

# BEHAVIOR-BASED INTERVIEW PROFILE / QUESTIONS



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## My Core Competencies / Profile

With the help of the definitions on the following pages, narrow down your top 6 core competencies based on your job objective and check the appropriate lines below.

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|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| _____ Analytical / Problem Solving | _____ Organizational Skills   |
| _____ Assertiveness                | _____ Perceptiveness          |
| _____ Creativity                   | _____ Performing Under Stress |
| _____ Customer Service             | _____ Policy and Procedures   |
| _____ Decisiveness                 | _____ Political Savvy         |
| _____ Flexibility / Adaptability   | _____ Process Improvement     |
| _____ Goal Oriented                | _____ Take Initiative         |
| _____ Interpersonal Skills         | _____ Teamwork                |
| _____ Leadership Ability           | _____ Verbal Communication    |
| _____ Motivating Others            | _____ Written Communications  |

## INDEX OF COMPETENCIES

**Analytical / Problem Solving:** Ability to assess a situation, create alternate solutions, and consider short and long term ramifications.

**Assertiveness:** Ability to maturely assert one's point of view to others regardless of differing opinions, status or position.

**Creativity:** Ability to take a fresh look at a problem or task and take a new approach to doing it; ability to come up with innovative ideas.

**Customer Service:** Ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with internal and external customers and work to meet the needs of the customer.

**Decisiveness:** Ability to commit to decisions based on current information without overstepping one's authority.

**Flexibility / Adaptability:** Ability to change one's approach or style to most effectively reach objectives.

**Goal Oriented:** Ability to define projected results and create and carry out an appropriate strategy to achieve those results.

**Interpersonal Skills:** Ability to connect and communicate (effectively conveying thoughts and ideas and listening for understanding) with people of varying status and position in a positive manner.

**Leadership Ability:** The sustained ability to mobilize a group while providing direction, protection and order to achieve specific goals.

**Motivating Others:** Ability to determine what inspires individuals or teams to take action and to create an energizing atmosphere that maximizes performance and results.

**Organizational Skills:** Ability to plan, schedule and prioritize tasks to meet objectives; ability to arrange information and create systems for routine operations.

**Perceptiveness:** Ability to interpret body language and verbal messages to gain an accurate understanding of others' values and positions on issues.

**Performing Under Stress:** Ability to remain poised and effective while handling tension arising from such things as conflict, long hours, deadlines, or challenging situations.

**Policy and Procedures:** Ability to integrate company policies into daily situations, apply established approaches to routine work matters, and follow the chain of command.

**Political Savvy:** Ability to affect and manage organizational change, use one's understanding of the corporate climate, the internal system and key individuals to achieve objectives.

**Process Improvement:** The ability to take action to identify, analyze and improve existing processes within an organization to meet new goals and objectives.

**Takes Initiative:** Ability to make things happen by identifying what needs to be done and then doing it without direction from others.

**Teamwork:** Ability to work collaboratively on a project with each individual contributing and putting personal preferences aside to ensure the accomplishment of a goal.

**Verbal Communication:** Ability to clearly convey information, ideas and attitudes in a persuasive manner; ability to actively listen for understanding.

**Written Communications:** Ability to clearly convey information and ideas in proper written format.

## Sample Interview Questions

**Analytical / Problem Solving Skills:** Ability to assess a situation, create alternate solutions, and consider short and long-term ramifications.

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### QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about a problem either involving personnel or a technical situation, that you were able to resolve.
2. Give me an example of a time when you used solid judgment and logic to solve a problem.
3. Describe a time when you were caught off guard by a problem or obstacles that you had not foreseen? What happened?

### Did the response address these key aspects?

- Describe key aspects of the situation.
- Use a logical approach to generate solutions.
- Evaluate and test alternatives.
- Consider short and long-term ramifications.
- Determine any possible negative outcomes.

**Assertiveness:** Ability to maturely assert one's point of view to others regardless of differing opinions, status or position.

