

Recognizing Behavioral Interview Questions

In this lesson, we'll look at some common patterns that can help you spot a behavioral question!

We'll cover the following ^

- Spotting a behavioral question
- Small talk

Spotting a behavioral question

How will you recognize behavioral questions? Behavioral interview questions will be asked in a few different ways, but they are all intended to prompt you into describing your behavior. Listen for the following openings:

- Tell me about a time when...
- Can you share a situation when...
- What do you do when...
- Give me an example of...
- Describe a...

When you hear any of these openings, you'll know what kind of response the interviewer is looking for.

Common hangups

Behavioral questions can sometimes include additional words that cause interviewees to hesitate. Some such words are:

**“Greatest”, “proudest”, “worst”,
“best”, “biggest”, “most**



significant”, “fastest”

These descriptive words could cause a candidate to pause and think back, “was this example really the worst, best, or biggest?” Instead of panicking, listen *past* these descriptors and make sure that you hear what the interviewer actually wants. Once you understand the question, respond with an applicable, practiced answer. If the situation you choose isn’t the “biggest” or the “worst”, you can introduce your answer by saying something like; “this failure wasn’t the biggest in terms of loss of business, but it had a significant impact on me because it revealed a blind spot.”

Small talk

Your interviewer may begin or end your interview with questions to put you at ease as a way to get to know you more naturally. These questions may come up when you’re walking from one interviewer to another or waiting for another participant to join a video conference. Such questions aren’t meant to trick you, but they do contribute to an interviewer’s overall impression of you. They may be looking for something that you have in common, something that makes you stand out, or just a way to get you off-script.

Be ready with genuine answers to questions like these:

- What do you like to do in your free time?
- What book are you reading right now?
- Seen any good movies lately?
- Are you a sports fan?
- Do you have any exciting trips planned?

Now that you know how to spot a behavioral question, let’s go over three different types of behavioral questions in the upcoming lessons!