



Interviewing Skills Workshop

Objectives

- To understand the steps involved in Behavior Based interviewing - enabling better hiring decisions
- To create a Behavior Based Interview guide for your next interview
- Provide practical interviewing experience



Traditional Interviewing tends to...

- Focus on the candidate
- Follow the resume
- Compare the applicant to minimum standards
- Get to “know” the applicant
- Sell the organization

Behavior Based Interviewing

- Is based on the premise that the greatest predictor of future job performance is past job performance. Allows candidates to validate their past performance against our current needs
- Focuses on the position first, not the candidate. Before we interview any candidate, we should have thoroughly determined the needs
- Focuses only on the most important requirements of a position - not all of them
- Provides for more consistency in interviewing style and successful selection

Behavior Based Interviewing tends to...

- Focus on the **position/job requirements**
- Follow the resume **competencies we need in the job**
- Compare the applicant to minimum **required** standards
- Get to “know” the applicant - **know how well the applicant has performed in similar functions in the past**
- Sell the organization... **(but probably not as much as in the traditional interview)**

Behavior Based Interviewing

Is a process that involves five simple, yet important steps.

1. Write down the five most important job competencies for this position.
2. Write one behavior-based question for each competency.
3. Ask the candidate the questions.
4. Explore each question three to five levels deep.
5. Evaluate candidate responses.

Five Step Process

1. Determine the five most important job competencies for this position.

Prior to any interview, list the five most important job competencies.

For an Engineer, for example...

- coordination and decision-making skills
- planning and organizational skills
- work standards
- quality orientation

Step 1: Job description (exercise)

Imagine this is a role description and you are one of the interviewers who will be interviewing candidates. Which would you think are 3 to 5 most important job competencies or aspects that you would like to ask the candidate questions about?

Company X is looking to recruit a graduate Civil Engineer For a number of projects in location Y.

The company is expanding and this is an excellent opportunity for a graduate to get their foot in the door and work on prestigious projects.

The Role:

- Setting out and levelling site
- Report directly to the Senior Engineer
- Ensure health and safety best practises are being followed at all time
- Monitor site labour force along with liaising with subcontractors

The Ideal Candidate:

- Previous setting out experience
- Degree in Civil Engineering or related field OR Strong Civil Engineering Experience
- Excellent organisational and time management skills
- Communication skills and ability to work well within a team

Five Step Process

2. Write one behavior-based question for each competency. A good way to begin a behavior-based question is to ask...

“Tell me about a time when...”

...you had to make a decision that made a client unhappy. (Decision making)

...you planned and executed a mega-project. (Planning and Organizational Skills)

...you were able to collaborate with another department to solve a problem on a project.
(Organizational Awareness)

...you had to ramp up your team’s efforts to produce a quality product in a short amount
of time. (Work Standards)

...your attention to detail helped improve the overall quality of your team’s work product.
(Quality Orientation)

Step 2: formulate questions exercise

1. Use the list you made of the 3 to 5 items you would want to ask questions about in the Graduate Engineer interviews.
2. Create some behavioral questions for one or two of the areas you have highlighted.
3. Discuss with the person next to you/in the group to get clarity on what a good question might be or how to improve the ones that were drafted by workshop participants.

Five Step Process

3. Ask the candidate questions

- Introduction
- Tell the applicant about behavior-based interviewing
- Take notes
- Allow for silence and be comfortable with it
- “Take your time, these are important questions.”
- Don’t “help” the candidate by suggesting answers for them.
- Probe for contrary evidence

Step 3: practice a question

1. Pick one of the questions you have formulated and practice with the person next to you. It is a role-play where the person next to you is acting like a job candidate for the graduate engineer role used earlier in the exercises. You ask your question first and the other person answers it. Then you play the role of the job candidate and the other person asks their chosen question which you answer.
(3 minutes)
2. Discuss with the person next to you or with the whole group – what worked and what would you do differently as a result of this exercise?

Five Step Process

4. Explore each question three to five levels deep

- “Tell me more... numbers, details, specifics...”
- “Can you talk about your specific involvement...”
- “And your part in this project was...”
- “What challenges did you face in this effort and how did you overcome them?”
- “What did you take away from this experience?”
- “What would you do differently?” (Contrary Evidence)

Five Step Process

5. Evaluate candidate responses

Has the candidate demonstrated, via specific past behaviors, the ability to be successful in each competency area?

How does this candidate's abilities compare to others you have interviewed?



Step 5: Review forms

Check the handouts to review the following forms that are available for interviewers:

1. Interview plan
2. Interview rating sheet
3. Job candidate summary – showing all the ratings you captured

Create An Interviewing Plan

1. On your Behavior Based Interviewing plan select five relevant competencies for a position you have open or anticipate needing.
2. Develop five questions to ask based on these competencies.
3. Share/critique your plan with a partner.



Compliance and Legal Issues

Managers need to:

- Post definitive job requisitions
- Ensure we are within our legal boundaries
- Avoid risky interview questions

Requirements on Requisition must be definitive

- Be specific on type of experience necessary to do the job
- Be specific on qualifications necessary to do the job
- Too vague means more applicants than what would truly be considered.



Potentially Risky Interview Questions

NEVER ASK

- Race or Color
- Religion or Creed
- National Origin (Passport detail may be appropriate as it relates to the right to work and live in your country without permits/visas)
- Sexual Preference
- Marital Status
- Birth Control
- Age/Date of birth
- Arrest Record
- Health/Disability Status
- Photograph

BE CAREFUL

- Language
- Relatives
- Organizations affiliated with
- Number of Dependents
- Child Care
- Housing

Some Questions and Answers

(For discussion or for handouts)

Q&A

Does the candidate have to have demonstrated complete mastery in every competency area to be considered a good hire?

