

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. COPING: Able to maintain a mature problem solving attitude while dealing with interpersonal conflict, hazardous conditions, personal rejection, hostility, or time demands.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
Tell me about a time when you had to cope with strict deadlines or time demands. Give me an example.	Discover if the individual overreacted or withdrew from demanding work. Will the success or failure in coping generalize to another job?
Give me an example of a time at work when you had to deal with unreasonable expectations of you. What parts of your behavior were mature and immature?	Determine the extent to which the candidate was realistic in identifying unreasonable expectations. Did the candidate overreact to rejection, conflict, authority figures or criticism? Was there evidence of high self control?
When have you had to cope with the anger or hostility of another person? Be specific.	Was the individual difficult to provoke and mature or was there evidence of antagonism or defensiveness? How long did it take for the candidate to rebound from any reaction?
It is not unusual to be in a setting at work that will be physically demanding or hazardous. Tell me about a time when you were able to do a job in spite of conditions.	Discover if the candidate has had experience working with difficult conditions. To what extent were the conditions REALLY hazardous or physically demanding? Did the candidate use REALISTIC solutions when under a clear threat?
Sooner or later we all deal with interpersonal conflict or personal rejection at work. Give me an example of a time when you had to cope with these demands.	Was there evidence for a mature problem solving attitude? Did the candidate become more aggressive, or withdrawing?
Tell me about a high stress situation when it was desirable for you to keep a positive attitude. What happened?	Did the individual maintain a problem solving attitude when experiencing the pressure or was there evidence of defensiveness, self-doubt, sensitivity or a quick temper?
Describe a high pressure situation you had to handle at work. Tell me what happened, who was involved, and what you did in terms of problem solving.	Did the candidate become part of the problem or part of the solution? Was there evidence of maturity, ability to learn and emotional control- or was there overreaction, self doubt or impatience?
Give me an example of a time when another person really tried your patience. Specifically, talk about a time when you were angry or frustrated and felt like attacking the other person.	Did the response provide evidence for restraint under a difficult situation? Was the candidate difficult to provoke and reasonably mature, or was there evidence of overreaction, hostility or a quick temper?

2. TOLERANCE OF AMBIGUITY: Able to withhold actions or speech in the absence of important information, deal with unresolved, frequent change, delays of unexpected events.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
An old proverb says “Silence is Golden”. Describe a time in your life when you were proud of your ability to postpone your comments until you had all the facts necessary for a good response to a situation.	Was the individual able to tolerate a situation and restrain comment? Was the candidate prone to jump to a conclusion and be too quick in speaking up? Was the individual creative in postponing comments?
Give me an example of a time at work when you had to deal with frequent job changes or unexpected events on the job. What does this situation say about your ability to work in an ambiguous or unstructured circumstance	Was the individual comfortable with the lack of structure and able to manage delay and ambiguity patiently- or was there a need to seek closure, jump to conclusions, or speak up too quickly?
What has been your experience working with conflicting, delayed, or ambiguous information? What did you do to make the most of the situation?	Is there evidence of an ability to deal with imperfect situations? Can the individual operate without a plan or structured agenda with some degree of comfort? Does the person NEED a predictable, structured, working environment?
Sometimes it is necessary to work in unsettled or rapidly changing circumstances. When have you found yourself in this position? Tell me exactly what you did.	Consider the individual’s preference for structure as opposed to non-structured work. Probe for flexibility in working in an unstructured situation.
When has it been necessary for you to tolerate an ambiguous situation at work? Give me the details of the duration and intensity of the circumstance.	What sort of emotional reaction did the candidate have to the ambiguous situation? Was there a NEED to press for an immediate resolution or were there feelings of discomfort or anxiety?
People differ in the preference for jobs which have well laid out tasks and responsibilities or ones which work changes frequently. Tell me about a time when you were successful in dealing with an unstructured work environment.	Did the candidate have positive feelings about the opportunity and flexibility offered by an unstructured job? Or did the candidate feel anxious or confused over what to do?
Sooner or later we all find ourselves in the position of having to live with an unresolved situation on the job. Tell me about a time when this happened to you.	Look for the ability to postpone action even when frustrated. Could the individual be philosophical and reasonable when having to deal with long-standing problems?
When have you been most proud of your ability to wait for important information before taking action in solving a problem? How did the waiting affect you?	Observe how the delay affected the individual. Was there evidence of maturity and patience or was there a tendency to move too quickly or feel discomfort?

3. **DECISIVENESS:** Able to make decisions quickly on available information and take action, make commitments and not change decisions when challenged, deal with emergencies as necessary.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
Describe a situation in which you had to draw a conclusion quickly and take speedy action.	Was the individual able to take quick action based on available information or was there a tendency to vacillate or postpone the decision?
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.	Did the individual exhibit a strength of conviction or resoluteness that resulted in standing firm? Did the decision reflect good judgment and reasonableness or was the individual simply being ‘hard-headed’?
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.	Pay attention to the individual’s ability to make a good decision even when under stress. Was there a tendency to hesitate or doubt the correctness of the plan of action?
Describe a time when you were under pressure to make an immediate decision (perhaps without the aids of a supervisor or manager). Did you take action IMMEDIATELY or were you more DELIBERATE and slow?	How effective was the candidate in making a decision without support or guidance from others? Was there the ability to show confidence and good judgment when information was lacking?
Tell me about a situation when you had to ‘stand up’ for a decision you made even though it made you unpopular.	Did the candidate show the ability to resist conforming to the expectations of others while using good judgment in making a ‘tough’ decision? Was there evidence of firmness and integrity without succumbing to popular opinion?
Describe a situation in which you had to take immediate action in a crisis involving human life or severe financial consequences.	Consider if the individual was impulsive in coming to a decision or was there a tendency to OVERANALYZE options and delay an immediate decision? Was the candidate TIMELY and EFFECTIVE in making the decision?
Many situations at work will require fast thinking and speed in making decisions. Give me an example of a situation in which you were especially skillful in making a decision quickly.	Look for the ability to make a quick decision based on available information. Did the candidate vacillate, appear confused, or postpone a necessary decision?
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.	Consider evidence of an ability to resist group pressure and commit to a plan of action. Did the candidate provide evidence of integrity and clear awareness of important values without being dogmatic?

