



Behavioral interview tips and tricks

Many employers ascribe to the philosophy that past behavior will dictate future results when interviewing candidates. And perhaps the most popular way employers assess past behavior is by conducting a behavioral interview.

If you walk into a behavioral interview unprepared, you may struggle to answer the interviewer's questions in a succinct and compelling manner. However, if you are prepared, you'll have a great chance of knocking it out of the park and landing the job.

Read the below tips to put yourself in a position to make a great impression during your behavioral interview!

1. Know the format

- Unfortunately, many candidates arrive to a behavioral interview woefully underprepared. The most common mistake? Simply not knowing the format and structure of this type of discussion.
- First, know that the interviewer will likely have a list of questions she will ask you. They typically start with phrases such as, "Tell me about a time when..." or "Give me an example of a time when...".
- From there, you'll need to provide a relevant and convincing answer to her question that typically follows the STAR format:
 - **Situation:** Give the background of the story you're about to tell.
 - **Task:** Describe your role or assignment in this particular example.
 - **Action:** What action did *you* take in this story?
 - **Result:** Provide a tangible result that came about as a result of your action. Preferably, the Result is a good one!

2. Think of examples ahead of time

- By conducting a simple internet search, you'll find a list of common behavioral interview questions.
- You should also review the job description for the role you're seeking in order to find skills and competencies the employer may want to ask about during the interview.
- Once you've found some questions you think are relevant to the position, record examples of stories using the STAR format.
- You probably won't predict all of the questions the employer will ask you, so consider listing 10 to 15 examples of projects you've completed, problems you've overcome, processes you've improved, and the like that are general enough to be applied to a wide variety of questions. One of the worst feelings in the world is getting caught flat-footed to a behavioral interview question. Don't be that person!



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3. Practice your answers ahead of time

- Once you've listed great examples, rehearse your answers. If you can't talk to a person, practice while looking in the mirror.
- Remember to use the STAR format as your guide while practicing.
- These answers should feel conversational and natural, not stilted. Remember to inject your personality into the process.

4. Keep answers brief

- As a rule, your responses should be under 90 seconds. If you go on any longer, you'll run the risk of losing the interviewer's attention.
- While speaking, do your best to read the interviewer's body language to determine how much longer to talk. Is he avoiding eye contact or fidgeting? In that case, consider wrapping it up.
- If the interviewer would like more information, he can always ask follow-up questions. As long as you answer the question fully, don't worry if he wants more information; he's likely just interested in what you have to say!

5. Don't be scared to ask the interviewer to repeat the question

- Occasionally, behavioral interview questions are very lengthy and full of details. If you're on the receiving end of an overwhelming question, do your best to write down the main points, but feel free to ask the interviewer to repeat the question.
- Chances are, the interviewer will appreciate your attention to detail and desire to answer the question fully.
- Sometimes, moments like these can take the conversation slightly "off-script" and provide an opportunity for you to create a more natural interaction with the interviewer. Take advantage of these moments.

If you would like to learn more about how to increase your chances of landing your dream job or hiring game-changing talent into your organization, contact us at clarkharvey@arrowheadtalentsolutions.com or 330.316.0867.



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