

The Behavioural Based Interview

Before the Interview

Most candidates tend to arrive at the exact time for their pending interview. It is good practice to arrive 20mins early as this gives you time to settle any nerves and it also has a calming effect as you are not running around rushing to get to the interview location. Most candidates who rush to make their interview time tend to also feel flustered and full of adrenalin at the interview – not a good start. Arrive 20 minutes early, even if it does mean you have to go for a coffee at a local café/coffee shop.

Background of the behavioural based interview

Most blue chip organisation now utilise the behavioural based interview in the selection process. To set you up for success we have outlined the structure of the interview and provided some helpful tips because:

- It is the most predictive form of interviewing
- Predicts future performance based on past behaviours
- If you reacted one way in a certain situation, the rule of thumb is you will react again the same way when presented with a similar problem
- The behaviours are often indicated in a job specification and this will give you an idea of what behavioural questions they could possibly ask

The beginning of the interview

Generally an interview will start with you being asked to go through your work history

- Be able to talk through in detail your CV and education,
- Be able to talk through notable accomplishments, skills, technical knowledge etc

Potential Questions

Why does this company appeal to you?

“I have looked on your website, spoken with others in the market and what really strikes me is.....”

So Talk about how you come to think the client is your employer of choice and choose things that drive the company culture like....

- Training and development
- Employee recognition
- Internal and external Client Focus
- Opportunity to contribute to improves processes etc
- Team Focus

Why does the role interests you and what strengths can you bring to the team?

Make sure you back strengths up with some evidence

Example is

- I am a team player – I am always ask others before I leave for the day is there anything I can help them with

Reason For leaving last role / looking for new role?

Don't go into unnecessary detail

What are your weakness / area for improvement?

Good examples of these are

- desk can get messy
- can find it hard to say no to people
- Find it hard to delegate
- Like to see things through to completion but sometimes can be a little obsessive with this
- Can sometimes take on too much to handle

Behavioural Based questions

Answer should be structured in 4 parts outlined in the STAR method

STAR Method for answering a behavioural based question (same as 4 point method)

Situation – describe the situation or setting

Task – outline what needed to be done

Action – Describe in detail the action your took (illustrate the skill clearly)

Result – Outline the positive results of your action, especially the benefits to the organisation
– if you make the results quantifiable that is even better

- Task and Action is the most important part as this is where you describe the behaviours

Sample Behavioural Competencies

Behavioural questions will generally begin with “Tell me about a time when...” or “When have you....” Etc

Questions could be based around the following behavioural competencies and below you will find points to touch on when answering the questions.

Questions about Team Work

Make sure you touch on some of the following behaviours:

- Managing others expectations
- Motivate others
- Constructive
- Escalation of issues when necessary
- Interdepartmental relationship building
- Proactive in Self training
- Networking Ability
- Offering to help others
- Take a Genuine interest in your colleagues
- Good Listener
- Can be relied upon

Questions about using your Initiative / Improving or streamlining processes

Make sure you touch on some of the following behaviours:

- Control focus
- Testing
- Proactive
- Leader not a follower
- Writing procedural manuals
- Gaining Authority
- Training others
- Committed to improving productivity
- Adapt or change behaviour to better achieve target/objective
- Confidence to challenge decisions
- Planning or using a Project Plan
- Automating Manual processes / Streamlining Systems or processes

Questions about Coping under pressure / coping with stress / time management

Make sure you touch on some of the follow behaviours:

- Managing others expectations on timelines
- Delegate
- Prioritise
- To do list
- Flexible
- Don't take it personally
- Not afraid to work back
- Have a clear appreciation for Strengths and limitations
- Shows good judgement under pressure
- Multitask

Questions about Internal and External Client Focus

Make sure you touch on some of the follow behaviours:

- Follow up
- Learn and address needs
- Empathise
- Use their words when communicating
- Reconfirmation
- Confident at dealing with all levels
- Manage others expectations

Questions about Analytical Skills / Problem Solving

Make sure you touch on some of the follow behaviours:

- Escalate issues when required
- Take into account risks and potential business impact
- Ability to make decisions based on information
- Analyse diverse alternatives
- Trend Analysis
- Attention detail

Questions about Operations Control

Make sure you touch on some of the follow behaviours:

- Attention to detail
- Understand why control is in place
- Addressing risk
- Able to verbalise implications of what happens when controls are not in place
- Knowing when to escalate

FOR ROLES SUPERVISORY AND MANAGER THAT INVOLVE PEOPLE MANAGEMENT ONLY - Questions about People Management

Behaviours are

- Managing others expectations on timelines
- Using different mediums to communicate
- Team meetings, one on ones, Personal Development Plans
- Succession Planning
- Cross Training
- Motivating others
- Able to plan or prioritise work to meet deadlines
- Strategic thinking ability to analyse to anticipate the impact of decisions on people, departments etc
- Setting goals, targets of key performance indicators
- Accountable
- Managing upwards
- Recognising achievements and knowing how staff like to be recognised
- Lead by example / Be willing to get hands on
- Having an impact on bottom line profit and loss
- Setting self and department targets ie: Reducing Failed trades etc

Questions for the client

Have some prepared and if you want take them in with you.

Good examples are:

- Opportunities for further training / education
- Ask about the structure of the team you'd be working in – how many people their backgrounds
- what issues if any they are currently facing,
- what they think the most challenging part of the role is,
- ask the interviewer what they like