

ABSOLUTE PERSONNEL

BEHAVIOURAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

6 SOFT SKILLS TO IDENTIFY IN AN INTERVIEW:



ADAPTABILITY



CULTURE ADD



COLLABORATION



LEADERSHIP



GROWTH POTENTIAL



PRIORITISATION



What are behavioural interview questions and why do they matter?

Behavioural interview questions are queries which require candidates to share specific experiences where they had to use a certain skill. A candidate's answer should give evidence as to how they dealt with a previous issue, demonstrating potential performance and capabilities.

Employers will ask behavioural questions in order to observe which candidates are likely to excel in their organisation. It can be beneficial for employers to have a list of behavioural questions on hand when conducting an interview. This preparation will ensure all interviews are consistent, giving all candidates equal opportunity to make a lasting impression whilst sharing skills, knowledge, and past experiences. Incorporating behavioural questions into your interviews will assist in improving your organisation's recruitment process.

According to LinkedIn's Global Talent Trends 2019, 57% of professionals struggle to assess soft skills accurately. Soft skills are personal, social and communication attributes which are needed for success in the job. These skills can often be hard to evaluate. Behavioural questions can highlight which soft skills a candidate possesses, the most important soft skills vary depending on sector and roles. LinkedIn surveyed over 1,300 professionals to identify the most common soft skills hiring managers look for when conducting an interview, as well as the types of behavioural questions they ask in order to pinpoint if a candidate possesses this specific soft skill.

These are the top 6 skills identified in the survey, ranked in order of importance:

- 1** **Adaptability** - The ability to change to accommodate different conditions. This soft skill is necessary in an ever-changing work environment.
- 2** **Culture Add** - People who inject diversity into an organisation, positively contributing to an organisation's culture.
- 3** **Collaboration** - The capability of working within a team in order to complete a task or achieve a goal.
- 4** **Leadership** - Someone who takes on the role of a leader, inspiring and leading teams to meet deadlines and goals.
- 5** **Growth Potential** - People who are capable of motivating themselves to improve their knowledge and understanding, so they can develop their role.
- 6** **Prioritisation** - Carrying out the process of deciding which tasks are of biggest priority in accordance to importance or urgency.

Determining which soft skills candidate must possess to be successful in your organisation can help employers tailor the questions used in interviews. Behavioural questions will help employers uncover a candidate's true potential.



ADAPTABILITY

The ability to change to accommodate different conditions. This soft skill is necessary in an ever-changing work environment.

LinkedIn recently carried out a survey to reveal the key soft skills professionals look for in candidates, this survey identified that 69% of managers say the most important soft skill they screen for is adaptability.

Employees who possess adaptability skills are more likely to achieve better outcomes, as they're comfortable with making strategic adjustments and shifting priorities accordingly. With over 54% of employees requiring significant reskilling or upskilling in order to keep pace with emerging technologies, adaptability is an essential skill for most organisations.

The Top 5 interview questions to screen for adaptability:

1

You have been asked to do something you've never done before, tell me about a time that's happened to you in the past. How did you react and what did you learn?

This question will allow you to listen out for excitement when it comes to tackling new challenges. It will also highlight the willingness to leave their comfort zones and the learnings they have gained from the experience.

2

Have you ever been assigned a task that was outside of your job description? If so, how did you handle the situation and what was the outcome?

Understand what their old job roles entailed and how they react to trying something new. They'll also have chance to explain the steps taken to ensure the task was carried out successfully.

3

Sometimes you may need to adjust to a colleague's style of working in order to complete a project, tell me about a time when you've had to adjust your style of working.

This question will show how flexible the candidate can be when required. They'll also be able to reflect on what they've learnt from this experience, both good and bad.

4

Tell me about a time when you have embraced a new process, system or piece of technology that was a major departure from the old way of doing things.

Listen out for eagerness to explore new ways of working. Did they discover a better way of working and did they embrace the change?

5

What is the biggest change you've had to deal with and how did you adapt to this change?

Does the candidate accept that change is inevitable? This question will highlight how they evaluated the situation and the steps they took to ensure they received the support needed to adapt successfully.

