

Examples of Behavioral-Based Questions

These examples are broken down by broad topic areas or specific skills. You will find that there are similar types of questions in each section. Since it is impossible to prepare answers to the endless number of behavioral-based interview questions you could be asked, it is recommended that you focus on the examples from your experience that you can use to answer these questions. In most cases, you can adapt a small number of your own personal and professional experiences to be able to answer a very broad range of behavioral-based questions. Set up an appointment with a career advisor at Career Services to learn how.

Accomplishments

- Give me an example of a time when you delivered more than what was expected.
- Give me an example of an accomplishment you are proud of.
- Tell me about a major accomplishment.
- Tell me about an accomplishment that took longer to complete than expected.
- Tell me about something that you accomplished that required discipline.
- What accomplishment is your greatest source of pride?
- What is your greatest achievement and why?
- What situations do your colleagues rely on you to handle?
- Tell me about what you feel has been your greatest accomplishment so far.
- What are your professional goals?
- Tell me about a project you worked on where you were especially proud of what you accomplished.
- Describe a time when stress had an impact on your ability to accomplish a goal?
- How do you respond to failure?
- Describe a time that you were faced with a failure and how you dealt with it.
- What is your greatest failure, and what did you learn from it?
- Tell me about a major accomplishment that you are proud of and conversely something that has not gone well.
- Give me an example of a time when you tried to accomplish something and failed.

Analytical Thinking

- Give me an example of a project that you've done that involved heavy analytical thinking.
- Describe a situation where you have had to use data to come to a solution?
- How do you measure the success of your work?
- How do you balance your reliance on facts versus intuition?
- Are you analytical? Give me one example of your analytical ability.
- Describe a project or situation where you demonstrated your analytical abilities.
- Describe a time when you were proud of your ability to use your mathematical knowledge or research techniques to solve a problem.
- Enumerate the analytical tools with which you feel competent, then give me an example from any time in your working history which shows your ability to use analytical techniques to define problems or design solutions.
- Give me an example of any time when you used tools such as survey data, library research or statistics as important contributors to definition of a specific problem.
- How would you rate your analytical ability? And why?

- Please describe an example of a time when you perceived an opportunity using your analytical skills which others were not been able to see.
- Solving a problem often necessitates evaluation of alternate solutions. Give me an example of a time when you actively defined several solutions to a single problem. Did you use any tools such as research, brainstorming, or mathematics?
- Tell me about a problem that you analyzed and your recommendation.
- Tell me about a time when you were systematic in identifying potential problems at work. Feel free to showcase your analytical skills.
- Tell me about a time when your analysis was incorrect. What would you have done differently?
- Tell me about your analytical skills.
- Thinking back over the last five years of your work, describe a situation in which you had to use mathematics to solve a complex problem. Take your time, remember a good example, and tell me all about it in detail.
- To what extent has your past work required you to be skilled in the analysis of technical reports or information? Pick any specific experience which would highlight your skills in this area and describe it in detail.
- What steps do you take when analyzing complex problems?
- What was your greatest success in using the principles of logic to solve technical problems at work? Be specific.
- What would your teachers/fellow students say about your critical thinking or analytical skills?
- Tell me about a time where you used analytical skills to solve a problem.
- Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
- What is the most complex analytical project you have completed, either as a student or as a professional?

Creativity

- Describe a situation where you came up with a creative solution to a problem.
- Describe a time when you've creatively overcome an obstacle.
- Give me an example of an issue that you had to address and your resolution of that issue.
- Give me one example of your creativity.
- How resourceful are you?
- Tell me about a time when your first solution did not resolve an issue. What did you do?
- Tell me about one of your most creative moments, personal or professional.
- Walk me through your process of solving an issue or problem.
- What books do you keep on your desk?
- What is the most creative project that you have ever worked on?
- Why do you think some companies with good products fail?
- Give me an example of how you have used your creativity to solve a problem on the job?
- Tell me about a time when you were creative in solving a problem.
- Tell me about the most creative project you have worked on.
- Tell me about a time when you had to think outside of the box in order to solve a problem.
- Describe a time when you saw a problem as a potential opportunity- What did you do?
- What inspires you to be creative?