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### QUESTIONS

1. What decision have you made in the past that was questioned by a superior? What did you do and what was the outcome?
2. Tell me about a difficult situation when you needed to persuade someone to go along with an idea.
3. When have you had to confront a co-worker or manager? How did you do it and what was the outcome?

### Did the response address these key aspects?

- Reiterate reasoning for their decision.
- Stand their ground.
- Effectively change others' opinions.
- Show aggressive or hostile behavior.
- Show discomfort in confrontational situations.

**Creativity:** Ability to take a fresh look at a problem or task and take a new approach to doing it; ability to come up with innovative ideas.

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QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about a time when you used an innovative approach to solve a problem at work.
2. Give me an example of how you change your approach to things or introduce new ideas.
3. What was the best idea you've had to improve something at a previous job?

Did the response address these key aspects?

- Think creatively about routine problems.
- Try a unique solution.
- Tailor other's ideas to fit the situation.
- Explore new approaches to provide solutions.

**Customer Service:** Ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with internal and external customers and work to meet the needs of the customer.

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QUESTIONS

1. Give me an example of a time when you used customer feedback to improve your services or products.
2. Describe a situation where you failed to satisfy a customer, what did you do about the situation.
3. Give me an example of a way in which you built a relationship with a customer.

Did the response address these key aspects?

- Is dedicated to meeting the expectations or requirements of internal / external customers.
- Gets first-hand customer information and uses it for improvements in communication, products, or services.
- Establishes and maintains effective relationships with customers and gains their trust/respect.

**Decisiveness:** Ability to commit to decisions based on current information without overstepping one's authority.

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QUESTIONS

1. When have you had to make a decision under stress? How quickly did you arrive at a decision?
2. Give me an example of a good decision you made, as well as a bad decision. What did you learn from the bad decision?
3. We are not always happy with decisions we have to make, but at times we are under pressure to make them. When have you experienced this and what did you do?

Did the response address these key aspects?

- Make a snap decision under pressure.
- Take time to rationally evaluate options.
- Demonstrate an appropriate level of decision-making responsibility on prior jobs.
- Assertively stand behind decisions they have made.

**Flexibility / Adaptability:** Ability to change one's approach or style to most effectively reach objectives.

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QUESTIONS

1. Give me an example of a time your day was interrupted and thrown off schedule. How did you handle the situation?
2. How have you adjusted your style when it was not working for the project or the team?
3. Have you ever worked for a demanding supervisor? Explain his or her leadership style and tell me how you worked under this style?

Did the response address these key aspects?

- Show versatility in approaching the situation from different angles.
- Compromise to reach a favorable outcome.
- Accommodate another's needs.
- Maintain high standards in the face of adversity.
- Successfully adapt to different workplace management styles.

**Goal / Task Oriented:** Ability to define projected results and create and carry out an appropriate strategy to achieve those results.

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QUESTIONS

1. Give me an example of the method you use in setting goals for yourself?
2. Tell me about a time when you did not meet a goal. What happened and how did you react to your failure?
3. Give me an example of a goal that you set for yourself at your last position. How did you develop this goal and what did you do to accomplish this goal?

Did the response address these key aspects?

- Use a system or method to set goals and specific objectives.
- Describe a specific planning process to meet goals.
- Set realistic goals.
- Set aside time periodically to set and review goals.

**Interpersonal Skills:** Ability to connect and communicate (effectively conveying thoughts and ideas and listening for understanding) with people of varying status and position in a positive manner.

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QUESTIONS

1. Describe how you get to know people in a new work situation. Do you tend to hang back and observe for a while, or quickly befriend co-workers? Give me an example of you doing this.
2. Tell me about a difficult or frustrating individual that you've worked with, and how you managed to work with them.
3. Have you ever experienced working with someone who seemed to talk more than they listened. What did you do to make sure your communication with them was understood?

Did the response address these key aspects?

