

# Interview Techniques

## Behavioural Interviews



### What is a Behavioral Interview?

Behavioural Interviewing is becoming an increasingly popular way to conduct interviews. It is based on the premise that past behaviour is the best indicator of future performance in a similar situation. A person specification will be developed and key competencies for the role determined. From these competencies questions are then designed to elicit details of behaviour in past circumstances similar to those you may encounter in the new position.

Behavioural questions generally start with “Tell me about a time” or “Describe a time when” and there are three parts to the answer the employer is looking for:

1. The circumstance or situation
2. The action that you took in response to the circumstance or situation, and
3. The results of your actions.

You can remember this using the acronym CAR (circumstance, action, result) and you should ensure that you cover all three of these areas when giving your response to a behavioural question. Ensure that you demonstrate how you used your skills to deal with the situation and what the outcome was as a result of your actions / behaviours.

### How to Prepare for a Behavioral Interview

In order to do well in a behavioural interview it is important to prepare examples of particular situations that you can discuss without having to pause too long for thought. By considering possible questions and answers in advance you will also be able to maximise the positive impressions you make and reinforce your interest in the position.

To anticipate questions you may be asked, look at the advertisement or job description and analyse the key competencies. Then think about experiences in your past positions that have demonstrated your skills in these areas. A competency may be defined as the skills, ability, knowledge and / or experience required to perform tasks. Some common competencies include:

decision making	interpersonal skills	team orientation
leadership	sales ability	people management
initiative	adaptability	relationship building
time management / prioritising	customer service orientation	financial management
tolerance for stress	attention to detail	tolerance for repetition

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### Sample Behavioural Questions

See if you can identify the competencies which these sample questions are designed to uncover:

- Tell me about a time when you have had to deal with a difficult customer. What did you do? What was the outcome?
- Describe a time for me when you had to win someone over to your point of view. Was it successful?
- Tell me about the biggest sale you have ever made.
- Tell me how you went about sourcing the biggest client you brought into your last company.
- Tell me about a time when you have done more than required in your job. What was the outcome of this?
- Tell me about the most significant contribution you made to your team.
- Tell me about a time you had to complete an important task on time. What steps did you take to ensure it was done?
- Describe a time when you have felt impatient with a customer. How did you go about handling it?
- Describe your most frustrating work experience in the past 12 months. What made it frustrating and how did you go about handling it?
- Describe a time when you wish you had responded differently to a member in your team.

If you analyse the job brief and highlight competencies you think will be inherent, you will be able to think of some working experience responses ahead of time instead of having to “wing it”.

Behavioural interviews offer you a wonderful opportunity to show what you have accomplished in your past working experience so that prospective employers can see you as an asset for their future.