

The Behavioral Event Interview



Hiring for 'fit' to build your team (and to advance your own career too!)

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Five COMMON interviewer ERRORS

The interviewer:



- talks more than the candidate
- asks archaic & uninformative questions (e.g. what are your strengths and weaknesses?)
- gets a verbal resume from the candidate
- asks hypothetical interview questions (e.g. what would you do...?)
- hires for chemistry, rather than fit

You will likely get asked

"Why do you want this position?"

You are really being asked:

"Why here?"

Why now?"

Do's and Don'ts with this question

"Why do you want this position?"

Inappropriate Answer	More Appropriate Answer
It's time for me to move up	I am passionate about X at this institution
It's the next logical step in my career	I feel aligned with the mission and goals at _____
I am not challenged where I am	My vision and your vision are well matched, good fit
There no place to "go" where I am now	I am ready to address more complex challenges and make a bigger contribution to _____

The Behavioral Event Interview

Is also called the CRITICAL INCIDENT method

Gathers data through a structured interview on how people respond and behave in specific situations because...



Past
performance

predicts



Future
performance

Why use the Behavioral Event Interview method?

Hiring for FIT, rather than chemistry, helps you hire right the first time:

People have the skills to do the job

People know what the job entails

Better fit and understanding of the job reduces job turnover

Turnover is one of the biggest human resource costs organizations face

The goal of Behavioral Event Interviewing is to:

- Evaluate the candidate's knowledge of specific situations or procedures
 - Gather data about interpersonal performance and on specific tasks

- *Assess theory in use rather than espoused theory*
 - Minimize personal impressions that might cloud hiring decisions
- Predict future task performance
 - Make appropriate hiring decisions for both fit and skill

Differences between a traditional and a Behavioral Event Interview

Interview questions ask how one *did* behave in a particular situation, not how one *would* behave.

The interviewer will ask for details, and will not allow the candidate to theorize or generalize about several events.

The candidate may not get a chance to deliver any prepared stories.

Differences between a traditional and a Behavioral Event Interview

Interviewers will question and probe (think of "peeling the layers from an onion"). And they take copious notes.

BEI follows a structured process and concentrates on areas that are important to the interviewer, rather than allowing the interviewee to concentrate on areas that s/he may feel are important.

Often interviews are graded on a point system to determine if the candidate passed or failed the interview

Steps involved in creating a behavioral event interview:

- 1. List the critical performance areas for the job*
- 2. Create open ended questions that queries the candidate's experience at those tasks*
- 3. Gather data on the Situation, Tasks, Action and Results in the candidate's answer*
- 4. Evaluate answers for demonstrated job performance*
- 5. Compare their answers to other candidate's answers (this is sometimes done with a point-scoring system)*

Example follow-up questions to test for consistency and determine if the candidate exhibited the desired behavior in that situation

"Can you give me an example?"

"What did you do?"

"What did you say?"

"What were you thinking?"

"How did you feel?"

"What was your role?"

"What was the result?"

You will notice an absence of such questions as, "Tell me about your strengths and weaknesses."

One of the best ways to learn this method before using it to hire is to experience it from the candidates side

So...

Candidate practice session!

How to Prepare *for* a Behavioral Interview

Examine the job description and note the most important skills. These are the skills you should be asked about in the interview process.

Recall recent situations that show favorable behaviors or actions, especially involving work experience, leadership, teamwork, initiative, planning, and customer service.

Prepare short descriptions of each situation; be ready to give details if asked.

Be sure each story has a beginning, a middle, and an end, i.e., be ready to describe the situation, your action and the outcome or result.

How to Prepare for a Behavioral Interview

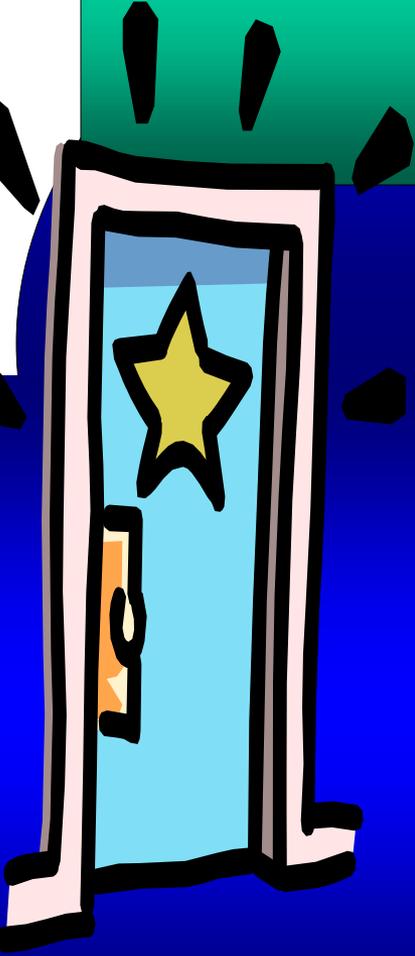
Be sure the outcome or result reflects positively on you (even if the result itself was not favorable).

