

Behavioral Interviewing

Incorporating behavioral interview questions in your hiring process has many benefits. Behavioral interviews are based on the premise that past performance is the best predictor of future performance. Questions in a behavioral interview are designed to reveal the extent to which a candidate possesses the core characteristics or competencies desired by the employer. Behavioral interview questions are pointed, probing and more specific than traditional interview questions and are geared toward exploring the candidate's demonstrated behaviors in their previous work experiences. For example, instead of asking how a candidate *would* behave, the interviewer would ask how a candidate *did* behave.

Process for preparing & conducting a behavioral interview:

- *Review the position.*
 - Review the position description in Jobs@UVA and determine behavioral characteristics or competencies that most directly correlate with successful job performance.
 - Review the positive/successful behaviors of previous incumbents to help identify competencies necessary for success in the position.
 - Consider speaking with other faculty/staff members who are knowledgeable about the position and/or who have some relationship to the position as another way of determining the required competencies.
- *Develop interview questions relating to the competencies identified for the position.*
 - Be sure to focus on 3, and no more than 5, key competencies for the position. Often, the answers that result from behavioral interview questions can illicit follow-up questions and detailed conversation between the interviewer and interviewee, so it is important to limit what is covered during the interview so as not to overwhelm the candidate.
- *Determine an "Answer Key".*
 - The interviewers need to have an idea of what behaviors they would expect to hear about in response to their questions.
- *Ensure Consistency.*
 - The list of questions should be used for each candidate that is interviewed to ensure fairness and consistency during the interview process. This is especially important when the interview is being conducted by a group/committee. Additionally, asking the same questions of each candidate will allow you, the interviewer, to make comparisons between the various answers and approaches of the interviewees.