Behavioral Interviewing Guide

Behavioral interviewing questions ask candidates to reflect on past experience(s) to provide insight for interviewers into the candidate’s skills and abilities. Behavioral interviewing questions typically provide greater opportunity for interviewers to assess a candidate’s potential success in a position than close-ended or future-focused questions. When properly focused, interviewers can gather a large amount of valuable information with fewer, well-crafted questions.

To help hiring managers and interviewers use this technique, several examples of behavioral interviewing questions are listed below.

# Core Behaviors

## Team Accountability

* Please tell us about a time that you had to work with colleagues to solve a problem.
* Can you describe a situation from a past position that demonstrated a sense of ownership for your work/role?
* Please tell us about a time that you were able to lend unique skillset or expertise to a project.

## Excellence

* Describe a time when you interacted with a difficult client or customer.
* Please tell us about a time you proposed a new idea or initiative. What prompted your idea and how was it received?
* Please tell us how you stay abreast of changes within our industry and give an example of how you have integrated changes/updates into a past position.

## Civility

* Please tell us about a time when you had to deal with an unexpected change on a high-priority and/or tight-timeline project.
* Please describe a situation where you had to give bad news to an employee or client.
* Please describe a time in which you managed a conflict with a co-worker.

## Integrity

* In past positions, how have you set expectations with clients regarding service or communication timelines?
* Please tell us about a time you have faced an ethical dilemma in the workplace. How did you advocate for your stance and what was the outcome?
* Please tell us about a time when you made a mistake at work. How did you handle it?

## Diversity

* Please describe a time when you addressed a language or other communication barrier when interacting with a co-worker or client.
* OHIO is committed to becoming a national leader for diversity and inclusion. Please explain how your past education or experiences have aligned with that goal and explain what role you believe this position has in aligning with that goal.
* Can you tell us about a time where you managed an interpersonal conflict in the workplace?

## Stewardship

* Please describe a time when you had to make a difficult decision in the workplace. How did you arrive at your decision?
* Please describe a scenario from your last position that you feel exemplifies a commitment to sustainability or responsible resource management.
* Please tell us about a time when you have handled projects with conflicting timelines.

## Leading Others

* Please describe your approach to performance management in your most recent role. How did you address positive behavior? How did you address negative behavior?
* Can you describe a situation from a past position where you led people through a difficult or new process?
* What do you feel is the most successful communication strategy you have used with previous teams?

# Evaluation

In addition to well-crafted questions, consistent, focused evaluation standards are of critical importance to a successful interviewing process. We strongly recommend that, prior to interviewing, search committees establish a set list of interview questions complete with a detailed evaluation rubric to assess candidates’ answers, calibrate committee expectations, and reduce the impact of rater errors caused by implicit bias.

## Example

Question: Please tell us about a time when you made a mistake at work. How did you handle it?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **0 points** | **1 point** | **2 points** | **3 points** | **4 points** |
| Candidate could not answer question OR answer indicates that candidate participated in illegal activities or knowingly violated state ethics code. | Candidate provided an example of a mistake but indicated that the situation was not resolved OR that another party prompted the resolution. | Candidate provided an example and discussed solution, but solution was unacceptable in terms of timeline or other departmental standards. | Candidate provided an example and discussed an appropriate response that they initiated that would be deemed acceptable within dept. | Candidate provided an example and discussed an appropriate response that they initiated. Candidate also indicated that they prompted fail safes to avoid future mistakes of similar nature. |