

Behavioral Interview Guide

CONGRATULATIONS! You've been invited to an interview. It's important to present yourself in a professional manner to position yourself positively for the role and contribute to the extraordinary reputation of Correlation One Fellows.

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Behavioral Interview Overview

What Are Behavioral Interviews?

Employers conduct behavioral interviews to better understand how a candidate has behaved in past professional situations, with a focus on real-life experiences. The core idea is that past behavior is one of the best indicators of future behavior and performance in similar situations.

How Are Behavioral Interviews Structured?

Candidates are asked to recount specific instances where they demonstrated particular skills or handled certain workplace situations. These questions often begin with prompts like, "Tell me about a time when..." or "Give me an example of..." The candidate is then expected to provide a detailed narrative of a real-life scenario, focusing on their actions and the outcomes.

What Are Example Behavioral Questions?

- ***Tell me about a time when...***
 - You encountered conflict on a team
 - You had to make a snap decision without having all the information
 - You needed to ask for help
 - You had to persuade someone to see things your way
 - You made a mistake
 - You had to delegate tasks to others
 - You presented ideas to an audience
 - You reached a goal
 - You were overwhelmed at work
- ***Give me an example of...***
 - A time you had to juggle multiple priorities
 - A time you showed initiative at work
 - A project you went above and beyond on
 - An experience you had that demonstrated leadership
 - How you would express disagreement with a supervisor
 - A difficult decision you've had to make
 - Something you've accomplished that you're proud of
 - A time you had to collaborate with a difficult colleague

Why Are Behavioral Interviews Important?

- **For Employers** - Predicts future performance based on past behavior by assessing candidates' skills (leadership, teamwork, problem-solving, adaptability, etc.) in real-world situations
- **For Candidates** - Provides a platform to showcase problem-solving and interpersonal skills effectively. Allows candidates to demonstrate their suitability for the role with real examples.
- **Cultural Fit** - Offers insights for both employers and candidates regarding alignment/fit with the company culture. This also includes being able to handle challenges and collaborate with teams.

Common Characteristics Evaluated in Behavioral Interviews

| Behavioral Skill Category | Purpose | Assessed Skills | Underlying Principle |
|------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Teamwork and Collaboration | Gauge how well a candidate works with others in challenging situations | Negotiation, empathy, conflict resolution, finding common ground | Collaboration is key in workplaces; understanding a candidate's approach to diverse personalities is crucial |
| Problem-Solving and Innovation | Evaluate a candidate's critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving abilities | Innovative thinking, problem-solving capabilities, initiative | Employers value candidates who identify and creatively solve issues, contributing to continuous improvement |
| Leadership and Influence | Assess a candidate's ability to lead, motivate, and influence others under challenging conditions | Leadership style, delegation, time management, achieving results | Effective leadership involves guiding teams efficiently towards goals, often under tight deadlines |
| Adaptability and Change Management | Determine how well a candidate adjusts to new situations and changes in the workplace | Flexibility, adaptability, learning agility, maintaining performance during change | Adapting to change is essential in the dynamic nature of modern workplaces |
| Handling Pressure and Stress | Understand how a candidate manages high-pressure situations and maintains productivity | Stress management, prioritization, staying calm under pressure, resilience | Coping with stress and pressure is crucial for maintaining performance and mental well-being |
| Effective Communication | Evaluate how effectively a candidate communicates complex information to non-experts | Clarity in communication, audience engagement, simplifying complex concepts | Clear and effective communication is fundamental for ensuring information is understood and acted upon correctly |



Interview Process Overview

SCREENING - Initial assessment stage, usually by a recruiter or hiring manager

Key Areas of Evaluation:

- Match with basic job role requirements/cultural fit
- Candidate's interest in and knowledge about the company
- Communication skills assessment

Preparation Tips:

- Research the company broadly (use their website and LinkedIn)
- Thoroughly study the job description, focusing on role specifics
- Anticipate and prepare for questions about minimum qualifications
- Practice answers to common questions like "Tell me about yourself" and "Why this role?"
- Prepare thoughtful questions for the recruiter

TECHNICAL - Evaluation of technical skills and critical thinking through various formats (live coding, business cases, data challenges)

Key Areas of Evaluation:

- Communication - Does the candidate ask clarifying questions and explain their approach/thought process?
- Problem Solving - Does the candidate show they understand the problem, are able to come up with a sound approach, conduct trade-offs analysis, and optimize their approach?
- Technical Competency - How quick and accurate is the implementation? Were there errors?

