

Behavioral Based Interview Questions

The theory behind behavioral interviewing is that a job applicant's past behaviors are predictors of his/her future behaviors. Behaviors critical to job success should be identified prior to an employment interview and then uncovered during the interview process by using behavioral interviewing techniques. Below are examples of questions that can be used during an interview to learn about an applicant's behavioral traits.

1. SCRIPTING

What would be your response if we asked you to answer your phone every time by saying exactly, "This is Mary, how may I help you" and similarly if we asked you to say, "Is there anything else I may do for you, I have the time," every time you were about to leave a customer or patient? What do you see as the benefits of that and/or what might be the barriers?

2. LIKELIHOOD OF RELOCATION

We invest time, money, and training in our employees and like to reap the benefits of developing and maintaining a long-term relationship. Have you been a long-term employee with other companies? If not, why not? Do you foresee any obstacles to having a long term relationship here? If hired right now, what goal would you have with the company in one year? Are there any reasons why you would not be able to be here for one year?

3. QUALIFICATIONS

Do you meet the minimum qualifications of the job?

4. GOAL SETTING

Tell me about an important goal that you have set in the past and what you did to accomplish it.

5. INTERACTION AND COPING SKILLS

Have you heard the expression "roll with the punches"? Describe a situation in the past when you had to work with a difficult person and "roll with the punches."

6. REPETITIVE TASKS

When you had to do a job that was particularly uninteresting, how did you deal with it?

7. COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION SKILLS

What experience have you had with miscommunication with a customer or fellow employee, and how did you solve the problem?

8. FOLLOW POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Tell me about a time when an upper level policy change or decision held up your work. How did you respond?

9. SUPERVISORY LEADERSHIP

What has been your experience in supervising a diverse group of employees with varied backgrounds and skills, and what did you do to ensure the best fit of employees for each job?

10. FLEXIBILITY

What methods or processes have you used when you were facing a transitional change in your job responsibilities to ensure a positive outcome for you and the company?

11. COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Describe a time when you realized you needed to make an improvement in your communication skills, and how did you manage it?

12. DIPLOMACY

What types of things in your work have upset you, and how did you react to those situations?

13. DECISIVENESS

Give me an example of when you were faced with a difficult decision affecting your job. How did you deal with it?

14. INTERACTION AND DIPLOMACY

Describe a time when you communicated some unpleasant feelings to your supervisor. What happened?

15. SUPERVISORY LEADERSHIP

What has been your experience dealing with poor employee performance? Give me an example.

16. INDIRECT SUPERVISION

In your current or past positions, what types of decisions do/did you make without consulting your boss?

17. ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

How do you organize your work to ensure that you are the most effective and productive?

18. MULTIPLE PRIORITIES / DEADLINES

Tell me about your work experience in managing multiple job priorities with varied deadlines. When and how do you determine priority and deadline changes?

19. MOTIVATION/SUPERVISORY LEADERSHIP

What is an example of a time when you came up with a clever way to motivate your employees?

20. PROBLEM SOLVING

What were the major obstacles that you overcame in your last job? How did you deal with them?

21. COMMUNICATION / CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Think of a problem customer that you had to deal with in your last job. Tell me what happened and how you handled it.

22. FOLLOW POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Describe a situation in which you felt it might be justifiable to break company policy or alter a standard procedure. What did you do?

23. PLANNING AND ORGANIZING

Think of a day when you had plenty of things to do. Describe how you scheduled your time.

24. CREATIVITY

Tell me about a time when you have been creative in your work. What did you do?

25. PROBLEM SOLVING

Tell me about any experience you have had turning a problem into a success.

26. RISK TAKING

Give me an example of a situation in which you took a calculated risk in a recent position. What were your considerations?

27. LEADERSHIP

Tell me about a leadership role that you have filled in the past. Describe the key leadership skills you feel you have and how you demonstrated them.

28. DILIGENCE

Tell me about a time when you felt like giving up on a certain job. What did you do?

29. STRESS

Describe a work situation in which a project you worked on and felt was very important to you was delayed or postponed. How did it interrupt your schedule and how did you respond to it?

30. INTERACTION AND PROBLEM SOLVING

Describe a situation when you worked with a person whose personality was the opposite of yours. How did you deal with it?

31. SUPERVISORY / POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Describe a circumstance in which you recommended the dismissal of a worker who had proven they could not handle the job. What procedure did you follow?

32. WRITING SKILLS AND INITIATIVE

Describe the most significant written document, report, or presentation you have had to complete. What was the response from the employer?

33. COMMITMENT AND INITIATIVE

Give me an example of a time when you went beyond your employer's normal job expectations in order to get a job done.

34. TEAMWORK

What did you do in your last job to contribute toward a teamwork environment? Describe how you felt your contributions affected the team.