Critical Thinking

- Describe a situation where you had to work with ambiguity. How did you deal with the situation and what was the result?
- Describe an instance when you had to think on your feet to get yourself out of a difficult situation.
- How do you set targets? How do you quantify and measure the outcomes?
- Provide an example of how you have successfully used a network within an organization.
- Tell us about the most complex project you have undertaken. Walk us through the process.
- What do you think are the two or three most important challenges facing society over the next two decades?
- How do you balance your reliance on facts versus intuition?
- Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
- What are the steps you take to anticipate and evaluate risks?

Decision Making

- Give me an example of your ability to make decisions under pressure.
- How would you rate a job that would constantly require you to make decisions?
- Tell me about the best decision you've made on the job.
- Tell me about the worst decision you've made on the job.
- What decisions are the easiest for you to make and which ones are the most difficult?
- What items of information do you typically need before you make a decision?
- What kind of decisions do you make in your current position?
- What steps are involved in making a decision?
- Describe an instance when you had to think on your feet to get yourself out of a difficult situation.
- Give an example of a time when you had to deal with frequent organizational changes or unexpected events on the job.
- Tell me about a situation where you had to make a decision without much information.
- Tell me about a time when you missed an obvious solution to a problem. What did you do once you discovered this?
- Tell me about an experience in which you had to make a difficult decision.
- What was the most challenging or riskiest decision you have made?
- Describe an example of a time when you had more than one manager and how you prioritized competing tasks.
- Tell me about a time when you were forced to make an unpopular decision.
- Give an example of a time in which you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision
- Describe a situation in which you had to draw a conclusion quickly and take speedy action.
- Tell me about a situation in which you found it important to 'take a stand' and be decisive on an issue of health/safety/human welfare.
- Describe a time when you had to commit to a plan of action in an emergency. Give me the details of the situation and tell me how long it took you to take action.
- Describe a time when you were under pressure to make an immediate decision (perhaps without the aid of a supervisor or a manager). Did you take action immediately or were you more deliberate and slow?
- Tell me about a situation when you had to 'stand up' for a decision you made even though it made you unpopular.

- Describe a situation in which you had to take immediate action in a crisis involving human life or severe financial consequences.
- Many times it is important to be hard headed about a decision you are making, particularly when others don't like it. Give me an example of a time when you stuck by a decision even though it was under attack by others.
- It is pretty realistic to say that no job is a complete 'bed of roses'. Tell me about a time when you were able to express your opinions maturely in spite of disagreements or objections.
- Your client or supervisor tells you to do something in a way that you know is ineffective. What would you do?
- Tell me about a time when you had a conflict to resolve and how you resolved it. Would you have done anything differently?
- How do you go about making important decisions? Give an example.
- Tell me about a difficult decision you've made in the last year. What process do you use to make difficult decisions?
- Sometimes we have to make decisions within a given time frame. Can you tell me about a time you needed to make a decision before you wanted to and what did you do?
- Describe a time when you delayed making a decision or stating an opinion because you had insufficient information to act.
- Please describe a situation in which you were required to make a decision in a short amount of time.
- Give details about a time when you included input from others to reach a decision.
- If I were your supervisor and asked you to do something you didn't agree with, what would you do?
- Tell me about a time you made a mistake on the job? How did you handle it?
- What's the most difficult decision you've made in the last two years and how did you come to that decision?
- Please can you give me an example of a decision you've made that has backfired?

Diversity and Culture

- How do you balance work and home life?
- How would your co-workers describe you?
- How would your friends describe you?
- How would your supervisor describe you?
- How would your teammates describe you?
- If two managers were discussing you, what would they be saying?
- Why do you want to work in this city?
- How do you facilitate cross-cultural workshops?
- Would you feel comfortable and confident working in a bilingual environment?
- Tell me about a time when you had to develop rapport quickly with someone.
- Tell me about your diversity experience
- Describe an ethical dilemma you faced at work?
- Give a specific example of how you have helped create an environment where differences are valued, encouraged and supported.
- Tell us about a time that you successfully adapted to a culturally different environment.
- Tell us about a time when you had to adapt to a wide variety of people by accepting/understanding their perspective.