Preparation Tips:

- Remember that technical interviews vary by role/company and are designed to be demanding
- Use resources like [Leetcode](#) and [HackerRank](#) for practice
- Emphasize showcasing problem-solving skills and strategic approaches
- Articulate your thought process and actively engage

ON SITE AND FINAL ROUND - Often a panel interview or a series of interviews over a week

Key Areas of Evaluation:

- Assess fit across various departments and teams
- Ask open ended questions about your skills and experience

Preparation Tips:

- Perform a deep dive into company operations and team structures
- Try to get the names of interviewers beforehand and request an interview agenda
- Prepare for a mix of behavioral, technical, and cultural fit questions
- Tailor your questions for each interviewer based on their LinkedIn profiles



Questions for the Interviewer

Questions for a recruiter:

- What professional development opportunities does the company offer?
- What does the onboarding process for this position look like?
- What does the hiring process at this company look like from start to finish? How many interviews can I expect, and what interview types should I be prepared for (phone screen, technical, etc.)?
- How long will the interviews last, and how many people will be interviewing me at one time?
- What should I bring with me for the on-site interviews, and what dress-code do you recommend?
- Do you recommend I bring a portfolio? Have other candidates done this successfully?
- Can you accommodate my disability, or special need?
- What are the next steps? When can I expect to hear back from you regarding next steps?

Questions for a potential co-worker:

- What previous experiences have helped you most in your current role?
- How would you describe the company culture here?
- What do you enjoy most about your job, and what is the most challenging part of your job?
- What is something that would surprise people about your day-to-day?
- What is your greatest reward in this position?
- What are current issues and trends in the field that I should be aware of?
- I read about "an issue or trend". How does this influence your work?
- How would you describe someone who would excel at this company?
- What is the profile of a person that would be most successful in this career/company/industry?
- How can we stay in contact? Can I connect with you on LinkedIn?
- What are the next steps? When can I expect to hear back from you regarding next steps?

Questions for a potential manager:

- How do you empower your team to be creative?
- Tell me about a time a member of your team challenged your decision. What was the outcome?
- How do you advocate for your team members when they aren't in the room?
- What is the most important project your team is working on right now?
- I read about "an issue or trend". How does this influence the team's work?
- How would you describe the culture of your team?
- How do you celebrate team success?
- What does success look like for this role in the first 30, 60 or 90 days?
- Is there a gap on the current team that you're hoping this position will fulfill?
- How will I be evaluated in this role and what does the evaluation process look like?
- What challenges is your organization currently facing?
- What are the next steps? When can I expect to hear back from you regarding next steps?

Questions for an executive:

- How do you see this company changing in the next 5 years?
- How has the mission of the company changed over time? What is the current focus?
- How do you set the tone for company culture?
- What was the latest company "win" and how was it celebrated?
- How do you measure company success?
- What are the next steps? When can I expect to hear back from you regarding next steps?



Communication Etiquette for Before, During, and After an Interview

Before Interview:

- Respond to communication within 24 hours of receiving emails, especially to invitations for interviews
- Check your spam folder frequently; many companies use automations to help move candidates through the process, and your email account may misinterpret these communications as spam
- When asked for your availability, provide 2-3 options at varying times, and be flexible to the interviewer's timezone considerations
- Check your voicemail message to ensure it is professional, identifiable to you, and not full
- Keep written communication concise and relevant to each specific stage
- Show enthusiasm and genuine excitement about the opportunity to interview

During Interview:

- Don't be too vague or general in your responses to interview questions
- Aim for responses to be 1-2 minutes long and avoid rambling or oversharing
- Be confident, and curious. Don't undersell yourself, and make sure you're not dominating the conversation. Show active listening skills and allow interviewer to lead the discussion
- Be prepared, but don't read from a script. Practice your responses and have reference notes, if needed

After Interview:

- Send a thank you email within 24 hours of the interview, and make it personalized to each person if possible. Below is an example:

Dear _____ ,

Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me today. It was exciting to hear how **[Company]** is using data in innovative ways and the strong culture of **[Key values]** within the team. I particularly enjoyed learning about _____ .

I am confident that my background in **[key assets]** will allow me to make a valuable contribution and I look forward to hearing about the next steps in the process. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any further questions.

Thanks again,

- Identify a hiring timeline by asking when they hope to fill the role, as well as asking when you can expect to hear back from them
- Do not follow-up until after the expected timeline they've shared has passed

