

Behavioral Interviews



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Behavioral interview questions are asked to ensure applicants describe specific examples during the interview process which provide details about the skills the applicant has for the position. These questions typically begin with phrases such as "Tell me about a time when..." or "Describe a situation in which you..."

When answering behavioral interview questions, it is important to use a specific example and the components of the P.A.R. technique.

P.A.R. Technique

Problem: What was the situation and specific problem that had to be addressed?

Action: What specific skills/tools did you use to address the task?

Result: What was the result of your behavior?

Sample Question/Answer

Question: Describe a time when you took the initiative to do something when it wasn't your responsibility to do so.

Answer: **(Problem)** The past two years, I have been in a mentor program. During the course of the program, I noticed there were many other student and alumni matches in our area, but we didn't have a formal way to connect with each other. **(Action)** When I became aware of this, I scheduled a time to meet with the mentor program coordinator to talk about ways to increase our networks. We developed a plan to start a blog for participants to talk about their experiences and share insights from the program. **(Result)** As a result of our thoughtful approach we increased networking opportunities among the members in the program. It was a huge success!

CEHD Career Services

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Sample Behavioral Interview Questions

- Tell me about a time when you had great difficulty communicating your thoughts clearly to another person or group and how you handled this situation.
- Tell me about the most significant project you worked on in which it was crucial to keep track of details while still managing the "big picture."
- Describe a time when you took the initiative to do something when it wasn't your responsibility to do so.
- Tell me about a time when you exhibited excellent listening skills while distractions were present.
- Tell me about a time you voiced a concern to a co-worker, supervisor, or professor.
- Discuss a time when you were responsible for a project that didn't go the way you expected. How did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time you took a leadership role amongst your peers. What specific things did you do that showed leadership and how did others respond to you as a leader?
- Tell me about a time when you had to work with a difficult person. What made them difficult and how did you handle those interactions?
- Describe a time when you worked on an effective team. Why was the team effective and what was your role in the team's success?
- Tell me about a time when you had to motivate or excite others about a project or event. What strategies did you use to make this happen?
- Explain a difficult decision you made and your decision making process.
- Describe a time when you had success communicating your thoughts clearly to another person or group.
- Tell me about an aggressive goal that you achieved. What specific steps did you take to achieve the goal?
- Tell me about a time when you built strong relationships where none existed before.
- Describe a time when you anticipated potential problems and developed preventative measures.
- Tell me about a time when you had to use your presentation skills to influence someone's opinion.