References:

1. LinkedIn, The Most Popular Interview Questions to Reveal Key Soft Skills
2. World Economic Forum, The Future of Jobs Report 2018



CULTURE ADD

People who inject diversity into an organisation positively contributing to a organisations culture.

Culture adds have the potential to positively impact your organisation. Studies show that companies with inclusive talent practices generate up to 30% higher revenue per employee.

Like any employee, culture adds should align with your company's core values and mission. However, this doesn't mean that the perfect candidate for the job has to be exactly like everyone else. Many organisations have now stopped screening candidates for 'culture fit', instead they're deciding whether or not the candidate in question is a 'culture add'. In other words, does this candidate resonate with the existing company culture and are they going to help grow and evolve the culture?

The Top 5 interview questions to screen for culture add:

1 Why would you choose our company and not others?

Listen for an honest answer. An honest answer will tell you what the candidate is really thinking, not what they think you want to hear.

2 Have your co-workers ever had a misconception about you?

This question highlights reflection and transparency. This is an opportunity for the candidates to be open and shows how honest they are with the people around them.

3 Name three things that are most important to you in a job

Is there alignment between what is important to the candidate and what the company has to offer?

4 What the most interesting thing about you?

Identify what the candidate can bring to your company culture.

5 In the last week, tell me about a time that you've be energised and productive at work. What were you doing?

This question will give an indication that the work environment and day-to day responsibilities are suitable for the candidate.

References:

1. Deloitte Insights, Diversity and inclusion: The reality gap



COLLABORATION

The capability of working within a team in order to complete a task or achieve a goal.

Job roles which require teamwork are found within most organisations and strong collaboration skills can have a huge impact. Collaboration can help improve overall productivity, morale and order. A recent study from Harvard Business also suggests that 50% of great collaborators also tend to be top performers.

When hiring for a role which requires effective teamwork, screening candidates for collaboration can help you find someone who will work well with others and drive their colleagues towards greater success. Failure to hire someone who doesn't possess collaboration skills could create roadblocks for colleagues.

The Top 5 interview questions to screen for collaboration:

1

Describe the best supervisor or partner you've worked with and what part of their management style appealed to you?

Understand the candidates working style and what type of personalities they work best with.

2

Can you share your favourite experiences working with a team? What contributions did you make?

This question gives candidates the opportunity to express their energy and motivation via teamwork.

3

Tell me about an experience where a project dramatically shifted direction at the last minute.

Does the candidate focus on keeping the team aligned and are they comfortable with asking for additional help?

4

Have you ever had to work with someone who was difficult to get along with? How did you handle this situation?

A willingness to try and see things from a colleague's perspective. Do they find the cause of tension and find ways to improve the relationship?

5

Describe a time when you were communicating with someone and they didn't understand you. What did you do?

This question will highlight whether the candidate possesses patience. Great collaborators will take the time to make sure they're understood and adjust their working style to align with others.

References:

1. Harvard Business Review, Collaborative Overlord.



LEADERSHIP

Someone who takes on the role of a leader, inspiring and leading teams to meet deadlines and goals.

A recent study shows that organisations with strong leadership are 13x more likely to outperform their competitors. Leaders possess the ability to inspire and motivate others, driving teams to success.

Other the other hand, poor leaders can demotivate staff and drive employees to quit. Therefore, regardless of seniority level, employers should always consider a candidate's leadership skills, you could be hiring the organisations future CEO without realising!

The Top 5 interview questions to screen for leadership:

1

When have you led by example in the past? What did you do?

Understand how their behaviour impacts others. Are they an inspiration to their team?

2

What is the toughest decision you had to make in the last six months?

Do they take careful consideration of outcomes? Great leaders will seek advice when needed.

3

Describe a time when something didn't go according to plan. What was your role in the situation and what was the outcome?

The candidate should express thoughtful reflection and have a strong sense of ownership.

4

Have you ever had to 'sell' an idea to your team and how did it go?

Great leaders should listen to the concerns of their co-workers, with the goal of making sure everyone is comfortable with the plan.

5

Have you ever had to persuade someone to see something your way? What steps did you take?

Candidates who possess leadership skills will have established credibility and will use evidence to reinforce their viewpoint.