No, particularly if this is a good position for someone who can “stretch” into it. For the most part, however, if we have properly defined our competencies, the more mastery shown in the interview, the more likely that the candidate will be successful at the company.

Why five competencies? Is three OK? Ten?

There is nothing particularly magic about five. Use three to six—whatever it takes to make a good selection. You will probably have to schedule multiple interviews if you attempt to probe more than four or five competency areas.

Q&A

How does Behavior Based Interviewing work with a team or group interview?

It works very well! If you have defined five competency areas and you have five interviewers, simply assign each interviewer a specific competency area. If each interviewer stays focused on their assigned area, you should get to know a lot more about the candidate than you would by conducting a traditional interview.

What about some of my old favorites? I like to know where they think they will be in five years? Can I ask?

Yes, but why bother? Most candidates have prepared for the “traditional” questions and you will tend to get a canned answer that does not reveal anything specific. Besides, do you know where you will be in five years?

Q&A

We have a lot to cover in a 45-minute interview... suggestions on timing?

1. Rapport Building-- 2 minutes only
2. Both you and the candidate know why you are here. (skip that one)
3. Resume Review-- 5 minutes
 - Cover specific issues/questions only.
4. Behavior Based Questions-- 30 minutes
5. Selling-- 5 minutes
6. Supplement with written documents provided (CV, cover letter etc) and follow-up calls/e-mails if you have additional questions.

Q&A

What if the candidate deviates from the question or tends to take off on tangents?

Try to bring them back to the question by interrupting and asking them to refocus on your question. If this does not work, mark them as poor communicators on your evaluation sheet and move on to the next candidate.

Shouldn't we review the resume in the interview?

Only if you have very specific questions or something appears strange. The candidate wrote it, he/she knows what is there. You read it. Why cover it? It is a traditional method of interviewing but not an effective use of your time.

Q&A

When do I sell our company to the candidate?

Traditionally at the end of the interview. You do not necessarily want to sell too much to a candidate in which you have no interest. Use most of your time to gather information from the candidate, not to give information. If you run out of time you can always arrange a follow-up phone call to answer questions or sell the organization to a particularly bright candidate.

Q&A

What if I am running late and really do not have time to do the prep work before the interview?

One advantage of Behavior Based Interviewing is that you only have to prepare once for any number of candidates contending for the same open position. Keep your list of five basic competencies and questions in a file folder as you create them. The skills and abilities you are looking for do not vary—only the candidates change. Pull them out of the folder for a 30 second review. Over time, you will build an interviewing strategy and plan for all of the positions you normally recruit.

Q&A

What do I do after the interview?

Complete the Applicant Interview Record

Applicant Interview Record

Applicant Interview Record

Applicant name: _____

Interviewer name: _____

Interview date: _____

Job Profile/Vacancy: _____



Rated Area	Scale of 1-5 based on job profile requirements (Rating)	Comments
Education		
Professional/Technical Skills		
Proven knowledge (as per job profile)		
Previous Industry experience		
Work Experience		
Willingness to be mobile (if required)		
Clear expression of thoughts and ideas and understanding of questions and directions		
Supervisory experience		
Salary requirements within range for position		
Recommendation:	Make offer <input type="checkbox"/>	Reject <input type="checkbox"/> More info needed <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments about recommendation:		

Explanation of Ratings

The following ratings should be given if, in the interviewer's judgment, the applicant::

5=Excellent - Clearly and significantly exceeds the minimum requirements for the factor under consideration. Not only meeting the minimum but other elements such as quality or quantity justify distinguishing this applicant from others. Other descriptions include ""exceptional"", high distinction"", or ""among the best"". This rating should be given only if clearly merited.

4=Good - Exceeds the minimum requirements for the factor under consideration, but not clearly or significantly enough to justify an ""excellent"" rating. This rating should be given where considerations of quality or quantity of the factor need to be emphasized or distinguished. Other descriptions include ""above average"" or ""above the norm"".

3=Satisfactory - Meets the necessary requirements or the minimum standards defined for the factor. It should also be used to indicate simple possession of the factor where quality does not apply. Other descriptions include ""average"", ""meets the standard"", or ""acceptable"". It is expected that most factors will receive this rating unless other ratings are clearly warranted.

2=Less Than Satisfactory - Does not meet all requirements for the factor but does meet some or if quality or quantity of the factor is lacking to the extent that a higher rating cannot be justified. Other descriptions include ""below average"", ""marginal"", or ""questionable"".

1=Not Acceptable - Clearly does not meet the minimum requirement for the factor and could not satisfactorily perform the job function to which the factor relates.

0=Not Applicable - Factor does not apply to the position.

Q&A

What else?

- Stick with objective, relevant comments on the Interview Record
- Relate the comments back to your questions
- Always interview more than one person

So, I have a job I want to fill... what do I do first?

Go to the Human Resources home page and select “Employment Requisition”

Q&A

What role does Human Resources play in selection and hiring?

Human Resources attempts to be as helpful as possible. We offer the following support:

- Coaching/consultation for managers with job openings
- Advertising (e-recruiting, print, trade journals, etc.)
- Direct sourcing/head hunting
- Pre-screening candidate qualifications
- Extending offers
- Degree and employment verifications
- Background checks
- Compensation research and recommendations
- Liaison with relocation resources
- Liaison with immigration resources with our external legal counsel
- New hire orientation, processing, and welcome packages