

Interview Guide

The following guide is a sample document which includes the types of information and materials hiring managers would want to provide to interviewers when preparing them to conduct behavioral interviews.

The HR team should use this document as a template to help prepare an interview guide that would suit their own organization's needs. In addition to your organization's interview guide, provide your interviewers with:

- Job Description
- Candidate's Resume

Interview Preparation

Behavioral interviewing is an interview technique that focuses on a candidate's past experiences, behaviors, knowledge, skills and abilities by asking the candidate to provide specific examples of when he or she has demonstrated certain behaviors or skills.

In a behavioral interview:

- The interviewer(s) ask each candidate the same series of questions, using the same phrasing, and in the same order
- The questions asked are created prior to the interview, and often have little room for variation in responses. There are few open-ended questions used.
- The interviewer is neutral but friendly. He/she does not provide any opinions during the interview.
- All candidates are evaluated on the same rating scale

Key Position Knowledge

Before walking into a behavioral interview, it is important to have an understanding of the role for which you're interviewing. Be sure that you're aware of the following:

- Why is the position being filled (organizational growth? Employee replacement?)
- What are the key position behaviors (KSAOs) and competencies?
- What does each rating on the rating scale look like to all of the interviewers?
- What are the dynamics like on the team where this open position resides?
- What type of person might work well with this team?
- What behavior or knowledge might be missing from this team?
- What type of person might fit best into the organization (organizational core competencies)?

Key Interview Behaviors

During an interview, it is imperative to follow these behavioral best practices:

- Be organized
- Come prepared with a writing utensil and a place to capture notes
- Bring a copy of the candidate's resume to reference
- Look and act professional
- Explain the interview process to candidates
- Allow opportunities for the candidate to ask questions
- Practice legally defensible behaviors
- Ask the behavioral interviewing questions exactly as provided
- Ask the same questions in the same order (by the same individuals) for each candidate
- Avoid leading questions when your probe for additional information
- Use appropriate body language
- Avoid non-verbal cues that could change a candidate's behavior or response
- Avoid evaluating non-verbal behaviors of candidates
- Use active listening skills
- Treat all candidates the same (ensure that the candidate has a positive and fair experience)
- Do not give the candidate any unfair or unrealistic expectations
- Be clear on the next steps in the process and their appropriate points of contact

Legally Defensible Behaviors

Under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and a variety of other federal and state laws, it is unlawful for employers with 15 or more employees to discriminate against job candidates on the basis of:

- Sex
- Race
- Color
- National Origin
- Religion

By avoiding questions related to these topics, and teaching all interviewers to avoid these topics, you can help your organization minimize their potential for litigation.

Note Taking Tips

Below are some key tips for taking effective notes during a behavioral interview:

- Use short-hand or key phrases to summarize the content and delivery of responses
- Balance your note taking and maintaining eye contact and engaging in conversation
- Avoid judgment in your notes
- Avoid rating a candidate's response until they have left the interview (but rate the candidate responses for yourself as soon as possible after the interview)
- Ensure that your notes support or justify your ratings (list actual answers along with how these answers apply to the competency being rated)

Interview Materials

Position Title:

Hiring Manager:

Interviewer:

Panelists:

Candidate:

Date:

Rating Scale:

Rating Values	Definition
Far Exceeds Requirements	Perfect answer. Demonstrates competency accurately, consistently, and independently. All points relevant. All good examples.
Exceeds Requirements	Demonstrates competency accurately and consistently in most situations with minimal guidance. Many good examples.
Meets Requirements	Demonstrates competency accurately and consistently on familiar procedures and needs supervisor guidance for new skills. Some good examples.
Below Requirements	Demonstrates competency inconsistently, even with repeated instruction or guidance. Few good examples
Significant Gap	Fails to demonstrate competency regardless of guidance provided. No good examples.

Behavioral Interview Questions

Competency:				
Lead Question:				
Response:				
Probing Questions/Responses:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Significant Gap	<input type="checkbox"/> Below Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Far Exceeds Requirements

Competency:				
Lead Question:				
Response:				
Probing Questions/Responses:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Significant Gap	<input type="checkbox"/> Below Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Far Exceeds Requirements

Candidate Summary

Please complete the following assessment of this applicant, along with your overall comments and recommendation.

KNOWLEDGE: *The sum of what is known and resides in the intelligence and the competence of people.*

Candidate possesses the knowledge required to carry out this role.

<input type="checkbox"/> Significant Gap	<input type="checkbox"/> Below Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Far Exceeds Requirements
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SKILLS: *Ability to carry out complex activities or job functions involving ideas (cognitive skills), things (technical skills), and/or people (interpersonal skills).*

Candidate possesses the skills as outlined in the job description to carry out this role.

<input type="checkbox"/> Significant Gap	<input type="checkbox"/> Below Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Far Exceeds Requirements
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ABILITY: *An acquired or natural capacity or talent that enables an individual to perform a particular job or task successfully.*

Candidate possesses the ability as outlined in the job description to carry out this role.

<input type="checkbox"/> Significant Gap	<input type="checkbox"/> Below Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Far Exceeds Requirements
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ORGANIZATIONAL / CULTURAL FIT: *Subscribes to the mission, vision and values of SHRM. Exemplifies strong customer relationship management, ability to collaborate and work across the organization to accomplish goals.*

Candidate is a team player and open to contributing positively to SHRM's unique culture and environment.

<input type="checkbox"/> Significant Gap	<input type="checkbox"/> Below Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Far Exceeds Requirements
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Overall Comments:

Recommendation:

Make Hiring Offer

Do Not Make Offer