

CBAT Career Services

The Behavior or Situational Interview: Strategies for Success

Behavioral interviewing is a technique in much use by contemporary employers; employers view past behavior as an indication of future performance on the job and ask questions that solicit responses based on *your* personal experiences. As candidates, you need to prepare thoroughly for this interview technique by doing the following:

1. **Develop a “rolodex” of experiences** in your brain so you have thought through great examples of life experience for all of the categories of questions you might receive that are behaviorally based. Common skill areas addressed include: time management, leadership, difficult situations, prioritizing, etc. *Use the attached self assessment tool to select personal experiences that will serve you well as you interview.* With this technique, there are certainly *better and best* answers to share.
2. **Remember your audience.** If you are interviewing for a job that involves managing people, think how it might look to make disparaging comments about personnel that are negative in nature, rather than focusing on how to develop these individuals into valued employees.
3. **Be positive.** Employers like to hire positive people. If you spend the interview process talking in “negatives,” the employer will not be interested in hiring you.
4. **Think globally.** We all know that we live in a global economy. What does this mean for you as a prospective employee? *You need to appreciate, value and respect those from other cultures and ethnicities.* It is up to you to demonstrate how you positively embrace the global economy and all that this implies in the interview process.
5. **Frame your answers using the STAR approach** for answering these questions: **S**(What was the **SITUATION**?); **T** (Outline the **TASK** you were asked to perform.); **A** (What **ACTION** did you take to complete the project, solve the problem?); **R** (What **RESULT** did you produce?). You don’t need to say, “The situation was . . .” or “The task was . . .” but you **DO** need to make sure that you touch on each facet of the STAR approach.
6. **Practice** answering these types of questions and work on areas of weakness.

Trust me. You simply cannot do well in a behaviorally based interview by choosing experiences to share “off the top of your head.”