

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWING

Expect to encounter this interview technique – commonly utilized by employers. “Behavioral” questions are designed to probe applicants’ past behavior in work situations, on the premise that the best predictor of future performance is past performance. To prepare, think in terms of a challenging or problem situation, how you **assessed** the situation, **actions** you took to address and/or resolve it, and the **positive results** that came from your efforts. Be specific when presenting this information to the employer, and present it so that it illustrates how you assess, take initiative, and decide upon an appropriate course of action.

There are three basic types of behavioral questions you may encounter:

- 1) The behavioral question could address a **specific skill** you’ve mentioned on your resume (such as communication skills). The employer might ask, “Could you give me an example of how you successfully applied your communication skills?” or, “Have you ever had to “sell” an idea to someone, and if so, how did you accomplish this?”, OR, the question may be more general in nature, such as,
- 2) “Have you ever experienced a difficult or challenging situation, and if so, please describe the situation and how you successfully handled it,” or, it could be a situational type question such as,
- 3) “What would you do if _____?” and then a hypothetical problem situation would be presented to you to address.

Complete the following “exercise” to help you begin formulating ideas on the qualifications you possess, and how you may present these qualifications in response to “behavioral questions” during an interview.

My three greatest strengths:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Examples of how I have successfully applied those strengths in an academic, work, or extracurricular setting:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Following are skills employers generally look for, and behavioral questions designed to allow the employer to assess whether or not you possess a particular skill.

Decision Making & Problem Solving

- Give me an example of a time when you had to be quick in coming to a decision.
- How did you make the decision to come to Southeastern Louisiana University and to major in _____.

Leadership

- Give me an example of a situation in which you exercised leadership abilities.
- Have you ever had difficulty getting others to accept your ideas? What was your approach?

Motivation (of yourself and others)

- Give an example of how you motivated your co-workers or classmates, as for a team project.
- Tell me about an important goal that you set in the past, that you successfully reached.

Communication

- Give an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with a customer/client.
- Have you ever had to “sell” an idea to your co-workers or a group? How did you do it? Did they “buy” it?

Interpersonal Skills

- What have you done in past situations to contribute toward a teamwork environment?
- Tell me about the most difficult or frustrating individual you’ve worked with, and how you worked with them.

Planning and Organization

- How do you decide what gets top priority when scheduling your time?
- What do you do when your schedule is suddenly interrupted? Give an example.