

Behavioral Interviewing

Behavioral Interviewing – asking questions that focus on how you have behaved in the past – is used to help employers predict future performance. This type of interviewing provides more objective facts on which to base employment decisions than other interviewing methods. Traditional interviewers ask general questions such as “Tell me about yourself”. Behavioral interviewing is much more probing and tries to pinpoint certain characteristics.

Points about Behavioral Interviewing:

- Employers predetermine which skills are necessary for the job opening and then ask very specific questions to determine if the candidate possesses those skills.
- You need to try and assess which skills the employer is seeking. Talk with alumni, read company literature, etc.
- An effective way to answer behavioral interview questions is to utilize a three step process:
Describe the: 1. Situation
2. Action you took
3. Result/Outcome
- Your response should be specific and detailed. Tell them about a particular situation that relates to the question, not a general one. Remember to tell them briefly the situation, what you did specifically and the positive result or outcome. Typically the interviewer will pick apart the story to try and identify the specific behavior. The interviewer can probe further for more depth or detail and often will ask: What were you thinking at this point? Tell me more about your meeting with that person. Lead me through your decision process.

Your interview preparation should include:

Identifying situations where you have demonstrated the behaviors sought by a company:

- Use examples from past internships, classes, activities, team involvement, community service, and work experience.
- Use examples of which you may be especially proud, such as running a marathon, running for student body president, or exhibiting paintings at an art show.

Know before you go into an interview what skills you have to offer and how you can benefit the employer.