

Behavioral Interviewing Skills

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Behavioral Interviews



- Most common form of interview typical in first or screening rounds
- Other types of interviews
 - Role Play, Scenario-based, or Simulation Exercise (typically in a group with other interviewees)
 - Case Interview (increasingly used beyond consulting and investment banking)



What is the first thing you do during an interview?

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“Tell me about yourself.”

Professional Introduction

- Brief introduction summarizing relevant information about your skills and experience
- Connect skills and experience with job





**“I’m an only child, which means I’m independent and resourceful.
But I’m also a first born, which makes me a natural leader.
When I look into my sweet wife’s eyes, I’m born again so
that means I’m also a creative, over-achieving youngest
child. Any time I look into a mirror, I become a twin,
which means I’m worth twice what you’re offering.”**

“Why are you interested in this position/company?”



This question tries to assess:

- Fit with organizational culture
- How position relates to your longer term career aspirations
- Your understanding of the company and industry





“Why are you interested in this position?”

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“Why are you qualified for this position?”

Types of Behavioral Interview Questions

- Tell me about a time when...
- Describe a situation where you had to...
- How have you demonstrated the skill of...
- Give me a specific example of a time when...



Don't memorize answers => Develop

2-3 stories around each theme



- Teamwork and cross-functional collaboration
- Challenging situation, handling stress, or learning from failure
- Decision-making, ethics, and values
- Organization and time management
- Solving a problem or data-driven problem solving
- Dealing with ambiguity
- Leadership and initiative
- Communication and conflict

Use S.T.A.R. method to answer behavioral interview questions

Situation	General context of your answer: who, what, when where
Task	What was the specific challenge, issue or goal were you trying to resolve or accomplish?
Action	What steps did you take to solve the problem or reach your objective?
Result (or Reflection)	What was the outcome? Where possible, quantify your result. If the outcome was negative, Reflect on what you would do differently in the future.

Where possible and relevant, relate your answer to the position/company.

“Tell me about a time you took the initiative to solve a problem.”

Situation	As career coaches for MBA students, we have to collect employment statistics from our students. These statistics are reported to an external accreditation organization every year. 2 years ago, when we were preparing our report for the Class of 2016, we learned that the reporting tool that we had been using was no longer compliant with accreditation standards. My manager had lots of back-and-forth discussions with the reporting platform and the accreditation body. She finally got clarity on the specific information that we needed to collect.
Task	Since it was my turn to collect and report employment statistics for the Class of 2017, I took it upon myself to create a new Excel template that we, as career coaches, could use to compile our students' employment outcome while being compliant with reporting standards at the same time.
Action	I had initially planned to create a web-based survey form that we could submit information to. However, I quickly found that it was more straight-forward if we created an Excel spreadsheet and manually entered the required data from our students. Since I had a list of the specific requirements that my manager had gathered from the accreditation body, I created individual columns for each requirement. The accreditation body also required us to use specific terminology for each data point. To ensure consistency among those of us who used the form, I created drop-down menus for each column, so that individual users were forced to use the required language from the accreditation body. Now, this was the first time that I created drop-down menus in Excel. However, I used the Help function in Excel and was able to create a robust reporting template on my own.
Result	The template now forms the basis for all employment reporting for our graduate programs. Even though I developed the Excel spreadsheet for MBA students, it is now used for other graduate programs as well. We have since added more columns to capture additional data points that will help colleagues in marketing and admissions. However, the core data set that is required by the accreditation organization is still in tact. It has been updated to reflect changes to reporting requirements.

Your turn...

“Tell me about a time
you took a leadership
role.”

“Tell me about the last
hard thing you
learned.”




“Do you have any questions for me?”



- Last chance to demonstrate interest and value to the company.
- Sample “You” Questions:
 - What brought you to this company? And what has kept you here?
 - What do you look forward to the most?
 - What do you find the most challenging/rewarding?
 - What is the most interesting project you have worked on?
 - What do you like best about the company? What would you improve?
 - How have you grown professionally from this job?
 - Tell me about your career progression and where you plan on going
 - What do you find most satisfying about working in this environment?
- Many of these questions may develop into follow-up questions. Ask questions that build upon the prior question.

Follow up with the interviewer:



**Ask for the Interviewer's contact information
(business card, email, or LinkedIn)**

**Ask the timeframe for following up regarding
your application status**

**Ask the best way to follow up
(Phone? Email?)**

Thank the interviewer

**Send a thank you email immediately (and
perhaps a thank you letter within 24 hours)**

Digital Interviewing



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-j3Ja8wTiA>

Preparation Tips



Understand Yourself

- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What would you like to achieve professionally?
- What do you know about the industry, employer and the position?
- What value do you offer to the company?

Preparation Tips

Practice

- Review the job description and brainstorm talking points at least one day before your interview and put them down on paper
- Bring at least 2 copies of your current resume
- Bring a notepad, pen, and a copy of the job description
- **Schedule at least 1 practice interviewer with your career coach before your interview (supplement with Quinnia.io for video interviews)**



Preparation Tips

Pace Yourself

- Don't rush to answer a question. It is ok to take a few seconds to compose your answer before talking.
- Control your rate of speaking. You do not need to rush your answers
- Ask the interviewer to repeat or clarify the question, if needed.



Digital Interviewing Tips



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ACh0o9k3qgs>

Common nonverbal mistakes made at a job interview

From a survey of 2000 bosses

In a survey of 2000 bosses **33%** claimed that they know within the first **90 seconds** of an interview whether **they will hire someone**



The average length of an interview is **approximately 40 minutes**

Statistics show that when meeting new people the impact is:

21% — Playing with **hair** or touching face

47% — Having little or **no knowledge** of the company is the most **common mistake** job seekers make during interviews

Failure to make **eye contact** **67%**

Lack of smile **38%**

Bad posture **33%**

21% — Crossing arms over their chest

9% — Using too many **hand gestures**

Handshake that is too weak **26%**

33% — Fidgeting too much

7% — From what we **actually say**

38% — The quality of our **voice grammar** and overall **confidence**

55% — The **way we dress, act and walk** through the door

Clothes

Bright colors are a turnoff

70% — Employers claiming they don't want applicants to be **fashionable or trendy**.

65% — Of bosses said **clothes could** be the **deciding factor** between two similar candidates



Reserve an Interview Room for Interviews



[https://giesgroups.illinois.edu/
bcs/about](https://giesgroups.illinois.edu/bcs/about)



“Interview Room Request”

8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday-Friday

Subject to availability.

Request room at least 24 hours before interview.

Thank You