4. **ASSERTIVENESS:** Able to maturely express one’s feelings and opinions in spite of disagreement, accurately communicate to others regardless of their status or position.

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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.	Observe if the individual felt free to speak up while avoiding feelings of intimidation. Was there evidence of good conflict management while handling disagreement in a constructive manner? Probe for a tendency to withdraw.
Give me an example of a time when you had to be assertive in giving directions to others.	Evaluate the candidate’s ability to speak up in a clear, direct manner. Question the ability to communicate with authority figures, hostile people of manipulative personalities.
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?	Observe whether the candidate showed social maturity and an ability to deal with feelings maturely and constructively. Notice if there was a tendency to feel intimidation, be too ‘nice’, or too ‘pushy’.
Some situations require us to express ideas/opinions in a very tactful and careful way. Tell me about a time when you were successful with this particular skill.	Listen for the ability to build a COMMUNICATION STRATEGY that is sensitive to others’ likes and dislikes. Was skill shown in communicating DIRECTLY while preserving others’ feeling? Was it an HONEST communication?
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.	Notice the ability to express opinions and persons in positions of authority. Discover if there was a fear of self-expression or was there a willingness to speak up in a mature way.
Describe a time when you communicated something unpleasant or difficult to say to your manager. How did you assert yourself?	Observe if the candidate was timely and accurate with the communication. Was there a hesitation to speak up because of feeling intimidated? Notice if there was skill in managing guilt, hostility, or fear.
Describe a time when you had to ‘sell’ an idea to your boss, superior, or other authority figure.	Look for the ability to be forthright and accurate even when communicating with a skeptical authority figure. Did the example show skill in dealing with objections and gaining acceptance? Was fear successfully managed?
Some of the best business ideas are born out of an individual’s ability to challenge, maturely, others’ way 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?	Look for the ability to persuade another to put aside ingrained way of thinking in order to build openness to change. Seek evidence for the use of TACT and PERSISTENCE rather than ABRASIVENESS to UNFREEZE old ways of thinking.

5. ENERGIZING: Able to create positive energy (motivation) in both individuals and groups.

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Give me an example of a time when your positive attitude caused others to be motivated or energized.	Look for such things as the ability to be a role model for others to emulate, to coach others to attitude improvement, to build excitement into work. Was a positive attitude present during the interview?
Give me a specific example of something you did which helped build enthusiasm in others.	Did the enthusiasm only lead to positive feelings or did it produce results? Evaluate whether the candidate was the significant contributor to the group enthusiasm. Determine whether the enthusiasm was enduring.
Tell me about a specific time when your ability to reward and encourage others created positive motivation.	Observe whether the candidate achieved the motivation through charisma, skillful use of rewards, or coaching skills. Determine if the candidate understands how different rewards apply to different people.
Tell me about a time when you showed high enthusiasm and energy in order to create positive motivation in others. Give me a specific example.	Observe the individual's method of responding. Was there evidence of enthusiasm and energy? Pay particular attention to the specific results associated with energy/enthusiasm. Did energizing change behavior or get results?
What kinds of experiences have you had in using prizes, contests, or financial rewards to motivate others? How do you evaluate the success of these techniques in general? How successful were you in a specific case?	Observe if the individual was careful in creating incentives that matched the needs of persons to be motivated. Determine whether the candidate distinguishes between 'give away' incentives and 'earned rewards'.
Pick an event from the last five years of your life in which you were an example of high motivation for other people to follow. Being specific, tell me about the event.	Notice if the example of motivation was a short term burst of energy or more of a long term behavior pattern. Was the individual truly motivational because of his/her actions or only exhibiting enthusiasm without motivating others?
Tell me about a time in which you used competition successfully as a means of encouraging others to try hard.	Was the individual instrumental in developing separate teams to compete or were individuals encouraged to compete with each other? Did the competition become counterproductive by overemphasizing winning rather than achievement of goals?
At work it is sometimes desirable to use recognition to build motivation in others. Describe a time in which you were able to use recognition to create positive energy in another person/	Observe if the candidate was successful in identifying the type of person for whom recognition is important. Was a distinction made between group and individual recognition? Did the recognition lead to higher performance?

6. POLICY AND PROCEDURES: Able to relate to routine operations in a manner that is consistent with existing solutions to problems, conform to establish policies and procedures, log work activities.

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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.	Observe if the individual felt free to speak up while avoiding feelings of intimidation. Was there evidence of good conflict management while handling disagreement in a constructive manner? Probe for a tendency to withdraw.
Tell me about your experiences in logging (documenting) your work activities in a written form. Be specific.	Did the individual adapt to the stated needs to document work? Did the example provide information on a commitment to be thorough and detailed in logging work activities, or did it seem that he/she only complied with the requirement?
On some jobs it is sometimes necessary to act strictly in accordance with policy. Give me an example out of your background when you were expected to act in accordance with policy even when it was not convenient. What did you do?	Observe if the example shows whether the candidate did, in fact, conform with policy when it was not convenient. Did the candidate demonstrate maturity and willingness to conform in the example?
When have you found it necessary to use detailed checklists/procedures to reduce potential for error on the job? Be specific.	Observe if the individual is aware of how checklists/procedures can reduce error. Also, determine if the candidate has had a rewarding experience in using procedures to make work more accurate/effective.
Describe a time when you had to adopt a well-defined work routine. How long did the situation last? What was involved?	Observe if the individual was able to manage work routine effectively. Was there an unusual need for change which led to the breaking of policy and procedures- or- did he/she commit to policy and procedures despite the routine?
Select a job you have had and describe the paperwork you were required to complete. What specific things did you do to ensure your accuracy?	Evaluate the candidate's actual experience in completing paperwork; to what extent does the completion reflect conformity to policy and procedures?
Many positions have well-established, standard methods to help you on the job. Give me an example of a time when you found a systematic method for solving work problems to be a good routine to follow. Be specific.	Observe if the individual can relate a systematic approach to problem solving. Was the individual able to describe how policies and procedures could be effective in working in hazardous environments or were unusual risk levels involved?
What types of experience have you have you had in managing situations that involve human health/human welfare or severe financial outcomes? Detail, as much as possible, the way in which you used policy and procedures to ensure your job effectiveness.	Determine the individual's actual level of experience in following procedures and the extent to which this meshes with actual requirements of the job in question. Notice how he/she managed risk. Was blind commitment or good judgment used?