- Show receptiveness to building rapport with co-workers and establishing work relationships.
- Demonstrate good 2-way communications.
- Demonstrate the ability to overcome communication barriers.
- Use alternate methods of communication to insure the clarity of their message.



**Leadership Abilities:** The sustained ability to mobilize a group while providing direction, protection and order to achieve specific goals.

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QUESTIONS

1. Define your leadership style and give me an example of it.
2. Tell me about a time when you took charge of a group in which you didn't like how things were going. How did you convince the people to do something different?
3. Describe a time when you led a team of people who didn't see eye to eye. What did you do and what was the outcome?

Did the response address these key aspects?

- Articulate a well thought out philosophy.
- Use power or intimidation to influence others.
- Use a persuasive leadership style.
- Demonstrate a variety of leadership experiences.

**Motivating Others:** Ability to determine what inspires individuals or teams to take action and to create an energizing atmosphere that maximizes performance and results.

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QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about a time when you were able to help an employee regain their motivation.
2. Can you sense what will motivate someone? Describe a time when you were able to do this.
3. How do you create excitement within a group to inspire them to take action on something? Give an example of a time you have done this.

Did the response address these key aspects?

- Show an understanding of techniques that may backfire.
- Show perceptiveness in incentivizing individuals differently.
- Understand the power of energizing others.
- Have experience motivating a group.

**Organizational skills:** Ability to plan, schedule and prioritize tasks to meet objectives; ability to arrange information and create systems for routine operations.

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QUESTIONS

1. Describe how you organized your responsibilities and tasks in your last position?
2. How do you set priorities on the job? Illustrate with an example from your last job.
3. Describe a work environment where you were often surprised with unexpected situations. How did you handle them?

Did the response address these key aspects?

- Use forward thinking to assess what was needed to get the job done.
- Discern what steps must be taken in what time frame to achieve their objective.
- Develop systems and processes to help organize their work.
- Use a systematic approach to setting priorities.
- Look at short-term and long-term goals before scheduling their time.
- Have contingency plans for special situations that arise.

**Perceptiveness:** Ability to interpret body language and verbal messages to gain an accurate understanding of others' values and positions on issues.

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QUESTIONS

1. What clues do you look for to insure your communication with someone is effective? Describe a time when your awareness of this proved valuable.
2. Describe a time when your perception of an individual was off. How did you originally arrive at your perception and what made it change?
3. Give an example of a time when you noticed that a coworker was not satisfied with the outcomes of a meeting. What did you do about it?

Did the response address these key aspects?

- Look for non-verbal signals to insure understanding.
- Accurately interpret body language of others.
- Demonstrate an understanding of individual differences in conveying values and positions on issues.
- Withdraw from situations involving organizational politics.

**Performing Under Stress:** Ability to remain poised and effective while handling tension arising from such things as conflict, long hours, deadlines, or challenging situations.

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QUESTIONS

1. Describe a specific situation that put you under a great deal of stress within the past few years. What did you do to handle the stress?
2. Describe a time when you overreacted to a situation at work. What happened, what did you do after the event and what did you learn from the situation?
3. We have all faced situations that made us feel like whatever we did, we just couldn't win. Tell me about a time when you were in this situation and how you decided what to do.

Did the response address these key aspects?

- Manage the situation without erupting, quitting or giving up.
- Describe an effective positive coping method to alleviate stress.
- Overreact to the situation.
- Use logic rather than emotion to rationally manage the situation.
- Show a reasonable level of tolerance for conflict and stress.

**Policy and Procedures:** Ability to integrate company policies into daily situations, follow established approaches to routine work matters, and follow the chain of command.

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QUESTIONS

1. Give me an example of a time when you had to support the agenda of your superiors in which you did not agree. What did you do?
2. Tell me about a time when you were tempted to break a company policy.
3. Describe a time when you disagreed with a company policy or procedure. What did you do?

Did the response address these key aspects?

- Reveal a positive attitude towards upper management.
- Put personal opinions and attitudes aside to support management's decisions.
- Describe policies and procedures in place to deal with routine situations.
- Get approval to bend or break policy for a special circumstance.

