

MASTERING BEHAVIORAL EVENT INTERVIEWS

A GUIDE FOR HIRING MANAGERS
ASSESSING COMPETENCIES



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the definitive guide on conducting Behavioral Event Interviews (BEIs). As a hiring manager, you understand the importance of identifying the right candidate for the job. BEIs offer a structured approach to assess candidates' past behavior, enabling you to make more informed hiring decisions based on concrete evidence rather than conjecture. In this booklet, we will delve into the fundamentals of BEIs, providing you with practical tips and techniques to conduct effective interviews that uncover the insights you need to build a high-performing team.

UNDERSTANDING BEI

BEIs are designed to elicit specific examples from candidates' past experiences to predict their future behavior in similar situations. Unlike traditional interviews that rely on hypothetical questions, BEIs focus on real-life scenarios, allowing candidates to demonstrate their skills, competencies, and attitudes through concrete examples. By probing candidates about their actions, behaviors, and outcomes in past situations, BEIs provide valuable insights into how candidates are likely to perform in the role they're applying for.

KEY COMPONENTS OF BEI

1. Preparation: Before the interview, familiarize yourself with the job requirements and desired **core** competencies. Develop a set of behavioral questions tailored to assess these criteria.
2. Questioning Technique: During the interview, ask open-ended questions that prompt candidates to describe specific situations, actions taken, and outcomes achieved. Example: ***“Tell me a time when you...”*** Use probing techniques to delve deeper into their responses and clarify any ambiguities.
3. Active Listening: Pay close attention to candidates' responses, focusing on the details of their stories and observing their non-verbal cues. Take notes to capture important points and facilitate post-interview evaluation.
4. Evaluation Criteria: Assess candidates' responses based on predetermined criteria such as problem-solving skills, communication abilities, leadership qualities, and adaptability. Rate each response objectively, considering both the quality of the example provided and the relevance to the job requirements.

SAMPLE BEI QUESTIONS

1. Can you describe a time when you had to resolve a **conflict** within your team? What steps did you take to address the issue, and what was the outcome?
2. Tell me about a challenging project you worked on. How did you **prioritize** tasks and manage competing deadlines to ensure successful completion?
3. Give an example of a time when you had to adapt to **unexpected changes** in a project or work environment. How did you approach the situation, and what was the result?
4. Describe a situation where you had to **influence others** to adopt your ideas or proposals. How did you communicate your perspective, and what strategies did you use to gain buy-in?
5. Can you share a time when you demonstrated **leadership** skills by motivating a team to achieve a common goal? What obstacles did you encounter, and how did you overcome them?

TIPS FOR CONDUCTING EFFECTIVE BEI

1. Establish rapport: Begin the interview with a friendly introduction to put candidates at ease and create a conducive environment for open communication.
2. Encourage storytelling: Encourage candidates to provide detailed examples by asking follow-up questions such as "Can you walk me through that situation step by step?" or "What were your thoughts and feelings at the time?"
3. Avoid leading questions: Refrain from asking leading questions that suggest the desired response or bias candidates' answers. Instead, maintain neutrality and allow candidates to share their experiences authentically.
4. Use the STAR framework: Structure your questions around the STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) framework to guide candidates in presenting their responses coherently and comprehensively.
5. Provide feedback: Offer constructive feedback at the end of the interview, highlighting specific strengths and areas for improvement based on candidates' performance.

CONCLUSION

Mastering the art of conducting Behavioral Event Interviews is a valuable skill that empowers hiring managers to make informed hiring decisions. By leveraging the structured approach of BEIs, you can uncover meaningful insights into candidates' past behavior and assess their suitability for the role with confidence. Remember, effective interviewing is not just about asking the right questions; it's about actively listening to candidates' responses, evaluating their experiences objectively, and ultimately selecting the candidate who best aligns with your organization's values and objectives. With the knowledge and techniques outlined in this booklet, you're well-equipped to conduct BEIs that drive successful recruitment outcomes and contribute to the growth and success of your team.

ALSO SEE THE EBOOK
"EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE INTERVIEWS"

ADAPTABILITY

(see “Change Management”)

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

- Tell me about a time when you had to change work mid-stream because of changing organization priorities.
- Tell me about a time when you were unable to complete a project on time and how you handled it.

COMMUNICATION

- Tell me a time when you had to be persuasive and sell your idea to someone, or persuaded team members to do things your way. What was the effect?
- Has anyone ever told you that you either talk too much, too little, or don't get to the point?
- Tell me about a time when you had to present a proposal to a person in authority and were able to do it successfully.
- Tell me about a situation where you had to be persuasive and sell your idea to someone else.
- Describe a situation where you had to be persuasive and sell your idea to someone else.
- Tell me about a time when you were tolerant of an opinion that was different from yours.