7. ALERTNESS: Able to be attentive to all aspects of the environment while working, to monitor environment during routine activity.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
Tell me about a specific experience you have had in which it was necessary for you to react quickly because of a change in the physical environment.	Notice the extent to which the individual's actions reflect alertness. Did any part of the answer suggest a tendency to be distracted or daydream?
What have been your experiences in reading dials, gages, or instruments in order to take critical readings on your job? Tell me about a time when your alertness helped you avoid making a significant mistake.	Evaluate the candidate's level of experience in using instrument to monitor the environment. Determine the extent to which the candidate's answer showed ability to pay close attention to reading even in boring, routine activity.
Identify a time when you were able to avoid a problem by using your ability to pay close attention when operating vehicles, equipment or machinery.	To what extent does the response provide evidence for an ability to be alert to the working environment? Does the answer suggest a tendency to be bored with routine, leading to accident proneness? How did he/she manage distractions?
In our type of work, it is very important to notice changes in the physical environment. Tell me about a time when you were proudest of your ability to not only NOTICE environmental changes but also TAKE ACTION to make your attentiveness pay off.	Does the answer reflect a genuine awareness of a change from a 'steady state' in the environment to a significant change? To what extent does the candidate's answer show good attentiveness despite distractions or irrelevant details?
Select an experience from your past which illustrates your ability to be watchful and alert when monitoring displays, instruments, or processes. Tell me, in detail, what happened.	Does the answer reflect an ability to pay close attention, despite boredom or a distracting environment? Did the individual recognize and fight against a tendency to daydream?
Give me an example of any time in the past when you were especially attentive to your environment while working. Feel free to showcase your skills in being alert while on the job.	Did the answer show more than recognition of the importance of alertness? Did the answer give information that related to attentiveness to key detail and ability to avoid distraction OR, on the other hand, a tendency to daydream?
Tell me about an experience you have had in hazardous conditions when your alertness paid off in saving you from a bad outcome.	Was the candidate's definition of hazardous conditions evidence for alertness? Did the answer reflect an ability to be alert when dealing with distractions, boredom, and repetition?
Tell me about your experience in dealing with routine work. What kinds of problems did you have to overcome in order to concentrate on the details of the job?	Was the candidate able to explain the degree to which concentration was important? What techniques were used to fight daydreaming, ignore distractions, and enhance alertness?

8. ANALYTICAL PROBLEM SOLVING: Able to use a systematic approach in solving problems through analysis of problem and evaluation of alternate solutions, use logic, mathematics, or other problem solving tools in data analysis or in generating solutions.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
Tell me about a time when you were systematic in identifying potential problems at work. Feel free to showcase your analytical skills.	Did the individual identify the problem while it was still manageable or had it reached the crisis level? To what extent did the example reflect a systematic approach?
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 about it in detail.	Determine the actual complexity of the problem as indicated by details of the example. Did the solution reflect analytical skills, ability to do logical trouble shooting, and the practice of questioning assumptions?
What was your greatest success in using the principles of logic to solve technical problems at work? Be specific.	Observe if the candidate can differentiate between logic and common sense decision making. To what extent are words such as deduction and inference used? Were tools such as computers or mathematics used as an aid in problem solving?
Describe a time when you were proud of your ability to use your mathematical knowledge or research techniques to solve a problem.	Did the individual mention specific mathematical formulas? To what extent were hypotheses, direct observations, and test of theory used?
Solving a problem often necessitates evaluation of alternate solutions. Dive 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?	Determine if the individual defined more than one solution for the problem. Were the solutions evaluated against predefined criteria? Did the selection of a solution reflect a systematic approach, analytical approach which anticipated problems?
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.	Observe if the individual has used more than casual reasoning in defining any problem. Does the candidate understand the importance of problem definition as indicated by his/her past experiences or was the solution methodology unstructured?
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.	Observe if the individual can define analytical techniques and tools, in terms of computer skills, mathematical skills, use of logic, laboratory techniques, or any methodology associated with the candidate's profession.
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.	Observe the level to which the individual was required to analyze technical information. Did the individual simply have to read a few professional articles or was detailed analysis and structured evaluation required?

