



# 2010 SOUTHWEST CLUSTER CONFERENCE

MARCH 2-4, 2010

DALLAS, TEXAS

## Traditional vs. Behavioral Interviewing

- ✓ *Behavioral Interviewing is said to be 55% predictive of future on-the-job behavior, while traditional interviewing is only 10% predictive.*

<h3>Traditional</h3> <p>Open-ended questions that allow the candidate to be fairly vague</p>	<h3>Behavioral</h3> <p>Very pointed questions that elicit detailed responses that draw on the candidate's past experiences</p>
<p>Tell me about yourself.</p>	<p>Some people work best as part of a group - others prefer the role of individual contributor. How would you describe yourself? Give an example of a situation where you felt you were most effective.</p>
<p>What are your strengths?</p>	<p>Describe a situation when you demonstrated initiative and took action without waiting for direction. What was the outcome?</p>
<p>What is your communication style?</p>	<p>Describe a time when you were able to effectively communicate a difficult or unpleasant idea to your supervisor.</p>

### Notes:



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## Sample Behavioral Interview Questions

### Adaptability

- Describe a major change that occurred in a job that you held. How did you adapt to this change?
- Tell us about a situation in which you had to adjust to changes over which you had no control. How did you handle it?

### Analytical Thinking

- Describe the project or situation which best demonstrates your analytical abilities. What was your role?
- Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
- Tell us about a job or setting where great precision to detail was required to complete a task. How did you handle that situation?
- Some people consider themselves to be "big picture people" and others are "detail oriented". Which are you? Give an example of a time when you displayed this.

### Building Relationships

- Give a specific example of a time when you had to address an angry customer. What was the problem and what was the outcome? How would you assess your role in diffusing the situation?
- It is very important to build good relationships at work but sometimes it doesn't always work. If you can, tell about a time when you were not able to build a successful relationship with a difficult person.

### Communication

- Describe a situation when you were able to strengthen a relationship by communicating effectively. What made your communication effective?
- Describe a situation where you felt you had not communicated well. How did you correct the situation?
- Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person, even when that individual may not have personally liked you, or vice versa.
- Have you had to "sell" an idea to your co-workers, classmates or group? How did you do it? Did they "buy" it?
- How do you keep your manager informed about what is being done in your work area?
- What kinds of communication situations cause you difficulty? Give an example.
- Tell us about a time when you and your current/previous supervisor disagreed but you still found a way to get your point across.
- Tell us about an experience in which you had to speak up in order to be sure that other people knew what you thought or felt.
- What have you done to improve your verbal communication skills?

### Conflict Resolution

- Describe a time when you took personal accountability for a conflict and initiated contact with the individual(s) involved to explain your actions.



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## Decision Making

- Discuss an important decision you have made regarding a task or project at work.
- Everyone has made some poor decisions or has done something that just did not turn out right. Has this happened to you? What happened?
- How do you involve your manager and/or others when you make a decision?
- In a current job task, what steps do you go through to ensure your decisions are correct/effective?

## Delegation

- How do you make the decision to delegate work?
- Tell us how you go about delegating work.
- What was the biggest mistake you have had when delegating work? The biggest success?

## Detail-Oriented

- Have the jobs you held in the past required little attention, moderate attention, or a great deal of attention to detail? Give me an example of a situation that illustrates this requirement.
- Tell us about a difficult experience you had in working with details.

## Flexibility

- What do you do when you are faced with an obstacle to an important project? Give an example.
- When you have difficulty persuading someone to your point of view, what do you do? Give an example.

## Initiative

- Describe a time when you made a suggestion to improve the work in your organization.
- What were your study patterns at school?
- Tell us about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
- When you disagree with your manager, what do you do? Give an example.
- Tell us me about a time when you demonstrated too much initiative?
- What sorts of things did you do at school that were beyond expectations?

## Interpersonal Skills

- Describe a recent unpopular decision you made and what the result was.
- Describe a situation in which you were able to effectively "read" another person and guide your actions by your understanding of their needs and values.
- Tell us about the most difficult or frustrating individual that you've ever had to work with, and how you managed to work with them.

## Innovation

- Describe a time when you came up with a creative solution/idea/project/report to a problem in your past work.
- Tell us about a suggestion you made to improve the way job processes/operations worked. What was the result?
- When was the last time that you thought "outside of the box" and how did you do it?



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## **Integrity**

- Describe a time when you were asked to keep information confidential.
- On occasion we are confronted by dishonesty in the workplace. Tell about such an occurrence and how you handled it.