(also see “Team”)

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- Tell me a time when you had a conflict at work and what was done to resolve it? (Avoid asking “What YOU did to resolve it?”)

CREATIVITY / INNOVATION

- Tell me about a situation in which you were able to find a new and better way of doing something significant.
- Tell me about a time when you were creative in solving a problem.
- Describe a time when you were able to come up with new ideas that were key to the success of some activity or project
- Tell me about a time when you had to bring out the creativity in others.

DECISION MAKING

- Tell me about a time when you were forced to make an unpopular decision.
- Describe for me a time when you had to adapt to a difficult situation. What did you do?
- Tell me about a time when you made a bad decision.
- Tell me about a time when you hired, or fired, the wrong person.
- Tell me a time when you had to balance competing priorities and did it successfully?
- Tell me how you have managed multiple client requests simultaneously that all appear to have high priority?

DELEGATION

- Tell me about a time when you delegated work or a project effectively.
- Tell me about a time when you did a poor job of delegating.
- Describe a time when you had to delegate to a person with a full workload, and how you went about doing it.
- (also see “Leadership” and “Decision Making”)

INITIATIVE

(see “Problem Solving”)

LEADERSHIP

- Tell me about a time when you accomplished something significant that wouldn’t have happened if you had not been there to make it happen.
- Tell me about a time when you were able to step into a situation, take charge, muster support, and achieve good results.
- Tell me a time when you had to discipline or fire a friend.
- Tell me about a time when you had to develop leaders under you.
- (also see “Delegation” and “Decision Making”)

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- What have you done in last year to continue your professional development?

PROBLEM SOLVING / RESOURCEFULNESS / INITIATIVE

- Tell me about a situation where you had to overcome major obstacles to achieve your objectives.
- Tell me a time you had to make an important decision with limited facts?
- Tell me a time when you surmounted a major obstacle?
- Describe for me a situation where you may have missed an obvious solution to a problem?
- Tell me about a time when you had to analyze facts quickly, define key issues, and respond immediately or develop a plan that produced good results.
- If you had to do that activity over again, how would you do it differently?
- Tell me about a time when you won, or lost an important contract.
- Tell me about a time when you used your political savvy to push a program through that you really believed in.
- Tell me about a situation that you had significant impact on because of your follow-through.
- Tell me about a goal you set that took a long time to achieve, or that you are still working towards.
- (also see “Priorities” and “Decision Making”)

PRIORITIES

- Tell me about a time when you had to balance competing priorities and did so successfully.
- Tell me about a time when you got bogged down in the details of a project and how you managed it.
- Tell me about a time that you felt overwhelmed with work assignments and how you managed it.
- Tell me about a time when you were given a complex project or assignment and how you approached it to get things started.
- (also see “Decision Making” and “Problem Solving”)

QUALITY / RESULTS

- How do you self-manage your work to ensure error-free results?
- Tell me a specific project or program that you were involved with that resulted in improvement in a major work area?
- Tell me a time when you wrote, or gave a report that was well received. What do you attribute that to?
- Tell me a time when you wrote, or gave a report that was not well received. What do you attribute that to?

RESOURCEFULNESS

(see “Problem Solving”)

SELF-AWARENESS

- Describe your individual style with how you work with clients, customers, or decision makers.
- Describe a time when you may have been disappointed in your behavior.
- Describe what you feel are your strengths and weaknesses or blind spots.
- What do you feel causes you stress?
- Describe a time you were under work related stress, and how you managed it?

SERVICE

- Tell me about a time when you made a lasting, positive impression on a customer.
- How do you know that you provide great service to internal and/or external customers & are respected by either your clients, customers, peers, or team? (Depending on the answer, ask “And how do you know that?”)
- Tell me a time when you had to deal with an irate customer?

STRESS MANAGEMENT

- Tell me about a time when you worked effectively under pressure and what it was like.
- Describe for me what you do to handle stressful situations.
- (also see “Self-Awareness” and “Change Management” and “Priorities”)

TEAM / BEING INFLUENTIAL / WORK WITH OTHERS

- Tell me about a time when you played an integral role in working on a team, the role you played, and how you handled:
 - a) working with others to get the desired results;
 - b) getting what you needed to produce your results;
 - c) handled differing points of view;
 - d) keeping them on track.
- Describe a situation where you had to be persuasive and sell your idea to someone else.
- Tell me about a time when you were tolerant of an opinion that was different from yours.

Continued...

“Team” *Continued...*

- Tell me about a time when you were able to motivate others to get the desired results.
- Give me an example that would show that you’ve been able to develop and maintain productive relationships with others, even though there were differing points of view.
- (also see “Communication” and “Conflict” and “Problem Solving”)

TIME MANAGEMENT

(see “Priorities”)

WORK WITH OTHERS

(see “Team”)

**ALSO SEE THE EBOOK
“EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE INTERVIEWS”**