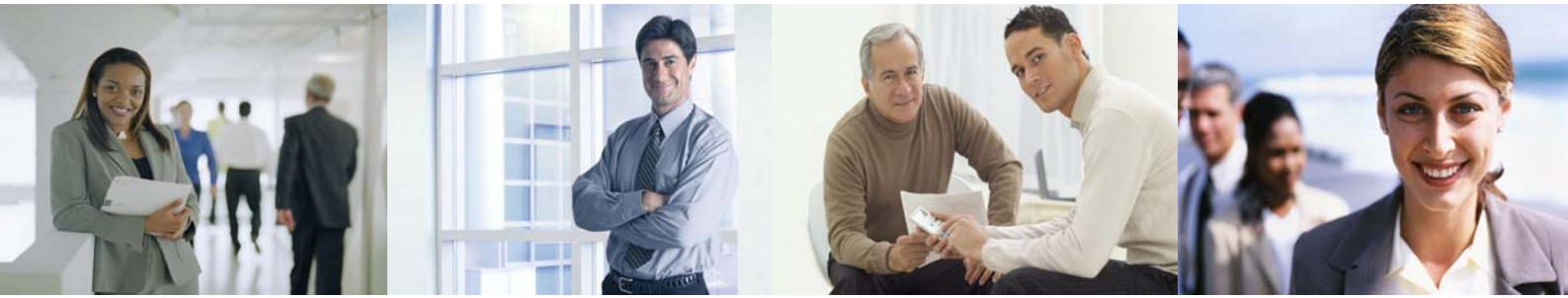


Behavioural Based Interviewing



What is Behavioural Based Interviewing?

Behavioural Based Interviewing is an in-depth interview process which is designed to assist in predicting the future performance of a potential employee/contractor by assessing their character traits through examples of behaviour in past situations. The process is quite thorough.

How does it work?

Initially the employer/hiring manager identifies a range of behavioural traits that they feel are essential in the ideal candidate they are seeking. These traits/skills are called Key Behavioural Domains or KBDs and cover all aspects of behaviour, personality trait and working style. They include qualities such as *patience*, *enthusiasm*, *leading by example*, *business awareness*, *independence* and *optimism*.

These KBDs may be chosen based on:

- Key Performance Indicators for the role: Does the nature of the role involve decision making? Is it client facing? Does it involve selling? Does it involve managing subordinates? For example:
 - A Help Desk/Support technician may require *flexibility*, *empathy*, and *tolerance for stress*
 - A Pre Sales Engineer may need *resilience*, *rapport*, and *tenacity*
 - A Senior Project Manager may need *analysis and judgement*, *problem solving*, and *negotiation*
- The organisations culture, values and vision:
 - Is this a traditional company with strong ethical values which requires ideal candidates to possess *integrity*?
 - Is this a company that embraces new challenges looking for candidates with *enthusiasm*?
 - Is this a global, growing organisation looking for candidates with *potential for advancement*?
 - Do they pride themselves on service delivery, and therefore seek candidates with a strong *customer focus*?
- The current team environment and prospective peers/managers/reports:
 - Will the candidate need a high amount of *patience* to deal with their colleagues?
 - Is it a dynamic fast paced environment that will require a high level of *decisiveness*?
 - Is it a large multicultural team that will see candidates with *sensitivity* make a better potential fit?

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The employer/hiring manager is asked to choose between 4 - 8 traits that are deemed critical to the success of a potential contractor/employee in their organisation. Once the KBD's have been decided upon, an interview questionnaire is created. This contains related KBD questions, designed to draw out how a candidate acted in the past in a certain situation, and to what extent they displayed the KBD in question. Following the in depth interview, the interviewer will evaluate the responses in order to assess character potential. This can be done informally or using a star rating system that allows candidates to be graded against a benchmark or each other.

Example Interview KBD Questions

Behaviour: *Analysis and Judgement*

Example Question: 'Tell me about a good/bad decision you have made. What went into making that decision? How do you feel about it now?'

Behaviour: *Persuasiveness*

Example Question: "Describe one time in the past where you have had to change someone's mind about something. How did you go about it and were you successful?"

Behaviour: *Work Planning*

Example Question: What has been the most difficult thing you have ever had to organise? What did you do?

What are the advantages of Behavioural Based Interviews?

- It allows a candidate to give a more rounded picture of themselves because answers can be based on experiences drawn from a variety of sources including work, home, hobbies, committee involvements etc., rather than relying on traditional past employment experience alone
- If successful it promotes harmonious working environments and prevents future personality clashes
- It is generally an accurate reflection of potential character as behaviours are often set for life
- It is culturally equitable - questions do not differentiate between candidates of different sex, race, religion, nationality, age, gender or marital status

What are the disadvantages of Behavioural Based Interviews?

- It relies on the assumption that one repeats certain behaviour when faced with certain situations
- It relies on the interviewers ability to correctly assess the answers objectively
- Some candidates may find it intimidating and feel uncomfortable discussing their personal experiences in an interview situation
- It does not accommodate candidates who do not have English as a first language and therefore may not fully express themselves

There are many studies that back up the effectiveness of behavioural based selection, but there will always be the question: Can an individual's future behaviour ever be readily predicted based on past actions? In the end, behavioural based interviews will give a more thorough representation of candidate potential and if used correctly should assist in finding the ideal fit between organisation and individual.