35. PROBLEM SOLVING

Give me an example of a problem which you faced on any job you have had and how you went about solving it.

36. GOAL SETTING

Give me an example of an important goal which had been set for you and about your success in reaching it.

37. JUDGEMENT

Why did you leave your last three jobs?

QUESTIONS TO REVEAL PERSONALITY/ TEMPERAMENT/ ABILITY TO WORK WITH OTHERS

38. What brings you joy?

39. If you took out a full page ad in the New York Times and had to describe yourself in only three words, what would those words be?

40. How would you describe your personality?

41. What motivates you the most?

42. If I call your references, what will they say about you?

43. What kind of environment would you like to work in?

44. What kinds of people would you rather not work with?

45. What kind of people bug you?

46. Tell me about a work situation that irritated you.

47. Have you ever had to resolve a conflict with a co-worker or client? How did you resolve it?

48. How have you worked as a member of teams in the past?

49. What previous job was the most satisfying and why?

50. What job was the most frustrating and why?

51. Tell me about the best boss you ever had. Now tell me about the worst boss. What made it tough to work for him or her?

QUESTIONS TO REVEAL PAST MISTAKES

52. When is the last time you were criticized? How did you deal with it?

53. What have you learned from your mistakes?

54. Tell me about an objective in your last job that you failed to meet and why?

55. If you had the opportunity to change anything in your career, what would you have done differently?

56. Tell me about a time when you had to work on a project that did not work out the way it should have. What did you do?

58. Tell me about a situation where you blew it. How did you resolve or correct it to save face?

QUESTIONS TO REVEAL CREATIVITY/ CREATIVE THINKING/ PROBLEM SOLVING

59. When was the last time you "broke the rules" and how did you do it?

60. What have you done that was innovative?

61. What was the wildest idea that you had in the past year?

62. If you could do anything in the world, what would you do?

63. What is the most difficult decision that you have had to make? How did you arrive at that decision?

64. When taking on a new task, do you like to have a great deal of feedback and responsibility at the outset, or do you like to try your own approach?

65. You are on the phone with another department resolving a problem. The intercom pages you for a customer on hold. Your manager returns your monthly report with red pen markings and demands corrections within the hour. What do you do?

66. What type of approach to solving work problems seems to work best for you?

67. Give me an example of when you solved a tough problem.

MISCELLANEOUS GOOD QUESTIONS

68. How do you measure your own success?

69. What is the most interesting thing you have done in the past three years?

70. What are your short-term or long-term career goals?

71. Why should we hire you?

72. What responsibilities do you want, and what kinds of results do you expect to achieve in your next job?

73. How did the best manager you ever had motivate you to perform well? Why did that method work?

74. What is the best thing a previous employer did that you wish everyone did?

75. What are you most proud of?

76. What is important to you in a job?

77. What do you expect to find in our company that you don't have now?

78. Do you have any questions for me?

QUESTIONS TO REVEAL INTEGRITY/ HONESTY/ TRUSTWORTHINESS/ETHICS

79. Discuss a time when your integrity was challenged. How did you handle it?

80. What would you do if someone asked you to do something unethical?

81. Have you ever experienced a loss for doing what is right?

82. Have you ever asked for forgiveness for doing something wrong?

83. In what business situations do you feel honesty would be inappropriate?

84. If you saw a co-worker doing something dishonest, would you tell your boss? What would you do about it?

85. How would you describe the ethics of your company? In which areas do you feel comfortable and uncomfortable with them? Why?
86. Give me an example of an ethical decision you have had to make on the job. What factors did you consider in reaching the decision?
87. Tell me about an instance when you've had to go against company guidelines or procedures in order to get something done.
88. Can you give me an example of something you did that you regret? How would you handle the situation differently today?
89. Have you ever felt guilty about receiving credit for work that was mostly completed by others? If so, how did you handle it?

QUESTION TO REVEAL HUMOR

90. Have you ever used humor to solve a workplace problem?

QUESTIONS TO REVEAL DECISION-MAKING ABILITY

91. Tell me about a time when you had to overcome serious obstacles in order to implement a decision.
92. Give me an example of an important business decision you made that, looking at it now, you think went wrong. What would you do differently, if you could?
93. Describe a situation where you decided it was OK to tell a lie.
94. We all want more information before making a decision, but we have to stop somewhere. Tell me about a time you had to draw the line, and how it worked out.

QUESTIONS TO REVEAL STAYING CURRENT

95. What are you doing now to develop your knowledge or skills?
96. What was the last business book you read or seminar you attended?

QUESTION TO REVEAL TEAMWORK IN DISASTER SITUATION

97. Your job may be crucial during a disaster such as a hurricane. In the past, have you contributed to a team committed to deal with the situation? Describe your role.