References:

1. Development Dimensions International, Global Leadership Forecast 2011.



GROWTH POTENTIAL

People who are capable of motivating themselves to improve their knowledge and understanding, so they can develop their role.

Career advancements are at the top of a candidate's priority list. Hiring someone with growth potential means that your new employee will develop the role and make it their own.

Employers can often be tempted to find candidates who have the same level of experience and knowledge as their current team members. However, hiring someone who will grow into the role will help earn their loyalty, therefore reducing your staff turnover. The cost of replacing an employee is about 1.5x their salary.

The Top 5 interview questions to screen for growth potential:

1 Tell me about the biggest career goal you've achieved.

This question gives candidates to opportunity to express their motivations and drive. They should take pride in their achievements.

2 Describe a time when a problem occurred but your manager was unavailable. What did you do?

Did the candidate use their initiative and explore options before making a final decision?

3 What would motivate you to make a move from your current role?

The candidates should signal that they are more invested in growth opportunities and interested in being challenged.

4 Do you often ask for direct feedback? If so, why?

Do they ask for feedback regularly? This is an indication that the candidate is interested in self-improvement.

5 Have you ever volunteered to grow your knowledge, as opposed to being directed to do so?

The candidate should express an eagerness to learn and expand their knowledge. Do they seek out new opportunities?

References:

1. LinkedIn, Why More Employees Are Considering Leaving Their Companies.



PRIORITISATION

Carrying out the process of deciding which tasks are of biggest priority in accordance to importance or urgency.

When hiring for a new position it's important to look for candidates who can manage their time effectively and pay close attention to detail, ensuring nothing is missed. Candidates who possess prioritisation skills will have mastered the ability to juggle key tasks.

This particular soft skill is increasingly important in roles that have strict deadlines and tight project timelines. Employees who can prioritise successfully are more likely to reach project milestones in a timely manner and meet project due dates. A recent study concluded that the ability to organise and prioritise work is ranked as the third most desirable quality in a new hire.

The Top 5 interview questions to screen for prioritisation:

1

Describe a project that you recently planned. How did you organise and schedule the tasks?

This question gives the candidate the opportunity to describe the way in which they have planned a recent project and how the project was driven in order to meet deadlines and completion.

2

Have you ever felt stressed or overwhelmed and how did you handle this situation?

Does planning and prioritisation help the candidate to remain calm when in a stressful situation?

3

Describe a time when you've had to juggle several projects at once. How did you organise your time?

The candidate should demonstrate a proactive process for organising their time (e.g. creating a to-do list and confirming deadlines).

4

Tell me how you determine how much time should be delegated for a task.

The candidate should think carefully about the amount of time their spending on a task.

5

Have you ever delegated an important task successfully?

Does the candidate show an understanding of how to delegate a task successfully? Candidates who possess good prioritisation skills should ensure their colleagues clearly understand the projects expectations and deadlines.

References:

1. NACE's Job Outlook for the Class of 2014 | Here are the soft skills most important to your business.



Help your candidates perform at their best during their interview

It's important to ensure that you, as well as your candidates, get the most out of every interview. In this blog we'll explore the ways in which you can help your candidates perform at their best during their interview.

All hiring managers understand that some candidates are better at interviewing than others. However, just because an individual is confident with interviews, that doesn't necessarily mean they're the best person for the job.

By following these simple steps, you can create a more supportive interview process, allowing your candidates to demonstrate their true potential. This way you can gain a better understanding of their capabilities and make an informed decision on who is the best candidate for the job.

1 Give the candidates time to answer

Allow the candidates moment to think and reflect on the question you have just asked. Resist the temptation to interrupt when they're speaking, make a note of what you'd like to say and talk about it once the candidate has finished.

2 Specifics

When asking behavioural questions, ensure you ask for real world examples, not just hypotheticals.

3 Don't be afraid to follow up

If you feel a candidate's answer seems incomplete, ask a follow-up question to help fill in the blanks.

4 The STAR method

The STAR method (situation, task, action, result) allows candidates to answer your questions in a structured way

For any further recruitment enquiries please contact the Absolute Personnel team on 01743 461239.

References:

1. LinkedIn, The Most Popular Interview Questions to Reveal Key Soft Skills