

# **FEEDBACK REPORT FOR PARTICIPANTS**

## **The Effect of Job Interview Question Type on Faking and Applicant Reactions**

**SMU REB # 23-065**

### **Research Project conducted by:**

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## **The Issue:**

The job interview is one of the most popular selection tools and, when structured, it is also considered to be one of the most valid predictors of job performance. However, job interviews have a notable weakness: they are susceptible to **faking**. Faking is a form of deceptive impression management and can be defined as 'consciously distorting answers to interview questions to obtain better interview ratings and/or to create favourable perceptions'. Faking may be a serious issue as applicants' attempts to misrepresent their qualifications or characteristics may lead to inflated ratings, ill-advised job offers, and poor employee performance.

The purpose of this research was to compare the four 'better' job interview question types of behavioural, situational, background, and job knowledge questions in terms of their impact on faking in the job interview. While the effect of question type on job interview faking has been previously examined, research has focused almost exclusively on comparing behavioural and situational questions or 'low' and 'high' objectivity questions. In addition, a second goal was to compare the four 'better' question types in terms of their effect on job applicant reactions.

Overall, this research was meant to provide practical benefit by helping to identify which question types organizations should use if they aim to minimize faking and improve applicant reactions to their selection process.

## **The Research:**

This research, used a within-subjects design to explore how interview question type (situational, behavioural, background, and job knowledge) impact applicant faking (i.e., deception) and reactions (i.e., affect, utility, and procedural justice).

More precisely, participants were instructed to imagine that they applied for the position of 'Marketing Analyst,' and that they had received an interview request. They were presented with a job description for the position that outlined the responsibilities and desired skills and characteristics and asked to complete an asynchronous video interview (AVI). An AVI is a type of interview that is conducted through the internet. Applicants are presented with written questions and are asked to record responses through their personal computer's webcam and microphone. The AVI in this study consisted of eight interview questions (two behavioural, two situational, two background, and two job knowledge). After the AVI, participants to watch back their video responses for all eight interview questions and indicated the extent to which they 'faked' on each of them. They also answered questions about how fair they perceived each question to be.

## **The Findings:**

Participants faked less on situational questions (e.g., "What would you do if...?") and job knowledge questions (e.g., "What are the key steps for...?"), suggesting that these questions may be more resistant to faking.

Applicants reported more positive reactions (affect, utility, procedural justice) to situational questions, particularly compared to background questions. Importantly, in addition to situational questions, applicant reactions scores were also all positive (means were greater than 3.5 on a 5-point scale) for both behavioural questions (e.g., "describe a time when...") and background questions (e.g., "what experience do you have in...?").

Interestingly, faking wasn't associated with improved interview performance. This finding aligns with a meta-analysis by Ho et al. (2021), and suggests that faking may not threaten interview validity.

### **The Implications:**

While our research suggests that organizations can minimize faking by incorporating situational and job knowledge questions, our work also reveals that faking may not impact interview validity.

Thus, organizations should focus on choosing question types that lead to positive applicant reactions (e.g., situational, behavioural, and job knowledge questions) and are strong predictors of job performance (i.e., situational and behavioural questions based on Hartwell et al., 2019).

Overall, given our findings and past work, situational and behavioural questions may be the best question types for organizations to incorporate into their job interviews.

You can access the official publication here: <https://econtent.hogrefe.com/doi/10.1027/1866-5888/a000361>. For those without paid access, the complete manuscript is also freely available on ResearchGate:

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/383177627\\_The\\_Effect\\_of\\_Job\\_Interview\\_Question\\_Type\\_on\\_Faking\\_and\\_Interviewee\\_Reactions](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/383177627_The_Effect_of_Job_Interview_Question_Type_on_Faking_and_Interviewee_Reactions).