BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Behavioral interviewing uses questions to determine how an applicant may respond or has responded in the past to certain situations. The examples provided below are divided into specific categories or skill sets that you may be looking for in your candidates. The list is intended to provide a guide to questions that you can use in interviewing, when appropriate.

CUSTOMER FOCUS

* Describe the most difficult customer service experience that you have ever had to handle. Provide specifics. How did you handle the situation and what was the outcome?
* Tell me about a time when you did your best to resolve a student or customer concern and the individual was still not satisfied. What did you do next?

DECISION MAKING

* Give me an example of a time when you had to quickly make a decision. What was your process for making the decision?
* Describe a difficult decision you have made in your job during the last year.
* Tell me about a time when you were forced to make an unpopular decision.
* Tell me about a time when you were faced with a difficult decision at work. What methods did you use to make your decision? What was the result?
* Describe a situation where you had to make a decision under pressure or time constraints.
* Describe a time when you were faced with a stressful situation that demonstrated your coping skills.

ACTION ORIENTED

* Tell me about a time you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
* How have you motivated yourself to complete an assignment or task that you didn’t want to do?
* Give an example of when your persistence had the biggest payoff.
* Describe a time when you performed a task outside your perceived responsibilities. What was the task? Why did you perceive it to be outside your responsibilities? What was the outcome?
* Describe a situation where you took initiative?

PROBLEM SOLVING

* Provide an example of a situation where you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem at work.
* Describe a time when you missed an obvious solution to a problem.
* Describe a situation in which you effectively developed a solution to a problem by combining different perspectives or approaches.
* We can sometimes identify a small problem and fix it before it becomes a major problem. Give an example of how you have done this.
* Tell me about a complex problem that you solved. Describe the process you utilized.
* Identify a problem you have encountered when old solutions didn’t work and you came up with new ones.
* Recall a time from your work experience when your manager or supervisor was unavailable and a problem arose. What was the nature of the problem and how did you handle the situation?

JOB PERFORMANCE

* Tell me about a time that you bypassed the standard procedures in order to get the job done more quickly.
* Give me a specific example of a time when you had to conform to a policy with which you did not agree.
* What are your standards of success at work? What have you done to meet those standards?
* Give me an example of a time that you were entrusted with something that had great importance.
* Describe a scenario in which you have gone above and beyond what was expected of you.
* What are some of the responsibilities on your job you feel you have done particularly well or in which you have achieved the greatest success? Why do you feel this way?

TEAMWORK

* Describe a time when you worked with a person who did things very differently than you. How did you get the job done?
* From your experiences what have you found are the best and worst parts of working in a team environment? How have you handled it?
* Tell me about a time when teamwork helped you reach a goal that may not have been otherwise achieved.
* What have you done in the past to contribute to a teamwork environment? What were some of your specific contributions?
* What type of people do you find most difficult to work with? Give an example of a situation where you have had to deal with a person very different from yourself. What did you do?
* Tell me about a time when you were part of a great team. What was your part in making the team effective?
* Tell me about a time when you had to work with someone who was difficult to get along with. Why was this person difficult? How did you handle the situation?
* Describe a time when you put the needs of the group before your own when completing a task. What was the outcome?

PROCESS MANAGEMENT

* Tell me about a time when you had too many things to do and were required to prioritize your tasks. How did you determine priority?
* Describe a time when you suggested a better way to perform a process? What was the result?
* Recall a time when you were assigned a complex project. What steps did you take to prepare for and finish the project? Were you satisfied with the outcome? What would you have done differently?

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

* Describe a time when others you were working with disagreed with you? What did you do?
* Tell me about a situation where you had to deal with an angry customer or co-worker.
* Recall a difficult supervisor, co-worker, customer or other person. What made them difficult? How did you interact with this person?
* Give me an example of a time you know you were right about something and your supervisor disagreed. How did you resolve the issue?
* Describe what you would do if a co-worker was not completing his or her share of the work.
* Tell me about a time you were successful in dealing with another person who may not like you personally.

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

* Tell me about a time when you felt another employee wasn’t being treated fairly. What did you do?
* Give me an example of a time when a supervisor gave preferential treatment to a co-worker. What did you do?
* Would you say that you enjoy getting to know your co-workers on a personal basis, or do you prefer to keep relationships formal?
* Describe a situation where you used humor to deflect a difficult or awkward situation.

SELF DEVELOPMENT

* Describe a time when you were not very satisfied or pleased with your performance. What did you do about it?
* Give me an example of a time when you set a goal and were able to meet or achieve it.
* Tell me about a situation you wish you had handled differently based on the outcome. What was the situation? What would you change when faced with a similar situation?
* Describe a time that you tried to accomplish something and failed. What did you learn?
* Describe a difficult obstacle that you have had to overcome. How did you handle it? What did you learn?
* Describe a time when your results were not up to expectations. What actions did you take?

FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS: These will sometimes assist in getting greater detail or more information and can also test consistency.

* Can you give me an example?
* What did you do?
* What did you say?
* What was your role?
* What was the result?
* What do you wish you had done differently?
* What was your thought process?
* What did you learn?