- Tell us about a time when you made an intentional effort to get to know someone from another culture.
- What have you done to further your knowledge/understanding about diversity?
- What have you done to support diversity in your previous employment?
- What measures have you taken to make someone feel comfortable in an environment that was obviously uncomfortable with his or her presence?
- There is increasing diversity in the workplace (e.g. races, sexual orientation, disabilities). What are the benefits and challenges to this?
- How would your experiences help you with this job?
- Describe your experience working with people of a race and/or sexual orientation different from yours

Leadership

- How do you motivate subordinates?
- Tell me about a situation at work in which you led a team well.
- Tell me about a time when you mentored someone.
- What leader do you most admire and why?
- What was your most significant leadership experience?
- Are Leaders born or made? And why?
- Describe a time when you had to alter your leadership style.
- Describe the characteristics of someone who is not a good leader.
- Describe the difference between Leaders and Managers.
- Describe the situations in which you are most comfortable as a leader.
- How would you describe your leadership style?
- In your opinion, what are the characteristics of a strong leader?
- Tell me about a good process that you have made even better.
- Tell me about a time when you have persuaded others to adopt your ideas.
- Tell me about a time when you were in a leadership position.
- Think about someone you know who is a good leader. What did they do to demonstrate their leadership abilities?
- Describe your comfort level while working with people of higher rank.
- Discuss the different styles of leadership.
- Name some of the circumstances under which a leader will fail.
- Tell us about a situation in which you've demonstrated your leadership ability.
- What have you done to develop your leadership skills?
- What is the importance of leadership in the organization?
- What is your strongest leadership skill and how will it assist you for this job?
- What personal qualities should a leader have?
- What role does leadership play for a supervisor or manager?
- How have you resolved difficult situations in the past by taking on a leadership role?
- What are the two most important values you demonstrate as a leader? Please tell me about a time where you have demonstrated both of these leadership values in practice.
- Please share your definition of leadership.
- Have you ever been in a leadership role? Explain

- What went well during an event or job that you were the leader of? What didn't go so well during an event or job that you were the leader of?
- Tell me about a time when you convinced others to use your ideas.
- Give an example of a time when you had to manage a significant change?
- Tell us about a time when you contributed a creative idea or concept to a team effort?
- Tell me about a time when you delegated a project effectively?
- Give me an example of a time when you had to be assertive in giving directions to others.
- Tell me about a time when your job required you to say, maturely, how you really felt about a situation. What did you say and how did you say it?
- Sometimes it is important to disagree with others, particularly your boss, in order to keep a mistake from being made. Tell me about a time when you were willing to disagree with another person in order to build a positive outcome.
- Describe a time when you communicated something unpleasant or difficult to say to your manager. How did you assert yourself?
- Describe a time when you had to 'sell' an idea to your boss, superior, or other authority figure.
- Some of the best business ideas are born out of an individual's ability to challenge, maturely, others' ways of thinking. Tell me about a time when you were successful in challenging others' ideas. What does this say about your ability to be assertive?
- What is your definition of leadership and what are the characteristics of a great leader?
- What have you learned about leadership in your extracurricular activities?
- What is the difference between management and leadership, and what makes a good leader?
- Are you a leader or a follower? Why?
- How have you resolved difficult situations in the past by taking on a leadership role? Tell me about your market research experience.
- What experiences of leadership have you had - describe those for me.
- How would you define 'success' for someone in your chosen field?
- What is your most important accomplishment?
- What leadership roles have you held?
- Provide us with an example of your leadership ability.
- What are the pros and cons of your leadership style and why?
- Describe the most outstanding leader you have worked with and how you are similar to that person. How are you different?
- Describe a project at work that you co-managed. What were the challenges? What was the outcome?
- Describe an instance when you had to challenge the group consensus. How did you approach the group? What was the outcome?
- What is the most significant change you have brought about in an organization?
- When leading a team, what do you do to make sure everyone is contributing?
- Describe an occasion when you put forth effort beyond what was expected.
- Tell me about when you took on a project and did more than what was expected.
- Describe an occasion in which you had to speak up and be assertive on a specific matter in order to express your opinion on something that you felt was important.
- Describe a time that you had difficulty influencing others to accept an idea. What approach did you take? Were you successful?
- What was the last project you headed up, and what was the outcome?