Be honest. Don't embellish or omit any part of the story. The interviewer will find out if your story is built on a weak foundation.

Be specific. Don't generalize about several events; give a detailed accounting of one event.

Preparing for the Behavioral Event Interview

Use the STAR method



Describe the **Situation**

What was the **Task** you needed to accomplish?

What **Action(s)** did you take?

What **Result(s)** did you achieve?

Some example BEI questions you could face in an interview situation



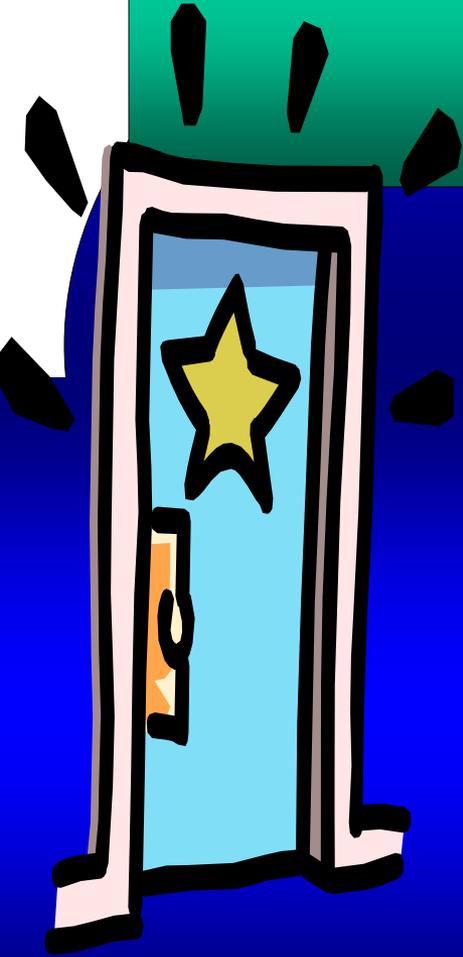
Let's practice:
Please volunteer
to answer a
question

Practice question #1

"Please give me an example of a time when you had to take steps to change or influence the culture of your organization."

Remember the formula for success...

The STAR method



Describe the **Situation**

What was the **Task** you needed to accomplish?

What **Action(s)** did you take?

What **Result(s)** did you achieve?

Now let's resume...
Practice question #1

"Please give me an example of a time when you had to take steps change or influence the culture of your organization."

Situation

Task

Action

Results

Practice question #2

"Describe a time when you had to create partnerships with another organization or group despite contentious relationships between the parties."

Practice question #3

"Tell me about a time when you implemented a successful development aspect to a program, department, or college."

Practice question #4

"Tell me about a time when
managed a difficult
interpersonal situation among
your staff."

Practice question #5

"Tell me about a time when you had to deal with the media on behalf of your organization. How did you handle embarrassing or difficult situations for your organization that were thrust into the public eye?"

Practice question #6

"Tell me about a time when you had to create a collaborative partnership in an unexpected place. Who was involved? How did the situation work out?"

Practice question #7

"Tell me about how you have brought innovation to your organization. What steps did you take? What happened?"

How would you create a behavioral event interview for **HIRING** a new employee?



- Review the job description
 - Examine skill deficits on your team
- Create a list of tasks and note the steps critical to successful task completion
 - Create your list of questions
- Create your probes and a data collection form

Let's try an example

Let's create a BEI for a University Leadership position



list 3 or 4 critical job skills:

- Lead and manage a diverse staff of professionals
- Excellent communication skills to connect people, resources and organizations
- Develop, advocate for, and control budgets
- Negotiate on behalf of your organization
- Other (ie: What else would YOU add to this list?)

What question makes sense?

Potential BEI questions for a University Leadership position



- Tell me about a time when you...:

In the final analysis: Behavioral Event Interviewing



BEI is a popular interviewing technique

Can help take bias out of the interviewing process

Can help hire for fit and skill competency

Some evidence that it reduces job turnover because the organization hires the right person with the right skills the first time

In general, what is the best way to prepare for any interview?

- Research the department, business unit, school, university, company, etc.
 - Understand what they do and what they are about.
 - Understand the job description so you are familiar with the tasks required.

Preparing for the interview

Research YOURSELF as well

- Why do you want the job?
- What are your skills, experiences, accomplishments, work style, personal and professional strengths?
- What specific situations exemplify these?
- Be ready to talk about the unique marketable skills that you have to offer

Preparing for the interview

Some final, practical thoughts (part 1)

- Prepare 4 or 5 questions about the department or position
- *Get a good night's rest*
- Know where you need to be when for the interview
- *Give yourself plenty of time and arrive early*

Preparing for the interview

Some final, practical thoughts...

- Look your best, but be conservative in dress, fragrance, etc.
- Listen carefully to the questions and formulate your response: **THINK** before you **SPEAK**.
- Make eye contact and remember to attune to non-verbal cues too!