9. GOAL SETTING: Able to define realistic, specific goals and objectives, to prioritize objectives.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
Tell me what you do in order to ensure that you have enough time set aside for goal setting- then review for me the specific times in which you have initiated your own goal setting over the last few years. What happened?	Notice if the individual has a daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annual time for setting goals. Be sure to note if there is an inability to mention a specific day or time allocation for goal setting, including long range goals.
In an aggressive working environment, it is often necessary to prioritize goals to be sure that effort is allocated appropriately. Tell me about the most important time in your working history when you prioritized your goals successfully.	Was prioritizing necessary- and if so, to what extent did establishing the priorities lead to good results? Did prioritization seem to be logical and efficient in terms of the objectives at hand?
Tell me about the system that you use for goal setting. To what extent does it involve using written objectives, paperwork or forms? Describe a specific instance in which you defined your goals and objectives in writing.	Could the individual define and elaborate, rather than set simple written goals? Observe if the importance of a systematic process is appreciated by the candidate. Does he/she believe in written goals, irrespective of other opinions?
What important target dates did you set to reach objectives on your last job? How did you set the dates? Exactly what were they, and what were your results?	Observe if the individual explains a logical basis for the target dates which were set. Could the individual refer to specific target dates and explain why they were essential in the overall sequence of steps necessary for attaining a goal?
Goal statements are often made to meet the expectations of others. Tell me about a time when you took the initiative to set goals and objectives, even though you were not prompted or directed by others to do so.	Evaluate the individual's commitment to set specific goals in the absence of expectations from others. Was the independent action taken in order to create goal statements?
What have been your experiences in defining long range goals? Tell me what specific goal was set, how it was set, and how successful you were in its achievement.	Observe if an individual defines long-term as being more than one year. Give extra value to the answer if the candidate can describe specific long range goals in a 5 or 10 year time frame. To what extent were the goals achieved?
Goal statements can be used to manage your own work activities since they enable you to guide day-to-day actions successfully. Describe an especially favorable experience you've had in using goals to guide your own actions.	Was a specific objective used as a basis for guiding behavior? Did the candidate seem happy to talk about this experience, because goal setting is an important part of his/her behavioral repertoire?
Give me an example of a time when you used a systematic process to define your objectives. What type of system did you use? What payoff did you get from using the process?	Did the candidate's response reflect belief in the importance of using a system for goal setting? Were brand names of commercially available systems mentioned? How well did the individual use the systematic process?

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION: Able to write clearly and effectively, present ideas, document activities; to read and interpret written information.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
Give me an example, taken from your experiences in report writing, preparation of memos, or general correspondence which illustrates the extent of your written communication skills.	Determine the individual's real experience level in preparing written information. Did the individual actually assume all responsibility for the writing, editing, syntax, etc., or was there help in the preparation? Was the writing creative?
In some jobs it is necessary to document work thoroughly, in writing. For example, documentation might be necessary to prove you did your job correctly or to train another person to do it. Give me an example of your experiences in this area.	Observe if the candidate showed true understanding of the importance of documentation for maintaining work records. Did the example provide evidence for more than an average amount of thoroughness in these duties?
Tell me about the most complex information you have had to read- perhaps involving research you had to complete. To what extent did this project test your communication skills and technical knowledge? Be specific.	Determine if the individual has had a significant level of experience in dealing with work-related reading. Evaluate the complexity of the task and the individual's comprehension skills.
This job will require you to spend a large amount of time writing. Tell me about your experiences that you think will contribute to your ability to do this job well.	Determine the individual's actual depth of experience in written information. Did the example provide evidence of some comfort with using written communications and did the writing experience seem to match the job?
Describe the most significant work experience you have had in which you had to use reference materials, library information, manuals, etc., to get a job done. How much time was required? How did the reference material help you most?	Look for experience in using more than simple manuals, spelling guides, etc. observe if the individual is capable of scanning reference sources and abstracting information important to the job.
In some positions it is necessary to be a thorough meticulous reader and in other situations, it is important for one to be able to scan through large amounts of information quickly. Describe your most significant scanning experiences.	Did the candidate provide specific references to numbers of magazines, newspapers, journals, etc. which are read on a regular basis? Was the individual able to cite specific documents scanned in the last few days?
How much reading of new information is required in your current job? How often do you have to expose yourself to new written communications? When did these skills cause you to be a superior performer?	Observe if the individual can provide evidence for superior reading skills. Did the type of material read suggest that the individual has good reading comprehension or was the material read simply forms, memos, etc.?
Describe your experiences in editing manuscripts, articles, documents, or any other form of written communication. Be specific.	Was the individual the actual author? Did the individual seem motivated to create or to supervise others in doing documentation? Was there evidence of good comprehension of abstract information or was it basic and straightforward?

11. COMMITMENT TO TASK: Able to start and persist with specific courses of action while exhibiting high motivation and a sense of urgency; willing to commit to long hours of work and make personal sacrifice in order to reach goals.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
Give me an example of a specific time in which you found it necessary to give long hours on the job. For example, tell me about the period when it was necessary to take work home, work on weekends, or maintain unusually long hours. Be specific.	Is the candidate proud of the commitment to get the job done or did he/she complain about the personal sacrifice? Did it appear that extra hours were required because of poor delegation or because of a dedication to excellence?
Tell me about a time when you were able to provide your own motivation to produce even though you were working alone. What were the circumstances of the situation and how did you manage to motivate yourself?	Was there more than a nine-to-five attitude demonstrated by the example given? Did the self-provided motivation indicate a willingness to accept demanding work conditions generally or was this an isolated incident?
Tell me about a time in your background when you were a driving, highly motivated worker. Don't be too modest- give yourself due credit for getting the job done.	Does the candidate's work history show well established work ethic and willingness to person regardless of the conditions? Was the motivation independent of special job incentives or was it an internalized value?
Some individuals have a strong sense of urgency about getting short term results-others are more 'laid back' and less driven in their approach to work. Give me an example of a time when you were either more 'laid back' or more 'urgent'.	Distinguish whether the individual is a TYPE A-STRESSED OUT person who is simply energetic or whether the person is energetic toward the attainment of an objective. Notice if the candidate is using a calm approach to excuse laziness.
Getting the job done may necessitate unusual persistence dedication to results especially when faced with obstacles or distractions. Tell me about a time in which you were able to be very persistent in order to reach goals. Be specific.	Discover if the candidate's persistence was a result of personal initiative or was it simply required by the job itself? Did the individual show self-discipline and high motivation over a period of high or months?
Tell me about a time at work when someone commented on your high or 'superior' level of task orientation. Feel free to brag on yourself.	Evaluate the degree to which the answer reflects a major accomplishment. On the one hand, the hard work might have taken MONTHS or YEARS to carry out; on the other hand, less importance is attached to a FEW HOURS of extraordinary work.
We both recognize that being successful takes more than luck. Hard work is necessary in order to achieve. Tell me about a time when you had to work very hard to reach your goals and be specific about what you achieved.	Is the individual's task orientation present even when away from the job? Observe the individual's track record and evaluate the level of achievement. Is evidence for commitment to task spotty or sustained?
We all have to make decisions on the job about the delicate balance between personal and work objectives. When do you feel you have had to make personal sacrifices in order to get the job done?	Not the degree to which the candidate is willing to show commitment by sacrificing time or personal interests to get results. Was there good balance between personal and work objectives? Was there evidence of 'workaholic' behavior?

