The Basics of the Behavioral Interview Process
Interviewing individuals for a position with your firm is as important as any case-related interview.
Training Objectives

- Select more high potential candidates.
- Develop a system to assess candidates more completely.
- Decrease time-to-productivity dramatically.
Interviewer Time Bombs

- Age
- Medical conditions
- Disabilities or impairments
- Previous work-related injuries
- Race, color, national origin or religion
- Marital status
- Childbearing plans
- Child care arrangements
- Arrest records
- Credit History
- Military leave requirements
- Union activities or sympathies
- Memberships in social organizations
Why hypothetical questions don’t work.

"What if . . ." questioning reveals very little about how candidates will actually perform on the job.

Answers to typical hypothetical questions can be memorized and rehearsed.
Past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior.

- Clearly identify the behaviors necessary for success in a position.
- Create questions that allow the candidates to provide real-life examples of how they have behaved in similar circumstances.
Behavioral Interviewing Basics

Analyze the position
Identify skills
Develop questions
Evaluate the candidates
Selection Criteria

- Identify specific skills the person will need to be successful.
- Categories can include: people skills, communication, initiative, planning.
- Weight = importance of skill to position.
Suggested Steps and Timing

- **Step 1** - Open the interview, discussion of firm culture; 3 min.
- **Step 2** - Ask questions about application materials; 5 min.
- **Step 3** - Ask prepared questions and take notes; 2-3 min. each.
- **Step 4** - Ask if candidate has questions and answer them; 5 min.
- **Step 5** - Close the interview; 2 min.
- **Step 6** - Evaluate the candidate; 10-15 min.

- Average interview time with seven to ten criteria: 1 to 1.25 Hours
- On-Campus interviews: 30 min.

From *Behavioral Interviewing Guide*, by Tom S. Turner
Interview Structure

• Develop rapport.

• **Explain format:**
  Questions about your background and skills, then an opportunity for you to ask questions.

• **Do not** describe job.

• **Do not** use leading questions.

• **Interview plan.** Keep them talking!

• Answer their questions and next steps.
Let candidates know in advance you’ll be asking specific questions about things they’ve done in the past.

Give candidates a few moments to think before they respond.
Behavioral Interview Objectives
• Goal is to find evidence of past behaviors that duplicate what you need for the position.
• Force the answers to be specific.

Use silence.
Listen.
How to listen . . .

• Listen. Don’t interrupt.
• Don’t finish the other person’s sentences.
• Don’t say “I knew that.”
• Don’t even agree with the other person. Just say “thank you.”
• Don’t use the words “no,” “but,” and “however.”
• Don’t be distracted. Don’t let your eyes wander elsewhere while the other person is talking.
• Maintain your end of the conversation.
• Don’t try to impress the other person with how smart or how funny you are.
IMPORTANT!
Take lots of notes from start to finish.
For each behavioral question asked, note the following:

- **Event (E):** The event or situation described by the candidate.
- **Reaction/Response (R):** What the candidate did in response to the event described.
- **Outcome (O):** What was the outcome of the action taken?
Evaluation

- Rate candidate responses based on the criteria.
- Use individual evaluation forms.
- Share your results and concerns with other interviewers.
- Compile scores for each candidate on the combined evaluation sheet.
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