

Behavioural Interview Questions

What is a Behavioural Question?

It is based on the idea that your past behaviour indicates how you will behave in the future. The employer will ask behaviour-oriented questions, based on your past work experience. You will need to provide **specific, real** examples of how you used a particular **skill** or **behaviour** in your past jobs. Questions often focus on “soft skills” relating to your relationships and ability to manage difficult situations, for example, being able to work under pressure

With a behavioural question, the interviewer is looking for results; they are listening for names, dates, places, the outcome and especially what your role was in achieving that outcome.

An example of this type of question is "Give me a specific example of a time when you had to address an angry customer. What was the problem and what was the outcome?" You must provide a specific example from your past jobs / experience of how you used a skill or behaviour. Often the focus is on “soft skills” e.g. customer service skills, decision-making, teamwork, handling pressure, etc. (related to the job requirements)

Your responses require not only reflection, but also organization. To maximize your responses in the behavioural format:

- Anticipate the transferable skills and personal qualities that are required for the job.
- Review your resume. Any of the qualities and skills you have included in your resume are fair game for an interviewer to press.
- Reflect on your own professional, volunteer, educational and personal experience to develop brief stories that highlight these skills and qualities in you. You should have a story for each of the competencies on your resume as well as those you anticipate the job requires.
- Prepare stories by identifying the context, logically highlighting your actions in the situation, and identifying the results of your actions. Keep your responses concise and present them in less than two minutes.

Here are some more examples of soft skills that employers may ask you about:

<p>Coping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about a high stress situation when it was necessary for you to keep a positive attitude. What happened? • <u>Give me an example of a time when</u> another person really tried your patience. Specifically, talk about a time when you were angry or frustrated and felt aggressive towards the other person. 	<p>Assertiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Tell me about a time when</u> your job required you to say, in a professional manner, how you really felt about a situation. What did you say and how did you say it? • Some situations require us to express ideas/opinions in a very tactful way. Tell me about a time when you were successful with this particular skill.
<p>Goal Setting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal statements can be used to manage your own work activities since they enable you to guide day-to-day actions successfully. Describe an especially favourable experience you've had in using goals to guide your own actions. • In a high-pressure working environment, it is often necessary to prioritize your goals to be sure that effort is allocated appropriately. Tell me about the most important experience in your work history where you prioritized your goals successfully. 	<p>Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even though the use of authority in a leadership role is not popular, it is necessary in some situations. Give me an example of a situation when you used your authority to influence another individual. Be specific. • Organizations are built on the principle of delegation. Give me an example of the greatest success you ever had in the use of delegation. Take time to think of the best example you can and be specific in describing it.
<p>Organization & Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning is more than thinking, it is also doing. Tell me what you have done with such tools as flow charts, production schedules and filing systems, or anything else to help you plan. • Give me an example of a time in which you were effective, in doing away with the constant "emergencies" and surprises in your work climate. How did your planning help you deal with the unexpected? 	<p>Written Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In some jobs it is necessary to document your work thoroughly. For example, documentation might be necessary to prove you did your job correctly or to train another person to do it. Give me an example of your experience in this area. • This job will require you to spend a large amount of time writing. Tell me about writing experiences you have had that reflect your ability to do this job well.
<p>Team Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We cannot do everything ourselves. Give me an example of a time when you created special team effort at work. Highlight the particular aspects of the situation that best demonstrates your skill in this area. <u>OR</u> Give me an example of how you contributed as part of a team. What was <u>your</u> role? • Building team spirit to get results is often a difficult thing to do. Tell me about a time when you had your greatest success in building a team spirit. What specific results did the team accomplish? 	<p>Commitment to Task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give me an example of a time in which you found it necessary to put long hours into a job. For instance, tell me about a period when it was necessary to take work home, work weekends, or maintain unusually long hours. Be specific.