12. INTERACTION: Able to communicate with others in a warm and helpful manner while simultaneously building credibility and rapport.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
Describe a time when you were able to be personally supportive and reassuring to a person who needed a friend.	Did the example show how the candidate could help build a helping relationship successfully? Was the candidate sensitive to the feelings of other persons? Was rapport built without appearing phony?
The word ‘communications’ means different things to different persons at different times. Tell me what this word means to you by giving me an example of a time when you were able to be warm and amiable as a communicator.	Observe whether the candidate tunes into the words ‘warm and amiable’ in giving an answer- or does the individual give a cliché or textbook answer about communications. Does the candidate appear warm and amiable in the interview itself?
Building rapport is sometimes a very challenging thing to do. Give an example of a time when you were able to build rapport with someone at work, even when the situation was against you.	Did the candidate’s response show a genuine concern for the relationship with the other person or was it simply a means to an end. Did the candidate respond to rapport building questions in the interview and otherwise seem amiable?
Being sympathetic to another person’s problems entails putting forth a special effort to understand the situation of dilemma. Give me an example of a time when you were able to give sympathy. How does this contribute to a work outcome?	Observe whether the person is able to be genuinely sympathetic. Did the sympathy seem to show a false concern? Did the person’s feelings of sympathy interfere with the ability to maintain an effective working relationship?
Being skillful in dealing with other people on the job is an important factor in being productive. Describe a time when you were successful in dealing with another because you built a trusting and harmonious relationship.	Observe whether the candidate is aware of how a trusting and harmonious relationship can be built. Does it appear that the ability to build such a relationship can be applied to the job in question?
It is all too easy to ignore the feelings of other because of a preoccupation with our own needs. Tell me about a time when you made a special effort to treat another person in a way which showed your respect for other’s feelings.	To what extent did the candidate REALLY make a special effort to demonstrate respect in terms of ACTIONS as well as words? Did the candidate devote extra time and effort to show concern for the other’s feelings?
Relating to another person goes beyond giving recognition and approval. Describe a time when you were helpful to another while simultaneously building a good relationship.	Observe whether the individual was able to be genuine while being helpful. Was there a balance between the tasks and the interpersonal components of the situation? Did the candidate give more priority to the task or the person?
Sometimes showing concern for another person is a foundation for building a good long term relationship. Tell me about a time when your concern for a particular individual was reflected in an interview, coaching, or counseling.	To what extent did the interviewing, coaching, or counseling techniques lead to a rapport and a productive outcome? Was the concern productive?

13. INTERPRETATION: Able to interpret verbal and non-verbal behavior; to develop accurate perception and understanding of others' feelings, needs, values and opinions; to be sensitive to and aware of personality differences and conflicts.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
In communicating, people's gestures or verbal cues can give us better understanding of what is meant. Give me an example of how your interpretations of verbal and non-verbal behavior have helped you in communications. Take your time.	Was the candidate able to name clues such as eye contact, leaning forward, tone of voice, etc. Observe if the candidate looked for congruence between verbal and non-verbal speech.
It is sometimes very difficult to perceive the needs, values, or opinions of others. Tell me about a time when you were able to 'step into another person's shoes' in order to discover their unique perspective.	Does the candidate seem to assume that all people are relatively similar in terms of their needs, values, and opinions? Was the example a good indication of perceptiveness?
Tell me about a time during negotiations when your perceptiveness helped you to make sense out another person's behavior.	Was the candidate able to understand the person as a person rather than relying on indicators of status? Did the details of the example convince you that the candidate was insightful of the differences in personality or non-verbal behavior?
Reading people can be an important skill. At work, when you analysis of another's motives and feelings paid off for you?	Look for an indication that special time was taken to 'read' the other person. Was personality/motivation theory, social style profiles, or body language used to help build insight?
Tell me about a time when you were proud of your ability to recognize how another person feels. Describe what happened in a way which will illustrate your ability to 'read' another person.	Discover if the candidate's understanding of the other person's feelings came largely from stereotypes or assumptions about that individual. If not, was there evidence that the candidate was perceptive?
There are many work situations in which it is important to be skillful in reading hidden interests and personality conflicts. Tell me about a time which shows your savvy in 'reading' another person.	Observe the detail given in the candidate's description of the situation. Was objectivity and analytical ability shown? If the candidate was part of the conflict, was objectivity shown in reading the situation?
The correct understanding of differences in personality can impact on work decisions such as work assignment, employee motivation and conflict management. Tell how your knowledge or personality differences benefitted your effectiveness.	Notice of the candidate has a knowledge of personality differences based on WORDS like 'compulsive' or 'aggressive'. Was there a precise description which suggests thorough understanding of an individual?
Tell me about a situation in which you were particularly skillful in detecting clues which show how another person thinks or feels. How did you 'size up' the person?	Did it seem that the candidate was able to make specific predictions about the individual's future behavior? Were the predictions based on GUT FEELINGS or were they based on an accurate understanding of past behavior and body language?