- Can you describe a time when your work was criticized?
- What irritates you about other people? How do you handle it?
- How would you go about establishing your credibility quickly with a team?
- Give me an example of a time when you have failed to make the necessary impact and why?
- How would your manager or subordinates describe you?
- Tell me about a time when you went beyond what was expected of you.
- Describe a situation where you had difficulty persuading someone around to your point of view.
- Give examples of how you have demonstrated leadership inside and outside the work environment.
- Tell me about a time you had to convince someone to do something they did not want to do.
- How do you define leadership? Now using that definition, give an example of a time when you were a leader.
- Give an example of a time when you showed initiative and took the lead on a problem.
- Tell me about a time when you missed an obvious solution to a problem.
- Why did you decide to be a Leadership Mentor?
- What does servant leadership mean to you?
- How do you intend to work on these competencies and growth areas in the future?
- Think of people in your life whom you consider to be really great leaders. What qualities do these people have? How do they make you feel when you work or interact with them?
- What did you learn about your own strengths and challenges during your leadership experience?
- Define in your own words system leadership and what specific role you see yourself playing within that context.

Problem-Solving

- How do you approach problem solving? Making decisions?
- Provide an example of how you've used creativity and analytical skills to solve a problem.
- Tell me about a situation at work in which you experienced conflict and how you resolved it.
- Tell me about a time when you solved an important problem in the workplace.
- Describe a time when you found it necessary to make an unpopular decision.
- Give me an example of a situation that was brought to your attention. What did you do?
- Give me an example of an unpleasant situation and tell me the issue that caused that unpleasant situation.
- How do you usually go about solving a problem?
- How have your technical skills been an asset?
- Provide me with an example of your problem-solving ability.
- Tell me about a recent problem you encountered and how you came to the solution.
- Walk me through your information and fact gathering methodology.
- What are the essential elements of effective problem solving?
- When do you have difficulty making decisions?
- Tell me about a situation in which you were required to analyze and solve a complex problem.
- What are the benefits of collaborative problem solving?
- Your supervisor left an assignment in your inbox regarding a project your coworker recorded during the week. You do not understand the assignment and your boss is out of the country and cannot be reached. What would you do?
- How have you helped others deal with a stressful situation?

- Give an example of a problem, which you faced on any job you have had (or in school) and tell how you went about solving it
- Tell me about a time when you had to solve a difficult problem - what was your thought process and the outcome?
- Explain how you typically address work problems. What steps do you use? Provide a specific example.
- Tell me about a situation in which you were faced with a problem and had no guidelines or resources to follow. How did you solve the problem?
- Give me an example of a time when you used your fact-finding skills to solve a problem.
- Describe a conflict with a boss or professor and explain how you worked to resolve it.
- How do you handle problems with peers? Please give an example.
- Tell me about a situation at work in which you experienced conflict and how you resolved it.
- Tell me about a time when you dealt with a difficult customer or client. What was the situation, how did you handle it, and what was the result?
- How would you communicate a concern to your supervisor?
- How do you effectively communicate with others?
- How do you handle difficult people?
- How do you deal with conflict?
- Describe an experience where you were able to work with a group to produce creative solutions and what role you took in that process.
- Provide a specific instance where conflict occurred (on the job, in a team, etc.). How do you deal with it? What was the outcome?

Management

- Tell me about any extra-curricular involvement you are currently doing and/or have past experience or future goals for.
- Can you tell me about a time when you disagreed with a manager?
- Describe a failed project you have been involved with at work, and explain why it was not successful.
- Describe a time when you acted on someone's suggestion.
- Describe an example of your ability to listen and be responsive.
- Describe your management style in dealing with staff or co-workers.
- Describe your strategies for organization and handling multiple projects?
- Explain, step by step, how you would handle an employee with performance issues.
- Have you had direct supervisory experience? If so, how would you describe your performance as a manager?
- How are you able to manage multiple projects and assignments at the same time? Give an example.
- How do you help ensure that your employees meet project deadlines?
- How do you manage your time on a typical day?
- How do you organize and plan for major projects?
- How do you respond to an employee who is underperforming?
- How have you participated in planning processes?
- How would you handle an employee who is a consistent behavioral problem?
- Tell me about a learning experience that affected your management style.
- Tell me about a past situation in which you had project constraints and how you managed them.
- Tell me about a time when you delegated a project effectively.

