

Behavior-Based Interview Questions

What is a behavioral interview? A behavioral interview is a job interview focused on discovering how an applicant acted in specific employment-related situations. The logic is that your past performance in the workplace will predict your future performance.

Instead of asking how you would behave, the interviewer will ask how you did behave. The interviewer wants to know how you handled a situation, instead of what you might do in a hypothetical situation.

Source: About.com. Job Searching. Behavioral Interview.
<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/jobsearchglossary/g/behavinterview.htm>.
Accessed 01/02/2014.

Sample Questions from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' Key Attributes. Collected from the training classes for supervisors, June & October, 2005:

Passion for Knowledge

- Tell me about a time when you recognized you needed more knowledge about a particular area and how you went about gaining that knowledge (addressing that identified need).
- Tell me about a seminar you've attended or a book you've read that was helpful to your current or previous position. How did you use that knowledge to enhance your performance?
- Describe a time when you took the initiative to seek additional knowledge when it was not required.
- If you were given a project and you were not familiar with the subject matter, what would you do to prepare yourself? Tell me about it.
- If you were working with another staff member who was not as familiar with the content/subject matter as you were, how would you handle the situation? Tell me about it.
- Describe a situation when you willingly took the initiative to share information with a colleague and the information assisted them in resolving an issue.
- Describe a challenging problem that you resolved by acquiring additional knowledge.
- Describe a time when you had to lead a new project from start to finish. Once the project was complete, how did you share the information with other teams?

Innovative

- Describe a challenging problem and how you resolved it.
- When a new procedure is created, give me an example of how you worked with volunteers (co-workers, etc.) to encourage implementation of the new procedure.
- Tell me about a new innovative system or procedure that you designed and implemented in your current or previous position.
- Describe a time when you used an unconventional approach to resolving a problem or challenging situation.
- Give me an example of a policy in your past job for which you recommended a change that resulted in a positive outcome.
- Give me an example of a policy in your past job for which you recommended a change that had a negative outcome. What did you learn from the experience?

Professional Demeanor

- Can you describe a time when you did not initially agree with the group but in the end accepted and supported the decision.
- Describe a situation when you were challenged by a customer and how you resolved it.
- Describe a situation when your recommendations were not accepted by a committee or other team members and how you handled it.
- Have you ever been in a situation where your ethical standards were compromised? How did you handle this?
- Have you ever had a policy you disagreed with that you had to enforce? How did you deal with it?
- Please tell me about a real-life situation when your patience was being tried.
- Tell me about a time when a member was asking you to share information you knew was confidential. How did you handle the situation?
- Give me an example of a situation you have encountered with an employee who was demonstrating negative behavior towards his fellow employees.
- Tell me a situation in which you disagreed with a decision that was made and how you handled it.

Respect for Differences

- Describe a time when you and another colleague had a disagreement about a work assignment. How was the situation resolved?

- Please tell me about a real-life situation where a member or customer contacted your business and refused to speak to anyone other than the key decision maker. How did you handle the situation?
- Describe a situation in which there was a difference in opinion between yourself and a co-worker. How did you resolve the conflict?
- Describe a situation where someone challenged how you were performing a specific task. How did you handle it?
- Give me an example of an experience in the past in which you had to trust your supervisor's judgment.
- Give me an example of a time you worked with someone where you disagreed with their cultural outlook and how did you get along with that person.
- Describe a situation in which you were sure you knew the solution to a problem, and interaction with others (co-workers) changed your opinion.
- Describe a situation in which you and a co-worker disagreed about your approach to a project. How did you resolve the situation?

Service Attitude

- Think back to a time about when a member/customer contacted you with an issue that was not within your job expertise. What did you do?
- Describe a situation with a difficult customer and how you satisfied him or her.
- Describe a situation when you had a difficult customer and you were unable to satisfy them. What happened?
- Describe how you successfully responded to an irate caller.
- Describe a situation in which you needed to apply principles of good customer service. How did you apply them?
- Describe a situation when a member was unhappy with your company and the steps you took to identify the issue and reach a satisfactory outcome.
- Describe a situation in which you exceeded the expectations of your customer.
- Give me an example when you went out of your way to help a co-worker.
- Describe for me your customer service philosophy. Can you give an example of how you applied this in a challenging situation?

Accountability

- A member prescribed an issue and requested assistance to resolve, please describe the complete situation from start to finish.

- Describe a situation in which you consciously chose not to follow policy to solve the situation. What was the outcome of this experience? Were you able to justify this decision to your manager?
- Tell me about a time when you needed to solve a particularly difficult problem that was out of the range of usually expected activities.
- How did you respond to a situation in which you received negative feedback about a problem you were unable to resolve?
- Describe a time when you worked on a project with other teams and each team had a different perspective. How did you complete the project?
- When you had a deadline to meet and too much work to accomplish in order to meet the deadline. How did you handle the situation?
- Give an example of a goal you have set for yourself and how you achieved it.