14. ORGANIZATION PLANNING: Able to organize or schedule people or tasks; to develop realistic action plans while being sensitive to time constraints and resource availability.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
Give me a summary of the planning activities you have been responsible for in your career in which you applied planning tools such as PERT, or the Critical Path method. Describe how you APPLIED the tool.	Is structured planning a part of the candidate's value system? Did the individual initiate structured planning or simply comply with corporate requirements? How familiar was the candidate with the use of planning tools?
Planning is often more thinking, it is also doing. Tell me what you have done with such tools as flow charts, production schedules, and filing systems (or anything else) to help you plan.	Did the tools help the candidate be systematic and organized? Were the tools seen as actually useful to the candidate or was he/she simply complying with another's system?
Give me an example of a time in which you feel that you were effective in doing away with the 'constant emergencies' and 'surprises' in your work climate. How did your planning help you deal with the unexpected.	Discover if the candidate can use planning to prevent emergencies. Did the plans consist of more than simple 'to do lists' or was there active use of STRATEGY and TACTICS in preventing or solving the problem?
Give me an example from your working history that demonstrates your ability to organize and maintain a SYSTEM OF RECORDS to facilitate your work.	Look for the ability to distinguish between one's OWN EFFORTS to organize the work and contributions made by others. Did the candidate INITIATE the organization of a record system or only fulfill company requirements?
Time management has become a necessary factor in personal productivity. Give me an example of any Time Management skill you have learned and applied at work. What resulted from use of the skill?	Did the individual's time management idea consist of a simple 'to do list' or use of a calendar or was the individual using time logs, timing devices, time studies, goals, values of certification or delegation?
Pick any event in the last five years of your work which gives a good example of your ability to use forecasting techniques. Did you use statistical procedures or a 'gut level' approach? What was your biggest predictive triumph? How did you do it?	Does the candidate use the cue with regard to 'gut feelings' in forecasting as a way to suggest that an intuitive approach may be less effective? Probe to determine if tools were used such as trend analysis, statistical methods, or math models.
Getting results at work often entails spelling out detailed action plans. Tell me about how you used MANAGEMENT BY OBJECTIVES methods to generate a plan leading to a specific goal. Describe the goal and the steps you used to achieve it.	Evaluate the specificity of the candidate's answer. Did the example contain 'fluff' in the way the response was created? Was management by objectives effectively used to generate realistic schedules and timetables?
Organization and scheduling of people and tasks is a necessary function in creating a productive working environment. Review your experiences in this area and detail a single case that illustrates your organizations and scheduling ability.	Notice if the individual saw organization and schedules as simply a way to handle emergencies. Was there a real commitment to developing a systematic approach to getting work done? Were time and resource constraint recognized?

15. CREATIVITY: Able to develop unique and novel solutions to problems; use intuition and a new way of thinking to give birth to new ideas; to present information in an attention- getting and interesting manner.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
In the ever expanding and evolving marketplace, product development it is necessary for growth and success. Tell me about your product development in a laboratory or marketing environment, focusing on one particular example.	Was the individual's creative effort directed toward a practical solution or simply 'pure research'? Did the individual show the ability to generate unique ideas in the laboratory or marketing environment that sell in the market?
Just about anybody can give a routine, standard answer to common problems; however, the payoff is often in the development of unique solutions to common problems. Give me an example of one of your unique and novel problem solutions.	Did the result of the unique solution lead to recognition or special notice? Did the process of creating the solution seem to reflect effective use of intuition and uniqueness? Was the solution a practical, effective, and useful one?
Creative persons seem to offer fresh insights frequently and regularly. Give me an example of a time when one of your insights or innovations was particularly well received by others.	Be sure to focus attention on both the creativity and the practical acceptance of the idea with this probe. Notice if the candidate gave an idea which was not practical or did the candidate get acceptance of an unimportant idea?
It is often suggested that the creative personality has a particular way of thinking which encourages inventiveness. Give me an example of a time when you were inventive and explored new ways of thinking.	Did the candidate's example provide information about breaking an old way of thinking to develop a new solution? Did the inventiveness cited in the example reflect the good use of intuition and the ability to 'play' with concepts?
Give me an example of a time when you think you were particularly creative in presenting information by use of graphics, models, or displays. In giving your example, focus on how your methods produce results?	Was more than one medium of presentation used in the example? Did the presentation really have novelty compared to methods used previously or was it simply a rework of a more routine style? Were graphics, displays, or models used effectively?
Often individuals who are creative in one mode seem to have creative skills in other areas. How do you rate yourself in terms of creativity in the fields of art, writing, and music? Tell me, by example, how you used these skills in your job?	Notice whether more than one of the art/writing/music skill forms was included in the example. Was the candidate able to translate his artistic creativity into practical result which would profit a business or market environment?
Creativity often means stepping back from regimented ways of thinking. When have you been able to break out of a structured mind set and intuitively play with concepts and ideas?	Did the candidate understand how different ways of thinking (structured vs. intuitive) can impact on creativity. Notice if there was a description of how to shift from one mode to the other. Was there a creative result?
Giving birth to new ideas may come from intuition; however, many high quality ideas come from hard work and dedication. Tell me an idea you produced through combined hard work and dedication.	Did it seem that the candidate gave birth to a new idea simply by accident or because of both skill and hard work? Did the example indicate a capability to generate new ideas in the future because of tenacity AND intuition?