- Tell me about an important assignment or task that you delegated and how you ensured it was completed.
- Think of someone you enjoyed working for. Describe that person's management style.
- What aspect of your management style would you like to change?
- What characteristics do good managers possess?
- What is the toughest aspect of managing people?
- What kind of work environment do you strive to create?
- What makes a good manager in this field?
- What management style do you enjoy working for? And why?
- What personal characteristics add to your effectiveness?
- What type of management style do you think is effective?
- Who is your role model and why?
- Why do you think a team of people - sports team, work team, may not work well together?
- Tell me about a time when you were working on multiple projects that had conflicting deadlines.
- You have three line managers (top internal clients of yours), each of whom has what they consider a top project requiring your time. What do you do?
- What are your strengths or weaknesses? Give three adjectives that describe you.
- Tell me about your management experience.
- Tell me about your client management experiences.
- Describe a situation where you had to work with ambiguity. How did you deal with the situation and what was the result?
- Give me an example of a time you creatively solved a problem.
- What do you consider our mission to be?
- What do you think will be the toughest part of this job?
- What makes you unique from all the other candidates? Why should we pick you for the position?
- What was your most significant leadership experience?
- Are you more of a leader or a manager?
- What has been the most difficult decision you have had to make as a manager?
- What strategic issues would you want to tackle if you were running a company in your chosen field?
- How do you try to influence people who disagree with you?
- Describe how you handled the most challenging experience you faced in persuading others to see things your way.
- What do you do to help your colleagues or peers perform at the best of their abilities?
- How do you create accountability and create a strong team?
- How have your job responsibilities evolved since you joined your present employer?
- How do you balance company interest and the interest of clients?
- Describe any previous management experience where you were a supervisor?
- Describe a situation where you evaluated a process and what efficiencies did you discover.
- What milestones, data, and metrics do you use to monitor the success of your projects or team?
- Describe a time when you have successfully empowered a team to achieve a business goal.
- Tell me about the toughest business decision you have taken in the last year.
- Give me an example of where you have managed a major project through to successful completion.
- How would you describe your management style - provide examples from your current or most recent employer that demonstrates this style.

- How do you define success? Now using that definition, give an example of a time when you were successful.
- What's your greatest criticism of your last job environment?
- What did you like the least about your last boss?
- How do you feel about working for a woman?
- Name the workplace mistake from which you learned the most.
- When you have difficulty persuading someone to your point of view, what do you do? Give an example.
- How have you adjusted your style when it was not meeting the objectives and/or people were not responding correctly?
- Have you ever had a subordinate whose performance was consistently marginal? What did you do?
- Tell me about a time when you delegated a project effectively.
- Describe a time when you anticipated a potential problem and developed preventive measures to address the problem.
- Tell me about a time when you saw something inefficient. What was the situation and how would you have done it more efficiently?
- What business outcomes can you drive that will strengthen our bottom line?
- How will you adapt to a professional environment where your seniors and peers may be younger than you and some of your subordinates may be older than you? ,
- How would you say your management style has evolved over time?
- Discuss a time in your professional career when you did an analysis and the outcome surprised you.
- Give me an example of something in the last two years that didn't go well. What did you learn from this experience?

Research

- How have you gone about ensuring accuracy and consistency in a document of data you were preparing? Tell me about a specific case in which your attention to detail paid off.
- What has participating in undergraduate research taught you?
- Do you have any experience in collecting data and conducting surveys?
- Have you done any fieldwork or lab work?
- Describe the different experiments or projects you have had to do in a lab or classroom. Have you had to trouble shoot?
- Describe a situation where it was difficult to obtain data or information to make an informed decision and how did you overcome this?
- Describe the last time you worked on a project that involved complex information or data.
- How would you carry out a research project?
- Give an example of how you applied quantitative or qualitative research and evaluation methods for data collection and analysis.
- Can you give me an example of a time when you conducted a research project, and how you prepared and reported the results?

Teamwork

- Describe a team experience that did not work well. How did you handle it?
- Give an example of your involvement in a team that was less than successful. What could you have done differently to make it more successful?

