What strategies did you use to resolve the situation?
- Tell me about a time you had to work with a difficult coworker
- Tell us about a time when a conflict in the workplace got in the way of you being able to do your job
- What do you do when a conflict in the work or in school?
- Describe a decision you made that was unpopular and how you handled implementing it

DECISION MAKING

- Explain a tough decision you made and how you came to the conclusion you did. Would you make the same decision if you could do it again?

DIVERSITY

- Tell us about how you have helped promote diversity and inclusion?
- Tell us about a time when you worked in a diverse environment or on a diverse team. What did you learn from this experience?
- What is your definition of diversity?
- Describe for us a time you noticed someone was not respecting diversity. How did you respond?

ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

- Share with us a time when you did the right thing, even when it was not going to be popular
- Describe for us a time when you witnessed a friend or colleague doing something wrong. What did you do?

GOAL SETTING

- Give me an example of a time when you set a goal and were able to meet or achieve it

LEADERSHIP

- Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done
- What strategies have you used to get individuals to work well together to achieve a common goal?
- Share an example where you utilized strong leadership skills
- Give us an example of a time when you successfully managed a group
- Tell us about a time when you had to lead others to implement a difficult change

PRIORITY SETTING/PLANNING & ORGANIZATION

- Describe the system you use for keeping track of multiple projects. How do you track your progress so that you can meet deadlines? How do you keep yourself focused?
- Give us an example of a time when you were unable to complete a project on time. What would you do differently next time?
- Give us an example of a time when you were faced with conflicting priorities. How did you determine the top priority?

PROBLEM SOLVING

- Describe a problem you were faced with and how you handled it
- Give a specific example of a time where you used good judgment and logic to solve a problem

STRESS MANAGEMENT

- Tell me about a really busy workday that went smoothly. What occurred and how did you handle it?
- Describe a time in which you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills
- Tell us about a time when you were under a great deal of pressure. How did you handle it?
- If I were your supervisor, how would I know that you were feeling stressed? What signs would I see?

TEAM WORK

- When working within a team, what role do you typically take on? Please provide an example
- Tell us about a team experience you found rewarding
- In your opinion, what are the best and worst parts of working in a team environment?

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