

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The behavioral interview is used by employers to evaluate a candidate's experiences and behaviors in order to determine their potential for success. The interviewer identifies desired skills and behaviors, and then structures open-ended questions and statements to elicit detailed and robust answers. Read through these sample questions and be sure to check out our S.T.A.R. Guide to Interviewing on a simple technique you can utilize to concisely structure your answers.

ADAPTABILITY

- Tell me about a situation in which you have had to adjust to changes over which you had no control. How did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time when you had to adjust to a classmate's or colleague's working style in order to complete a project or achieve your objectives.
- What do you do when priorities change quickly? Give one example of when this happened.
- What do you do when you are faced with an obstacle to an important project? Give an example.

ANAYTICAL SKILLS + PROBLEM SOLVING

- Describe the project or situation that best demonstrates your analytical abilities. What was your role?
- Tell me about a time when you had to analyze information and make a recommendation. To whom did you make the recommendation? What was your reasoning? What kind of thought process did you go through? Why? Was the recommendation accepted? If not, why?
- Tell me about a situation where you had to solve a difficult problem. What did you do? What was your thought process? What was the outcome? What do you wish you had done differently?
- What steps do you follow to study a problem before making a decision?
- Give a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
- Give me an example of when you took a risk to achieve a goal. What was the outcome?
- Have you ever worked in a situation where the rules and guidelines were not clear? Tell me about it. How did you feel about it? How did you react?
- Have you ever had a situation where you had a number of alternatives to choose from? How did you go about choosing one?

COMMUNICATION

- Tell me about a recent successful experience in making a speech or presentation? How did you prepare? What obstacles did you face? How did you handle them?
- Have you ever had to "sell" an idea to your classmates or co-workers? How did you do it? Did they accept your idea?
- What challenges have occurred while you were coordinating work with other departments or divisions?
- Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person even when that individual may not have personally liked you (or vice versa). How did you handle the situation? What obstacles or difficulties did you face? How did you deal with them?
- Tell me about a time in which you had to use your written communication skills in order to get an important point across.
- Describe a situation where you felt you had not communicated well. How did you correct the situation?
- How do you go about explaining a complex technical problem to a person who does not understand technical jargon?
- Tell us about a time when you and your current/previous supervisor disagreed but you still found a way to get your point across.
- Tell us me about a time in which you had to use your written communication skills in order to get an important point across.
- Tell us about a time when you had to tell a peer that you were dissatisfied with their work.
- How do you keep those you manage informed about information that affects their jobs?
- How do you keep your manager informed about what is being done in your work area?

CREATIVITY + INNOVATION

- When was the last time you thought "outside the box" and how did you do it? Why?
- What innovative procedures have you developed? How did you develop them? Who was involved? Where did the ideas come from?
- Tell me about a problem that you've solved in a unique or unusual way. What was the outcome? Were you happy or satisfied with it?
- Give me an example of when someone brought you a new idea that was odd or unusual and how you handled it.
- Tell us about a suggestion you made to improve the way job processes worked. What was the result?
- Describe something that you have implemented at work. What were the steps used to implement this?
- Describe a time when you facilitated a creative solution to a problem between two employees.

DECISION MAKING

- Tell me about a time when you had to make a decision without all the information you needed. How did you handle it? Why? Were you happy with the outcome?
- Give me an example of a time when you had to be quick in coming to a decision. What obstacles did you face? What did you do?
- What is the most difficult decision you've had to make? How did you arrive at your decision? What was the result?
- Tell us about a time when you had to defend a decision you made even though other important people were opposed to your decision.
- How do you involve your manager and/or others when you make a decision?
- Give an example of a time in which you had to keep from speaking or not finish a task because you did not have enough information to come to a good decision. Give an example of a time when there was a decision to be made and procedures were not in place?
- On many occasions, managers have to make tough decisions. What was the most difficult one you have had to make?
- Tell us about a time when you were forced to make an unpopular decision.
- What is the riskiest decision you have made? What was the situation? What happened?

GOAL SETTING + STRATEGY

- Give me an example of an important goal which you have set and tell me how you reached it. What steps did you take? What obstacles did you encounter? How did you overcome the obstacles?
- Tell me about a goal that you set that you did not reach. What steps did you take? What obstacles did you encounter? How did it make you feel?
- Describe how you develop a project team's goals and project plan?
- Tell us about a time when you anticipated the future and made changes to current responsibilities/operations to meet future needs.
- Describe what steps/methods you have used to define/identify a vision for your unit/position.
- What were your long-range plans at your most recent employer? Describe your role in developing them.
- How do you go about setting goals with subordinates? How do you involve them in this process?
- Describe how you develop a project team's goals and project plan?
- Give an example of an important goal that you set in the past. Tell about your success in reaching it.
- Tell me about a project that you planned. How did you organize and schedule the tasks? Tell me about your action plan.

