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Hiring Series: Behavioral Interviewing

Chapter: 1	Page: 3409.2848.1.0.2	Template: content
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Hiring managers are increasingly using behavioral interviewing techniques to elicit more information about someone’s skills and abilities and help predict their chances for success in a particular job.

What is behavioral interviewing? It is when you identify the essential skills for an open position and structure questions prompting answers that reveal a candidate’s past performance and their strengths and weaknesses.

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In a more traditional interview, the hiring manager will often ask direct questions that allow the candidate to give shorter and more summarized answers. Often the hiring manager will also give “clues” as to the desired response. As a result, it is relatively easy for job candidates to bluff their way through a more traditional interview.

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Workplace Scene

Let's watch as this interviewing manager asks more direct questions.

Chapter: 1	Page: 3409.2851.1.0.2	Template: video
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[[CSL #502]]

Behavioral Interviewing--How Not To

[Manager and applicant at a desk for an interview]

Hiring Manager: So, if hired, are you comfortable with getting in the trenches and doing some copy writing, designing, layouts, and so forth? Are you comfortable with that?

[Sign for “prohibited”]

Applicant: Absolutely! I have always been very hands-on and I can generally learn to accomplish any task. In my last role, I served double duty as managing our social media as well as writing our social media copy and posts.

Hiring Manager: Excellent, okay. Tell me how you organize and execute marketing campaigns? Do you use marketing automation to track and measure your results?

[Sign for “prohibited”]

Applicant: Well, I’m proficient in several marketing tools. I typically like to draft the campaign and then put it into a program. I use AB testing to track the success of the data and then from there, I make adjustments based on what the data is telling me.

Hiring Manager: Excellent. Okay, as it relates to operating under a tight budget, do you have experience managing campaigns under a very specific budget?

[Sign for “prohibited”]

Applicant: Yes, I've always worked for companies where limited resources were available. So I had to price out every activity and we also had to get at least 2 competing bids so I had to be as conservative as possible.

Hiring Manager: Alright, super. Thank you very much.

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As a general rule, the hiring manager should not be talking very much. Instead, the manager should be asking questions prompting the candidate to talk a lot about their past work performance. The more the candidate talks, the more visibility the manager has into their strengths and weaknesses.

To elicit the most helpful information, ask questions to get a detailed view of how the candidate performs on the job.

Chapter: 1	Page: 3409.2853.1.0.2	Template: video
Version: All	Shutterstock Image: 114832648	Audio: no

Workplace Scene

Let's watch the interview again but this time with the manager asking questions which force the candidate to give detailed explanations of how she performed in specific situations.

Chapter: 1	Page: 3409.2854.1.0.2	Template: video
Version: All	Image: screenshot	Audio: no

[[CSL #503]]

Behavioral Interviewing--How To

[Manager and applicant sitting at a desk for an interview]

Hiring Manager: Can you describe a situation where you needed to take an innovative course of action?

Applicant: Yes. I worked with a start-up company that markets to consumers. So with a very small budget, we had to be creative when developing our brand but still generate enough revenue. So, we decided to leverage the social media network and include our customers so that they would create our brand. So we gave them the necessary tools and they created their own social media campaigns, we also gave them enough content so that they would create the social media and generate competition. From there, it drove amazing results.

[The interview continues]

Hiring Manager: Can you give me an example of a marketing campaign that did not turn out as planned?

Applicant: Okay, well, the last company I worked for had a vintage clothing line had a tremendous appeal to urban female buyers. The online revenue was growing, but mainly in the big cities. So, we decided to expand our market reach and booked a series of National trade shows. Despite all our efforts to promote the line prior to the show, we weren't able to garner enough interest to justify the cost of the events.

[Everyone has experienced unsatisfactory results but by soliciting an example, the manager gets visibility into the applicant's strengths/weaknesses compared to others]

Hiring Manager: Tell me about a marketing project that you brought in on time and under budget.

Applicant: Certainly. Well, I was at a telecommunications company that had very aggressive sales goals. So, I partnered with the sales team to understand those goals. We collaborated to create a marketing plan that would meet those expectations. Due to the limited marketing budget, we decided to help those sales reps who were struggling due to the market landscape, or competitors. We used best practices to acquire and nurture those leads and we leveraged the in-house telemarketing team to do a deeper lead qualification process.

We were able to increase the overall sales rates and we lowered the budget by using existing tools and resources. The sales reps were happy and everyone was happy that we met all goals.

[This question forces the applicant to show their ability to work within budget and time constraints rather than talk about or summarize their ability]

Hiring Manager: Well, that was very informative. Thank you very much.

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Behavioral based interviewing elicits more objective facts to help make hiring decisions as compared to more traditional interview styles. In a behavioral interview, the open-ended style or hypothetical question forces the candidate to reveal how they would perform in relevant situations and whether they are strong or weak in the skills identified as necessary for the particular position.

Click **HERE** for a list of sample behavioral interview questions.

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Thank You

Thanks for taking this **Learning Moment**.

Questions about this concept?

Email us: trainer@emtrain.com