- Give me an example of a teamwork experience you enjoyed. One that you didn't.
- Have you ever been in a situation where a team member was not holding up his or her end of the project? What happened?
- How do you define success in a team project?
- Tell me about a well-functioning team that you were on. Why do you think the team worked so well together?
- Tell me about your last experience working in a team and what role you played.
- Tell me the advantages & disadvantages of teamwork.
- What did you do in your last position to contribute toward team success?
- What qualities do you admire most in fellow team members?
- Do you work better by yourself or as part of a team?
- If I were to ask your team members to give me feedback about your deliverables what would they say?
- Tell me about a successful team of which you were a member.
- Tell me about a team project that didn't go well. What happened? And tell me why it didn't go well.
- Tell me about a team project you worked on. And what was your role?
- What are the characteristics of a successful team?
- What are the important qualities a person should have in order to become an effective team member?
- What can you contribute to establish a positive work environment for a team?
- What qualities do you have that make you an effective team player?
- What type of people do you work best with?
- While working on a team project, what did you learn about teamwork?
- Tell me about a time when you had to work in a team; what role did you take?
- Tell me about a time when you had to convince a group of people of something which you yourself did not agree with.
- Do you prefer to work independently or in a group? Why? Give an example when you were in a group that did not work well, how did you overcome this difficulty?
- How well do you work with others? Would you consider yourself competitive?
- If you do not get along with someone on your team, how do you handle the situation?
- Describe a project, assignment or task you worked on as part of a team that was not as successful as you had hoped it would be.
- Describe a project, assignment or task you worked on as part of a team that had a successful result.
- Tell me about a time when you were working in a team and played a key role in coming up with a creative idea. What happened, and what was the result?
- Tell me about a time when you helped a team of coworkers achieve an important goal. What did you do to help the team achieve the goal? What was the result?
- Tell us about a time when you had to work on a team project or assignment
- Describe to me how you have made an impact in a team environment.
- What did you do in your last job to contribute toward a teamwork environment? Be specific
- Give us example of a time when you had to work with a team of people and that team was not functioning very well together. What did you do?
- Describe a situation where you have had to work as part of a team? To achieve a result? What was your role in this?

- Some people prefer to work in teams while others prefer to work autonomously. What is your preference? Give an example of a time when you were most effective working in your preferred mode of operation.
- How well do you work as part of a team?
- Tell me about a time when you had a customer conflict and how you resolved it positively for the customer?
- Tell me about a time when you thought you knew how to handle a situation, yet chose to solicit opinions from other team members.
- How would you get people who aren't working together well to establish a common approach?
- Can you explain how you were able to interact as a multidisciplinary team member?
- Tell me about a time when you were working in a team and played a key role in coming up with a creative idea. What happened, and what was the result?
- Describe a time in which you felt it was necessary to modify or change your actions in order to respond to the needs of others?
- In what kinds of situations do you find it difficult to deal with people?
- Tell me about your experience in dealing with a variety of different people.
- Tell me about your experience in working with volunteers.
- What has been your experience in working with community organizations?
- Provide an example of how you've used creativity and analytical skills to solve a problem.
- What type of role do you play on a team?
- Tell me about a situation at work in which you experienced conflict and how you resolved it.
- Tell me about a time when you used creativity to solve a design problem.
- Tell me what you have found to be the major obstacles to effective teamwork.
- Tell me about a time when you helped someone else succeed.
- When working as a member of a team, has there been a time when some members of the team were unable to work together? How did you address the situation?
- Was there a time that you recall selling one of your ideas to a group or a team? What approach did you attempt? Did you close the sale?
- Explain how you identify the needs and values of another person and how you develop an understanding of their interests.
- Describe how you handled a difficult or frustrating person with whom you had to work.
- Would you characterize yourself as a team player? Give me an example.
- What's your traditional role in group work? Does it change?
- Talk about your first memory of being a part of a group. What do you remember most about this experience?
- Talk about an experience you have had collaborating with other people on a project. What did you enjoy about this experience? What was challenging for you?
- Tell me about your experience working in a team. What were your goals as a team and how did you accomplish these goals? Was there anything you would have changed about how you worked together?
- What is your experience leading groups?