

A behavioral question is a question that aims at learning about your past behaviors in specific work situations in order to predict how you will behave in the future. Hiring managers ask behavioral questions because they are trying to see if you possess the qualities they are seeking. The 5 most common behaviors that come up are:

1. Teamwork oriented
2. Problem solving
3. Initiative/Leadership
4. Interpersonal Skills
5. Challenge/stress/pressure

### Common Behavior Based Questions:

- *Tell me about a situation where you had to solve a difficult problem.*
- *Describe a project or idea (not necessarily your own) that was implemented primarily because of your efforts.*
- *Do you feel you work well under pressure? If so, describe a time when you have done so...*
- *Give me an example of a time when you motivated others.*
- *Tell me about a time where you had to delegate tasks during a project.*
- *Give me an example of when you showed initiative and took the lead.*
- *Tell me about a time when you missed an obvious solution to a problem.*
- *Tell me about a situation you had with an upset customer/client/co-worker and how you handled it.*
- *Give me an example of a time you had to make a quick decision.*

### Preparing for Behavioral Questions:

1. Read the job description and research the company to discover the most important qualities the organization is looking for. Do they emphasize collaboration, hard-work, problem-solving, etc? Keep these qualities in mind while you prepare your answers.
2. Think about projects you have worked on in class, accomplishments you are proud of, times you dealt with difficult people and situations at work that had a positive ending or that taught you a valuable lesson.
3. Apply the STAR concept. STAR will give you the opportunity to answer behavioral questions in a way that articulates your abilities and strengths.

### **Situation: Describe the situation.**

- The interviewer wants to know about a specific challenge you encountered.
- It is important to think of a situation that is going to be important to the role to which you are applying.

### **Task: How did you approach the situation?**

- This is your chance to go into detail and be descriptive regarding how you overcome the obstacle.
- How did you plan to resolve the situation?

### **Action: What action did you take?**

- The interviewer wants to know what your role was in terms of resolving the situation.
- This is where you explain how you implemented the task.

### **Result: Close with the result of your efforts. Include figures to quantify the result if possible.**

- This is your chance to complete the story and let the employer know what happened as a result of your actions on the project.
- How did your actions benefit the company or client?

## Examples of STAR:

*Tell me about a time you had to solve a difficult problem.*

Situation	Office supplies were missing pretty regularly
Task	So we had to figure out how to track who was coming and going.
Action	I suggested we create a sign-in sheet of time in, time out and objective of visit which had to be initialed by the front desk staff.
Result	Once people realized we were keeping track of when they were in the office, supplies stopped disappearing, and we were able to save money by ordering less supplies.

*Tell me about your proudest professional accomplishment.*

Situation	I worked at a restaurant previously and we were getting poor customer reviews. I volunteered for a committee tasked with investigating the reason for the poor reviews.
Task	After analyzing the reviews, we discovered that customer wait times were the largest contributor to negative reviews.
Action	I then led brainstorming situations with my team to find a solution.
Result	This solution was a change in how orders were taken for the kitchen. This change meant that people were served their food more quickly and so they were able to eat, pay and leave in a timely manner. Because of this wait times dropped for those waiting to be seated as well. The restaurant set a record in profit earnings that year and customers are much happier to work with as well.

Remember that experiences you have had could fit as the answer to multiple behavioral questions. For example, an employer might choose to ask either “How do you work under pressure?” or “Tell me about a time you experienced a conflict and how you handled it?”, and you could potentially answer with the same experience.