**Political Savvy:** Ability to affect and manage organizational change, use one's understanding of the corporate climate, the internal system and key individuals to achieve objectives.

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QUESTIONS

1. Describe a time when politics at work impacted your ability to do your job. How did you handle the situation?
2. Tell me about a time you discovered the best way to sell an idea to your boss, subordinate, co-workers or upper management.
3. Explain a work related situation in which you were able to read between the lines and discover the true meaning of a message.

Did the response address these key aspects?

- Use insight into the organizational system in order to facilitate change.
- Use their understanding of the other individual's position to their advantage.
- Demonstrate perceptiveness in "reading" others.
- Demonstrate the ability to identify messages under the surface.

**Process Improvement:** The ability to take action to identify, analyze and improve existing processes within an organization to meet new goals and objectives.

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QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about a suggestion you made to improve the way job processes or operations worked. What was the result?
2. Tell me about one of your workplace improvements that another department now uses.
3. Give me an example of an idea you had to improve the effectiveness or efficiency of your department?

Did the response address these key aspects?

- Dedicated to providing high quality products and services to meet the needs and requirements of internal and external customers.
- Use data to drive change.
- Open to suggestions and feedback
- Concerned about continuous improvement

**Takes Initiative:** Ability to make things happen by identifying what needs to be done and then doing it without direction from others.

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QUESTIONS

Did the response address these key aspects?

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Give an example of a time when you anticipated a problem and did something about it before it became an issue.</li><li>2. Tell me about a project you initiated at your last job?</li><li>3. Give me an example of a time when you went above and beyond the call of duty?</li></ol> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enjoys working hard</li><li>• Interested in new opportunities and trying new things</li><li>• Identifies things that need to be done and does them without direction from others</li><li>• Makes a challenge an opportunity to grow and develop</li></ul> |
|---|---|

**Teamwork:** Ability to work collaboratively on a project with each individual contributing and putting personal preferences aside to ensure the accomplishment of a goal.

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QUESTIONS

Did the response address these key aspects?

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|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Give an example of how you worked effectively with others to accomplish an important result.</li><li>2. Describe a team experience you found disappointing. What would you have done differently?</li><li>3. What roles have you typically played as a member of a team? How did you interact with other members of the team?</li></ol> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Works collaboratively with others.</li><li>• Focused on accomplishing goals and achieving results.</li><li>• Able to put personal needs aside to see that the project is completed.</li><li>• Demonstrates participation.</li></ul> |
|--|---|

**Verbal Communication:** Ability to clearly convey information, ideas and attitudes in a persuasive manner; ability to actively listen for understanding.

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QUESTIONS

Did the response address these key aspects?

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|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Tell me about a time in which you had to speak up in order to be sure that other people knew what you thought or felt.</li><li>2. Tell me about a time when you had to present complex information. How did you ensure that the other person understood your interaction?</li><li>3. Give me an example of a challenging communication situation? How did you handle it?</li></ol> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Express ideas in a way that addressed the listener's concerns.</li><li>• Listen carefully to others to understand their ideas and points of view.</li><li>• Clearly articulate complex information.</li><li>• State a persuasive case.</li><li>• Vary their communication style and try new approaches when necessary.</li></ul> |
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**Written Communications:** Ability to clearly convey information and ideas in proper written format.

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QUESTIONS

Did the response address these key aspects?

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Tell me about your experience preparing written reports? What was their length and how did others react to them?</li><li>2. Give an example of a time when you have wanted to follow up an important conversation with a note, memo, or letter?</li><li>3. When have you created documents... proposals...research findings... or other written communications? Describe your experience?</li></ol> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrate the appropriate level of writing experience for the position.</li><li>• Write clearly and understandably to others.</li><li>• Demonstrate willingness to communicate through letters, reports, and memos.</li><li>• Use writing to emphasize and clarify important points.</li><li>• Find writing enjoyable.</li></ul> |
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