INITIATIVE

- Describe a project or idea (not necessarily your own) that was implemented primarily because of your efforts. What was your role? What was the outcome?
- Describe a situation in which you recognized a potential problem as an opportunity. What did you do? What was the result? What do you wish you had done differently?
- Tell me about a project you initiated. What did you do? Why? What was the outcome? Were you happy with the result?
- Tell me about a time when your initiative caused a change to occur.
- What projects have you started on your own recently? What prompted you to get started?
- What sorts of things have you done to become better qualified for your career?
- Tell us about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
- Tell us how you keep your job knowledge current with the on going changes in the industry.

INTEGRITY + ETHICS

- Discuss a time when your integrity was challenged. How did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time when you experienced a loss for doing what is right. How did you react?
- Tell me about a business situation when you felt honesty was inappropriate. Why? What did you do?
- Give a specific example of a policy you conformed to with which you did not agree. Why?
- Describe a time when you took personal accountability for a conflict and initiated contact with the individual(s) involved to explain your actions.
- Tell us about a time when you had to handle a tough problem which challenged fairness or ethical issues.
- On occasion we are confronted by dishonesty in the workplace. Tell about such an occurrence and how you handled it.

INTERPERSONAL

- Give an example of when you had to work with someone who was difficult to get along with. How/why was this person difficult? How did you handle it? How did the relationship progress?
- Describe a situation where you found yourself dealing with someone who did not like you. How did you handle it?
- Describe a recent unpopular decision you made. How was it received? How did you handle it?
- In your opinion, what are the key ingredients in guiding and maintaining successful business relationships? Give me examples of how you have made these work for you.

INTERPERSONAL CONTINUED

- Describe a situation in which you were able to effectively "read" another person and guide your actions by your understanding of their needs and values.
- Describe a situation where you had a conflict with another individual, and how you dealt with it. What was the outcome? How did you feel about it?
- How have you adjusted your style when it was not meeting the objectives and/or people were not responding in the way you anticipated?
- Give an example of a time when you made a mistake because you did not listen well to what someone had to say.

LEADERSHIP

- Tell me about a team project when you had to take the lead or take charge of the project? What did you do? How did you do it? What was the result?
- Describe a leadership role of yours. Why did you commit your time to it? How did you feel about it?
- What is the toughest group that you have had to get cooperation from? What were the obstacles? How did you handle the situation? What were the reactions of the group members? What was the end result?
- Have you ever been a member of a group where two of the members did not work well together? What did you do to get them to do so?
- Have you ever met resistance when implementing a new idea or policy to a work group? How did you deal with it? What happened?
- Give an example of a time in which you felt you were able to build motivation in your coworkers or subordinates at work.
- Give an example of how you have been successful at empowering either a person or a group of people into accomplishing a task.
- Tell us about some demanding situations in which you managed to remain calm and composed.

PERSUASION

- Describe a time when you were able to convince a skeptical or resistant customer to purchase a project or utilize your services.
- Have you ever had to persuade a peer or manager to accept an idea that you knew they would not like? Describe the resistance you met and how you overcame it.
- In selling an idea, it is sometimes useful to use metaphors, analogies, or stories to make your point. Give a recent example of when you were able to successfully do that.
- When have you used facts and reason to persuade someone to accept your recommendation(s).

SELF-AWARENESS

- Can you recall a time when you were less than pleased with your performance?
- If there were one area you've always wanted to improve upon, what would that be?
- What do you consider to be your professional strengths? Give me a specific example using this attribute in the workplace.
- What was the most useful criticism you ever received?
- Give me an example of when you were able to meet the personal and professional demands in your life yet still maintained a healthy balance.

TEAMWORK

- Describe a situation where others you were working with on a project disagreed with your ideas.
- Tell me about a time when you worked with a classmate or colleague who was not doing their share of the work. How did you handle it?
- Describe a situation in which you had to arrive at a compromise or help others to compromise. What was your role? What steps did you take? What was the result?
- Tell me about a time when you had to work on a team that did not get along. What happened? What role did you take? What was the result?
- Give an example of how you worked effectively with people to accomplish an important result.
- Have you ever been a project leader? Give examples of problems you experienced and how you reacted.
- Describe a team experience you found disappointing. What could you have done to prevent this?
- Give an example of how you successfully empowered a group of people in accomplishing a task.
- Have you ever been in a position where you had to lead a group of peers? How did you handle it?
- Give a specific example of how you have helped create an environment where differences are valued, encouraged and supported.
- Describe your leadership style and give an example of a situation when you successfully led a group.
- When working on a team project have you ever had an experience where there was strong disagreement among team members? What did you do?
- Think about the times you have been a team leader. What could you have done to be more effective?
- Describe a team experience you found rewarding.
- Tell us about a time when you adapted to a wide variety of people by understanding their perspective.
- What measures have you taken to make someone feel comfortable in an environment that was uncomfortable with his or her presence?

Schedule an appointment with a Career Coach to discuss interview strategies and conduct a mock interview.