**Behaviour Interviews**

**“The best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour.” ~ Janz**

Behaviour interviews have become much more common. Even if the whole interview is not done as a behaviour interview, at least some part of the interview, or some questions, will be of this type.

The information obtained is more “how” you performed in your past job, not “what” you did.

**STAR**: Interviewers are looking for you to describe **a situation and/or a task**, report on what **action** you took and how you took it, and identify **results** from your action. These questions sift out candidates who have not had the necessary experiences to do the job.

Employers are looking to explore your **employability (soft skills, transferable skills) skills**, for example, leadership, initiative, problem solving, enthusiasm, and team building. So they will ask questions related to these qualities. They are looking for **specific examples** with a lot of detail.

Be prepared to answer these questions by anticipating the skills the job requires, and having suitable “stories” to describe the situation. Rehearse your responses to anticipated questions.

**Some examples of behavioural questions are:**

**Teamwork:** Tell us about a time when you worked as a member of a team and how you were able to contribute to the project’s success? What was your role? Was the team’s project successful?

**Initiative:** Describe a time when you took initiative – that is, did something that you were not expected to do or asked to do by your boss /teacher. What did you do? How did you do it? How did the boss/ teacher react?

**Communication:** We all have to work with people, bosses, co-workers, or customers who are difficult. Would you describe for me one of the most difficult people or situations you’ve had to deal with specifically, and how you handled that person or situation.

**Problem solving:** Describe a time when you took action to solve a problem. How did you go about it?

**Goal Setting:** Describe a time when you set a goal or standard for yourself that was clearly going to be a challenge. How did you set that goal and what were the results?

**Planning and Implementation:** Tell me about a time when it was challenging for you to ensure that information you were assembling was correct. What steps did you take to ensure accuracy?

**Customer Service:** Tell me about a time when your efforts to help a customer exceeded their expectation. What did you do and how did you do it?

**More Behavioural Questions**

* Describe a situation in which others within your organization depended on you to come through for them.
* Describe a time when you had to build motivation or encourage participation at work or in your extra-curricular activities, or in a team project at school.
* Describe an innovative idea that you produced which contributed to the success of an activity or a project.
* Tell me about a time when you had to use your verbal communication skills in order to influence someone’s opinion or explain a difficult concept.
* Describe a time on a past job when you were faced with problems or stressful situations that tested your coping skills. Did you handle the situation successfully? If not, what did you learn from the situation?
* Sometimes, you are required to make decisions quickly. Additionally, you may not have all the information available to you to make the most informed decision possible. Illustrate a time when you had to make a quick decision, citing examples at work, school, or in your extra-curricular activities.
* You have read the job description. Please outline two of the main responsibilities of the position you are seeking, as set out in the job description. Tell me something about your background or experiences that would help you in fulfilling those responsibilities.
* Sometimes, you are faced with multiple deadlines, and have to rush work in order to meet those deadlines. Describe a time when you had to sacrifice quality in order to meet a deadline. How did you handle the situation?
* We have identified accountability as an integral part of this position. We would like to hear a specific example from your experiences that illustrates this quality.
* Describe the most creative project you have ever completed.
* Time management is very important to this job. Outline for us your time management skills and what you have done in your past experience to develop and enhance these skills. Share with us a specific example, whether in your academic life, your job, or part of your everyday work life, when your time management skills proved useful, and outline for us why this was the case.
* Give us an example of how you keep current and informed about your job and the industry that you work in.
* Tell me about a time when you had to plan and coordinate a project from start to finish.
* Describe an instance when you had to think on your feet to get yourself out of a difficult situation.
* Give me a specific example when you used good judgement and logic in solving a problem.
* By providing examples, show us that you can adapt to a wide variety of people, situations, and environments.
* Give us an example of a time when you had to quickly analyze a customer’s needs.
* Tell me about a time when you had to use your written communications skills in order to get a difficult point across.
* Tell us about a specific time when you had to conform to a policy that you did not agree with.
* Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person, even when that person might not have personally liked you (or vice versa).

**Note** that interviewers will ask the questions most relevant to the job posting, and if your answers are not specific enough, they will probe for more: “Can you give me an example; What did you do?; What did you say?; What were you thinking?; How did you feel when that happened?; What was your role?; What was the result?; What do you think you learned from that experience?

When answering these questions, if you can make use of a sample in your portfolio, do so this is your chance!

