

BEHAVIORAL-BASED INTERVIEWING

There are two main types of questions: Informational questions and behavioral questions. **Informational questions** are just that – your interviewer is gathering information to find out whether or not you have the necessary background to do the job. **Behavioral-based questions** ask you, the interviewee, to provide specific examples which target the behaviors the interviewer believes are needed for success in the position.

Why do recruiters ask behavioral-based questions? The premise behind behavioral interviewing is that the most accurate predictor of future performance is past performance in similar situations. Employers use the behavioral interview technique to evaluate a candidate's experiences and behaviors so they can determine the applicant's potential for success.

How do you prepare for these types of questions? Spend some time thinking about ALL your past experiences (work, education, personal, sports, etc...) and then use the sample questions at the end of this section to practice. As you are practicing, think about the overall situation: The task you were performing, the actions you took and the results of those actions.

SAMPLE BEHAVIORAL-BASED QUESTIONS:

Tell me about a project that required you to track small details while still managing the big picture.

When I worked as a Peer Advisor, I was responsible for helping to train new Peer Advisors. Last year I was asked to develop a new training program for five new Peer Advisors. To do this, I worked with a fellow Peer Advisor to create new materials, and also to schedule training topics and presentations. My goal was to be sure the new advisors received all the information they'd need to effectively advise students, while also making the training enjoyable and interactive. I identified and worked on materials needed for the training binder, created a schedule for the daily training activities, identified and contacted appropriate speakers, and created fun and interactive training activities.

In the end, the training was a solid success. It was well-organized and stayed on schedule. My supervisor gathered feedback, and all 5 trainees reported that it was an informative and fun training.

Tell me how you manage your time.

I establish a To-Do list for each week and review each day the prior evening. Then I add to it and reprioritize tasks if needed as the week goes on. With this method, I have never missed a deadline. When other things interfere, I make up the time lost as quickly as possible. When I need to focus on detailed tasks, I make sure to set aside time that will be free of interruptions so I can concentrate and work more effectively.

WHAT INTERVIEWERS REALLY WANT TO KNOW

For each sample question you practice, think about "what the interviewer really wants to know" and come up with examples of how to demonstrate that information.

<i>Interview Question</i>	<i>What they really want to know</i>	<i>Examples I can give</i>
"Tell me about yourself."	<p>Can I filter information?</p> <p>Do I know what is relevant?</p> <p>Do my skills relate to the position?</p>	"I am a junior at Stonehill College majoring in English. I have completed 2 internships in both publishing and editing. I enjoy interviewing people and learning about the stories they have to tell. I know that this position requires great interpersonal and analytical skills, and I believe I can bring the lessons I have learned from my internships to this position."
"What are your strengths and weaknesses?"	<p>Do I know about myself?</p> <p>Can I articulate relevant personal information?</p> <p>Am I honest?</p> <p>Will my weakness be a liability to the position/company?</p>	"One of my strengths is the ability to be both organized and flexible. I approach each and every project with a great deal of preparation, yet I strongly believe in team collaboration. My weakness is that I do not have a great deal of experience in sales, but I am a quick and thorough learner who will always give 110% to my work."
"Why are you interested in our organization?"	<p>Did I do my homework?</p> <p>Can I articulate the mission of the company and what makes it different from its competitors?</p>	"I've done my research on both ABC company and your competition. I would like to work at ABC company for both the opportunity to learn and for room to grow. ABC Company's stock has been doing well, your corporate training program is well respected, and the work culture is one that appeals to me. I like that there is an open-door policy and that the environment is a collaborative culture, and I believe that is consistent with my work ethic and value system."