## **Leadership**

- Give an example of a time in which you felt you were able to build motivation in your co-workers or subordinates at work.
- Have you ever been a member of a group where two of the members did not work well together? What did you do to get them to do so?

## **Listening**

- Give an example of a time when you made a mistake because you did not listen well to what someone had to say.
- What do you do to show people that you are listening to them?

## **Motivation**

- Describe a situation when you were able to have a positive influence on the actions of others.

## **Organizational**

- Describe a time when you had to make a difficult choice between your personal and professional life.
- Give me an example of a project that best describes your organizational skills.
- What do you do when your schedule is suddenly interrupted? Give an example.

## **Performance Management**

- Give an example of a time when you helped a staff member accept change and make the necessary adjustments to move forward. What were the change/transition skills that you used.
- Give an example of how you have been successful at empowering either a person or a group of people into accomplishing a task.
- Tell me about a difficult performance review you have had from a supervisor.
- When do you give positive feedback to people? Tell me about the last time you did. Give an example of how you handle the need for constructive criticism with a subordinate or peers.

## **Personal Effectiveness**

- It is important to maintain a positive attitude at work when you have other things on your mind. Give a specific example of when you were able to do that.
- Tell your methods for keeping your supervisor advised of the status on projects.
- Tell us about a recent job or experience that you would describe as a real learning experience? What did you learn from the job or experience?
- Tell us about a time when you took responsibility for an error and were held personally accountable.
- Tell us about a time when your supervisor criticized your work. How did you respond?



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## Planning and Organization

- How do you schedule your time? Set priorities? How do you handle doing twenty things at once?
- What do you do when your time schedule or project plan is upset by unforeseen circumstances? Give an example.

## Presentation

- Tell us about the most effective presentation you have made. What was the topic? What made it difficult? How did you handle it?

## Problem Solving

- Describe the most difficult working relationship you've had with an individual. What specific actions did you take to improve the relationship? What was the outcome?
- Give me an example of a situation where you had difficulties with a team member. What, if anything, did you do to resolve the difficulties?

## Problem Resolution

- Sometimes the only way to resolve a defense or conflict is through negotiation and compromise. Tell about a time when you were able to resolve a difficult situation by finding some common ground.
- Sometimes we need to remain calm on the outside when we are really upset on the inside. Give an example of a time that this happened to you.

## Relating Well

- Tell us about a time when you were forced to make an unpopular decision.
- What would your co-workers (or staff) say is the most frustrating thing about your communications with them?

## Resource Management

- Tell us about a time when you organized or planned an event that was very successful.

## Self Assessment

- Can you recall a time when you were less than pleased with your performance?
- Give me a specific occasion in which you conformed to a policy with which you did not agree.
- If there were one area you've always wanted to improve upon, what would that be?
- What was the most useful criticism you ever received?

## Setting Priorities

- Have you ever been overloaded with work? How do you keep track of work so that it gets done on time?
- When given an important assignment, how do you approach it?

## Stress Management

- How did you react when faced with constant time pressure? Give an example.
- What was the most stressful situation you have faced? How did you deal with it?



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## Teamwork

- Describe a situation in which you had to arrive at a compromise or help others to compromise. What was your role? What steps did you take? What was the end result?
- Describe a team experience you found disappointing. What would you have done to prevent this?
- Describe a team experience you found rewarding.
- Have you ever been a project leader? Give examples of problems you experienced and how you reacted.
- Have you ever been in a position where you had to lead a group of peers? How did you handle it?
- Tell us about a time that you had to work on a team that did not get along. What happened? What role did you take? What was the result?
- Tell us about the most difficult challenge you faced in trying to work cooperatively with someone who did not share the same ideas? What was your role in achieving the work objective?
- Think about the times you have been a team leader. What could you have done to be more effective?
- What is the difficult part of being a member, not leader, of a team? How did you handle this?

## Time Management Schedule

- How do you typically plan your day to manage your time effectively?
- Of your current assignments, which do you consider to have required the greatest amount of effort with regard to planning/organization? How have you accomplished this assignment? How would you assess your effectiveness?

## Toughness

- On many occasions, we have to make tough decisions. What was the most difficult one you have had to make?
- Tell us about setbacks you have faced. How did you deal with them?
- What has been your major work related disappointment? What happened and what did you do?
- What is the most competitive situation you have experienced? How did you handle it? What was the result?

## Values Diversity

- 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? How have you demonstrated your learning?

## **\*\*Possibly AmeriCorps-Related\*\* (Think of some of your own!)**

- ✓ Tell me about a situation where you had to follow strict policies and procedures, even if you disagreed with them.
- ✓ Tell me about a situation where you had to routinely turn in paperwork on time.
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- ✓
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