

# INTERVIEW TIPS PART II

## ***Behavior-Based Job Interviewing (BBI)***

**The candidates who do the best in BBI interviews have predicted the questions/topics and have practiced their answers.**

### **common skills targeted for BBI probing**

<b>Alertness</b>	<b>Listening</b>
<b>Assertiveness</b>	<b>Management</b>
<b>Commitment to Task</b>	<b>Oral Communication</b>
<b>Coping</b>	<b>Organization/Planning</b>
<b>Creativity</b>	<b>Perception</b>
<b>Decision Making</b>	<b>Problem Solving</b>
<b>Goal Setting</b>	<b>Team Building</b>
<b>Leadership</b>	

The BBI concept – that past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior – sparks interviewing techniques that can reveal the job worthiness of candidates with considerable accuracy. It regularly leads to hiring/not-hiring decisions that do what they’re supposed to do: bring into the organization new hires who have not only the knowledge and skills required for the job, but more importantly, the personal and performance attributes needed to succeed in that job, as well as within the particular culture of the company.

The candidates who do best in these interviews are those who have predicted the questions (or at least the topics) and have planned and practiced their answers. Students who understand the process and prepare for it can use the same techniques to great advantage in non-BBI interviews, as well.

### **Behavioral-Based Interviewing STAR System**

(Remember and rehearse one to two minute descriptions of previous situations using the following guidelines)

**Situation**

Briefly describe to the interviewer, the situation you were facing. Set the stage so they clearly understand the circumstances.

**Task**

Describe the task you undertook to deal with the situation.

**Action**

Describe your decision-making process and the action undertaken

**Result**

Describe the result.

Be prepared to provide examples of occasions when results were not as expected. The skilled interviewer will probe your skill in handling failure and success.

Be prepared for questions asking for more detail than you’ve already given.

Identify three to five top selling points – attributes that set you apart from other candidates – and be sure you point them out during the interview.

Always choose an example which has a positive outcome.

### **CAREER CENTER**

**Office Hours:**

**Monday—Friday  
8:00am—5:00pm  
050 Sayles  
(507) 222—4293**

**CA Hours:**

**M—F in the Career Center  
11:00am—5:00pm  
Su—Th in the Libe  
8:00pm—10:00pm**

### **Behavior-Based Interview Questions:**

1. Give me an example of a time when you demonstrated initiative.
2. Thinking over your college experience, describe a situation in which you were challenged in using your communication skills. Tell me about it in detail.
3. Tell me about a time when you were able to successfully resolve a conflict with a co-worker.
4. Tell me about your experience in dealing with routine work. What problems did you overcome in order to focus on the details the job required?
5. Give me an example of a time when you set long range goals. Tell me what your goal was, how you decided on the goal and the outcome.
6. What is the most difficult decision you made that involved other people who did not agree with the decision? Tell me about the process of making that decision and the results.
7. What was one of the most difficult problems that you have solved?
8. Accuracy is often critical in producing quality results. Select a job that required you to complete paperwork and tell me what specific things you did to ensure accuracy in your results.

### **Additional Questions you may be asked in an interview:**

#### **Self:**

9. Tell me about yourself.
10. What are your major strengths and weaknesses?
11. Describe most satisfying accomplishments.
12. Which geographic location do you prefer?

#### **Work History/Education**

13. What was your most/least satisfying job?
14. Give some examples of your initiative, willingness to work, leadership skills, ability to follow directions.
15. Tell me your reasons for leaving your job/resuming your work?

16. How did you get along with your last boss/coworkers?
17. How well do you work under pressure?
18. How did you spend your spare time/vacations?
19. Why did you major in \_\_\_\_\_?
20. What college courses did you like the most? Least?
21. Tell me about your extra-curricular activities and interests.
22. Do your grades reflect your abilities?
23. What percent of your college expenses did you earn?
24. What plans do you have for further study?
25. Can you get recommendations from past employers?
26. What are your plans for the future?
27. What job in our company do you want to work toward?
28. What is your ultimate career goal?
29. How long do you plan to stay with our company?
30. Tell me your personal preferences regarding: routine, work, regular hours, overtime, travel, large vs. small company/city.
31. What do you know about our company?
32. Why do you think you might like to work for our company?
33. Why do you think you are qualified for this job?
34. What are your salary expectations?
35. Are you willing to spend time as a trainee?
36. What interests you about our product or service?

*\*Beware of illegal questions according to the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Civil Rights Act, the Equal Pay Act, Age Discrimination Act, Pregnancy Discrimination Act, and any state statutes.*

### **Questions You May Ask:**

#### **Job**

1. When would the job begin?
2. Is there a probation period?
3. Would you please show me an organizational chart and where this position fits within the structure?

4. Where is the person who previously held this position?
5. What are the areas in the job that you'd like to see improved?
6. What are some of the skills and abilities you see as necessary for someone to succeed in this job?

#### **Department**

7. What is the organization's plan for the next five years, and how does this department or division fit in?
8. What are the department's goals and how do they fit into the company's mission?
9. Describe the atmosphere and corporate culture of the office.

#### **Training**

10. What type of training programs do you offer to new employees?
11. What opportunities are available for staff development?
12. What is the typical career path for a person in this position?
13. Is there an opportunity for professional growth and upward mobility?
14. How is promotion determined?
15. How is this position evaluated? By whom? When?
16. What is your company's policy on providing seminars, workshops, and training so the employees can keep up on their skills or acquire new skills?

#### **On Job**

17. What opportunities exist for travel?
18. What is the policy concerning relocation?
19. To whom would I report? To whom would my supervisor report?
20. What are the short and long-range plans of the organization?
21. Where would I work? May I tour the facilities?
22. When do you plan to make your decision? May I call you on \_\_\_ to find out the results?

## **after the interview**

**Evaluate.** Make notes to yourself about how the interview went.

**Follow-up.** Shortly after the interview (ideally, within 24 hours), follow-up the interview with a letter thanking the interviewer for his/her time and restating your interest and qualifications. This can be an important opportunity to address any concerns you feel the interviewer may have about you.

**Continue to follow-up.** As long as the employer says the position is open, continue to follow-up.

**Ask for feedback.** If you are told that someone else was hired, it is OK to ask why you were passed over. This can be helpful feedback for future interviewers.

#### **Sources:**

Van Beusekom, Mark; Sharon Cobb, and Randy Dostal. **Behavior Based Interviewing: Understanding it, Applying it, Getting the edge.** April 10, 2001.

"Job Choices." 46<sup>th</sup> Ed, page 58. National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2002

Ryan, Robin. **60 Seconds & You're Hired.** New York: Penguin Books, 2000.

National Association of Colleges and Employers Planning Job Choices: 1998