16. VERSATILITY: Able to modify one’s own behavioral style to respond to the needs of others while maintaining one’s own objectives and sense of dignity.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
Sooner or later we all have to deal with arrogant, dogmatic, people. Tell me about a time when you were able to be flexible with this type of person.	Notice if the candidate was able to give more than a very simple way in which flexibility was demonstrated. Did the action require a reasonable amount of effort in order to adapt to the other person?
A behavioral scientist once said, “In order for one to be interpersonally effective it is necessary to change to meet the needs of others.” Tell me how you adapted to another person successfully.	Did the change seem to be informal and friendly or did the individual feel stressed in being adaptable? Did the person compromise his/her personal dignity while accommodating another?
In the work situation, we must all compromise to make things happen. Tell me about a time when you felt it necessary to compromise your own immediate interests in order to be socially flexible and tolerant of another person’s needs.	Look for evidence that the candidate achieved an important, valuable, benefit to the work situation through deferral of self interests. Did the candidate seem overly accommodating or immature?
Several years ago, a popular phrase said ‘different strokes for different folks.’ At work, we frequently need to deal with all sorts of people. Describe a time when you adapted to different types of people.	Did the example cover only one instance of adaptation or was there evidence of adaptation to accommodate to several others? Was the candidate adapting to different people or to different situations?
It is sometimes very difficult to accommodate the wishes of another person without going so far that we lose our own personhood. Tell me about a time when you tried hard to ‘be nice’ BUT had to back off to avoid loss of self esteem.	Was the candidate able to accommodate to a sensible degree which did not threaten his/her personhood? Was the candidate able to compromise skillfully without being exploited?
It is often very difficult to please another person while maintaining your dignity. Tell me about a time when you were able to balance your sense of dignity while changing your behavioral style.	Notice if the individual was able to achieve BOTH objectives. Did the adaptation relate to a reasonable work requirement which was appropriate to accommodate or was the requirement a demeaning one which validly threatens personal dignity?
At times, we are all required to deal with difficult people. An even more demanding factor is to be of service to a difficult person. When have you been successful with this type of situation at work?	Look for both the versatility and the service attitude with a difficult individual. Did the candidate show tolerance and maturity? Was the situation positively resolved?
Tell me about a time when you were able to make someone feel comfortable when dealing with a situation which had a lot of feelings involved in it. Describe a specific case.	Notice if the candidate was able to adapt to the special needs of the other person. How did the other person feel after the discussion? Was tolerance shown?

17. LEADERSHIP: Able to influence the actions and opinions in a desired direction; to exhibit judgment in leading others to worthwhile objectives.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
Give me an example of a time when you used facts and reason to persuade another person to take action. Be specific.	Notice if the individual only attempted to be persuasive or was effective in persuasion. Did the example contain benefit statements, significant facts, logical reasons and practical inducements?
Even though the use of authority in a leadership role is not popular, it IS necessary in some situations. Give me an example of some situation when you used your authority to influence another individual. Be specific.	Observe if the candidate felt confident in using authority. Was there evidence of over-use or under-use of authority? Did the individual seem to be 'locked in' to a democratic or participative leadership style?
Organizations are built on the principle of delegation. Give me an example of the greatest success you have ever had in the use of delegation. Take time to think of the best example you can and be specific in describing it.	Notice if the individual had a tendency to over or under delegate. Was there sensitivity to whether the delegation would be appropriate in a crisis? Was there sensitivity to the ability of subordinates to carry out the work?
Instead of simply using authority to influence another individual, it is sometimes desirable to lead other persons by setting a positive example for them to follow. Describe a work situation when your example served as a model for others.	Did the candidate seem comfortable in modeling for another person? Was there an accidental mention of a time in which the influence of the role model was negative? Was there evidence of ability to change style? What were the results?
Being able to change another person's behavior is both a skill and a responsibility. Tell me about a time when you were successful in this area- what kind of payoffs accrued to yourself, the other individual, and the organization?	Notice if the candidate was able to define a change of objective for another individual. Was there deliberate selection of a method of influencing or changing that person? Was there an awareness of non-manipulative use of rewards to influence?
Individuals vary in their abilities to use power or persuasion to influence others. Give me an example of a time when you used either power or persuasion to guide another person to a worthwhile objective.	Notice the individual's preference for either power or persuasion in channeling another person's behavior. Was there a specific awareness of an important objective- or was the attempt to influence poorly planned? Was it effective?
Currently the 'buzz word' to describe a certain quality that people in a leadership position have is 'charisma'. Give me an example of how YOU have used personal charisma or charm to lead others.	Was the candidate overly modest about the ability to use charm and charisma? Did the example suggest credibility could be used effectively to lead others? Was charm and charisma evident in the candidate's interview style?
Communications and leadership go hand in hand. Give me an example of a time when your communication skills were powerful enough to enable you to influence the way others thought or acted, even in a very difficult situation.	Was there evidence that the candidate could, in fact, influence another person successfully and that the influence was effective in bringing about a beneficial outcome? Was communication used well/ Was authority overused?

18. TEAM BUILDING: Able to work with people in such a manner as to build high morale and group commitments to goals and objectives.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
We cannot do everything ourselves. Give me an example of a time when you dealt with this reality by creating a special ‘team effort’ at work. Highlight the special aspects of the situation which best demonstrate your skill in this area.	Did the candidate refer to a single discussion with one individual, or was there a mention of a plan/method for dealing with the team as a group? Was there emphasis on special incentives or using confrontation to build a team?
It has been said that one of the best ways to manage people is to teach them how to manage themselves. Tell me about a time when you contributed to a working group’s ability to direct itself by building group standards for performance.	Did the individual use words such as NORM, STANDARD, and COMMITMENT in formulating the response? Was there evidence that the candidate did, in fact, contribute to the work group standard as either the manager or a group member?
Building a team spirit to get results is over a very difficult thing to do. Tell me about a time when you had your greatest success in building a team spirit. What specific results were accomplished by the team?	Observe if the team spirit produced a meaningful result. Did the team spirit come from ‘cheerleading’ techniques or did it result from use of conflict to build change? Was participative decision making used?
Goal congruence is the overlap between individual’s goals and group objectives. Tell me about a time when you created group commitment to goals by developing goal congruence.	Notice if the individual was able to provide a good example of goal congruity. Pay particular attention to the ability to build goal congruity between several individuals toward a team effort. Was there true evidence of group commitment?
It’s sometimes important to confront a negative attitude to block de-motivators at work. Give me an example of a time when you confronted a negative attitude successfully with the result of building teamwork and morale.	Notice if the candidate was systematic and positive in handling the negative attitude. Was there evidence of overreaction and hostility disguised as an attempt to remove negative forces at work? Was there scape-goating?
One way to build a teamwork attitude is to explain to individuals how their personal goals overlap with team goals. Give me an example of any time in which you were able to build an overlap of individual and team goals.	Was participation and open communications used in building the teamwork environment? Did the candidate’s technique actually build group commitment? Was there evidence of ability to confront negative attitude positively?
There is a big difference between being committed to an individual or to a team. Tell me about a time when your commitment to a person was tested because of your commitment to the team. Explain what you did and why.	Was the candidate able to distinguish between individual and team commitment? Did the example suggest that the candidate could conform to team norms and commitments even if this conflicted with commitment to a person?
The term ‘participative management’ has been used for years to describe a technique of building a team spirit by collecting suggestions from others. Describe a time when you used suggestions to build team commitment.	Observe if the individual used the participative approach effectively or saw it to be weak. Did the example contribute to team commitment? Was morale lowered by over participation?

