

The Purpose of Behavioral Interviews

In this lesson, we'll look at why organizations conduct behavioral interviews.

We'll cover the following

- Past behavior is a predictor of future behavior
- What interviewers are really assessing

Past behavior is a predictor of future behavior

When preparing for interviews, it is very common for people to gloss over the behavioral portion and just focus on fine-tuning their applicable knowledge. However, interviewers also want to know if you are someone they would want to work with. They may be wondering:

- Are you calm under pressure?
- Are you comfortable giving formal presentations?
- Can you respectfully give your boss bad news?

Behavioral interviews help employers to understand how you have performed and behaved in the past in both positive and negative situations. According to [PH.D. Katherine Hansen](#), “behavioral interview questions are said to be 55 percent predictive of future on-the-job behavior.”

This is because traditional interviews focus on technical questions that you may have spent time studying on [codinginterview.com](#) or a similar website. While acing the traditional interview is **extremely** important, it gives no insight into how you handle stress, failure, or conflict. That's why behavioral interviews exist; to make sure that you're not the kind of person who will get overwhelmed with the job in three months and cause an unnecessary commotion.

One interview method is not necessarily better than the other; however, when the methods are combined, the interview process becomes more indicative of each candidate's true potential. With a mix of behavioral and technical questions, candidates have more opportunity to provide concrete examples of their strengths.



What interviewers are really assessing

So, what are interviewers really assessing during behavioral interviews?

Depending on the job, it may be your ability to work in teams and collaborate with others. The culture may value knowledge sharing or being a good motivator. They might prioritize self-awareness, growth mindset, ambition, humility, comfort with ambiguity, or risk tolerance.

Whether you will be pioneering a new role or backfilling an existing one, the interviewer knows more about the job than you do. They also know more about the existing team and organization. Therefore, they may be listening for certain capabilities and behaviors that will be more likely to make a new hire successful.

In other words, the interviewer is trying to learn about all the parts of you that are usually hidden from employers until they are revealed as a problem or a virtue.

Behavioral interviews ensure that employers have as much information as possible when making hiring decisions.

That's it for this chapter! In the next one, we'll look at all that you can do to prepare for a behavioral interview.