19. DECISION MAKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING: Able to take action in solving problems while exhibiting judgment and a realistic understanding of issues; able to use reason, even when dealing with emotional topics.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
Solving a problem requires more than good plans; it means taking action. Give me an example of a time when you were able to take meaningful action in solving a practical problem.	Did the example provide evidence for sound judgment, a systematic approach, and a willingness to commit to a solution? Did the solution seem reasonable even when dealing with an emotional topic?
Having a good solution for a problem often entails more than just being intelligent. Often, exercise of good judgment is needed to complement logic in choosing a practical solution. Describe a time you used good judgment in solving a problem.	Did the candidate's response provide evidence of judgment in managing people, resources, or resistance to change? Did the candidate specific how the action was taken rather than simply elaborate in the reason behind the action>?
When we got emotionally involved in a problem situation, it is often very difficult to be objective. Tell me about a time when you were proud of your ability to be objective even though you were emotional about a problem situation.	Evaluate the extent to which emotions were REALLY involved in the situation and then observe the individual's ability to manage feelings in a problem solving situation. Was the solution practical and reflective of good judgment?
A wise man once said, 'The key to solving a problem is in knowing exactly what the problem is.' Tell me about a time when your understanding of issues associated with the problem provided you with a foundation for generating a good solution.	Notice if a systematic, logical, reasonable approach was used in analyzing the problem. Was a problem statement written? Were criteria analyzed? Was an analysis made of potential problems associated with the situation? Was action taken?
In many problem situations, it is often tempting to jump to a conclusion and build a solution quickly. Tell me about a time when you resisted this temptation and THOROUGHLY obtained all fact associated with the problem before coming to a decision.	Did the candidate reflect impulsiveness in describing the temptation to jump to a conclusion? Was there clear evidence of the ability to withhold the tendency to take action? Did the individual use a sound approach in getting facts?
Good problem solving often includes a careful review of the facts and weighing of options before making a decision. Give me an example of how you reached a practical business decision by an organized review of the facts and weighing of options.	Did the individual actually determine the facts and weigh the options in detail throughout the decision making example? Was the importance of using a structured decision making process recognized?
Even though you may be dealing with a complex problem, it is often important to use a common sense approach in making a decision; not all analytical solutions will seem practical. Tell me about a time when your common sense paid off for you.	Notice if the individual referred to people requirements, resource limitations, previous agreements or any other limitation of an analytical decision making approach. Would the solution have approval of others who were involved?
Often, extensive job training and experience is required to get the best results in decision making. Describe, in detail, a situation in which you used your training and experience in making a decision which required sound judgment.	Notice the extent to which the individual provided detail on the practical impact of training/experience. Will this training/experience generalize to the job in question? Did the decision work?

20. READING THE SYSTEM: Able to recognize and use information about organizational climate and key individuals to accomplish legitimate organizational goals; be aware of the importance of timing; politics and group processes in managing change.

Probes	Interpretive Guide
Unfortunately, most organizations have some political elements which impact on the way things get done. Tell me about a time in your background in which you feel you worked within the system, handling a political situation effectively.	Did the individual demonstrate an understanding of the hidden political agenda, anticipate the outcome, avoid trouble, and generate a solution with a positive outcome while working WITHIN the system?
Many times, getting results necessitates development of a full understanding of the informal climate which dictates how things get done. Give me an example of a time when you were able to manipulate the power/influence system to get results.	First discover if the candidate understand the questions. Many individuals who are not astute in organizational dynamics do not understand the differences in formal and informal systems. Was a desirable objective reached?
Many times, getting results requires a full understanding of the organizational climate or culture. Tell me about a time when your astuteness or 'street smarts' in an organization helped you to get results.	Notice if the candidate's response reflects the understanding of the question. Did the candidate's answer reflect an ability to use key individuals, knowledge of timing, organizational politics or group processes in making things happen?
Different people have different 'hot buttons'. When have you been successful I discovering a KEY person's 'hot button' and USE that knowledge to bring about an important change. Be specific.	Notice if the candidate is astute enough not to say embarrassing things about a previous manager or co-worker. Was the understanding of another person's needs used effectively to achieve positive change without manipulation?
At times it is very important to understand how communication channels, interpersonal networks, and politics influence decisions at work. Describe a time when your understanding of the political dynamics at work was put to good use.	Notice if the candidate's definition of 'good sue' was self-protection or contribution to a meaningful result. Is the individual able to describe political networks and indicate how these networks impacted on a decision?
Organization change is often guided by friendships and relationships which can influence how things happen. Tell me a time when you used your interpersonal skills to build a network of contacts to reach goals.	Observe if the individual simply described a network of contacts in terms of friendships or was the network of contacts used to contribute to productive work outcomes?
The term 'shrewd' suggests an ability to understand what REALLY needs to be done to reach an organizational objective. Tell me how you 'read the system' shrewdly to reach a goal.	Observe if the individual used common sense in understanding the 'how' of getting results. Did the candidate describe a meaningful strategy which led to a positive outcome of was self-protection or revenge the goal?
Give me an example of a time when your 'timing', political awareness, and knowledge of how groups work enhanced your ability to generate a change. Take your time in coming up with a specific example.	Did the candidate seem to use common sense while 'reading the system'? Was evidence given of blind spots, anxiety or excessive aggressiveness in a change solution? Was the result a 'win-win' outcome?