INTERVIEWING QUESTIONS

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW: A style of interview designed to elicit knowledge, experiences, skills, and abilities from an applicant to see how these can directly relate to the job and predict the applicant’s future success in the job. Behavioral interviews are more traditional and common.

STAR Stories: A framework that can be used to answer questions regarding an applicant’s skills, attributes, strengths, and abilities in a way that markets these via story

- **Situation**: the beginning. A brief description of the situation and context of the story.
- **Task**: explain the task you had to complete, highlighting specific challenges or limitations
- **Action**: describe the actions you used to complete the task, highlighting desirable traits without directly stating them (skills, attributes, strengths, and abilities)
- **Result**: finish with the results of your actions, including quantifiable figures if possible.

Prepare multiple STAR Stories prior to your interview so that you can use them in an organized and comfortable manner during your interview.

- Tell me about yourself (use this question as a means to briefly elaborate on your resume. Do not discuss personal info)
- What are some of your strengths? What are some of your weaknesses? *(Use STAR Stories)*
- What internship/job related skills have you developed through your coursework?
- How will this internship/job relate to your long-term career goals?
- Give me an example of how you have encountered and handled a conflict.
- What do you hope to gain from this experience?
- What type of work environment are you most successful in?
- Name three things that are important to you in a work experience.
- Why should I hire you?
- Tell me about a project or presentation that you are particularly proud of and why.
- In what ways do you feel you will make a contribution to this company?
- What do you know about our company? *(Researching the company in advance is KEY to answering this question)*
- What qualities are you looking for in a manager/supervisor?
- What do you see yourself doing five years from now?
- What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? How?
- What factors did you consider in choosing your major?
- What has been your greatest challenge?
- What types of situations put you under pressure and how do you deal with pressure?
- What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
- Do you work better in a group or alone? Why?
- Describe the relationship that should exist between a supervisor and those reporting to her or him.
- Describe a time when you were faced with a problem at work that tested your coping skills. What did you do?
- Give me an example of a time when you were especially hard working.
- Tell me about a time when you had to use your written/oral communication skills in order to get a point across that was important to you.
- Give me an example of a time when you were proud of your ability to cope.
- Give me an example of a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
- Give me an example of a time when you were able to communicate successfully with another person, even when the individual may not have personally liked you or vice versa.
- Describe the most creative work-related project you have completed.
- Give me an example of a problem you faced on the job, and tell me how you solved it.
- Give an example of a time when you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
• Describe the most significant written document, report, or presentation that you’ve completed.
• Tell me about a time when you had to solve a complex problem and the steps you took to solve it.

CASE INTERVIEW: A style of interview which consists of business problems taken from a real-life business situation or an example drawn from your resume, which focuses on your analytic approach to the problem, rather than specific business knowledge. PRACTICE IS KEY. Schedule 1-2 mock case interviews with someone in Career Education, a mentor, or a professor.

Listen to the question. Take notes. Summarize the question. Verify the objective(s). Ask clarifying questions. Organize your answer. Hold that thought- think before you speak. Manage your time. Work the numbers into your answer. Be coachable- listen to the interviewer’s feedback. Be creative and brainstorm. Exude enthusiasm and a positive attitude. Bring closure and summarize.

SAMPLE:
“& and I are sitting in an empty room with no telephone, reference books, or computers. Can you tell me how many disposable diapers were sold in the U.S. last year?”

POSSIBLE RESPONSE:
“I am going to assume that the population of the U.S. is 250 million people. I am going to further assume that the average life expectancy in the U.S. is 75 years. For simplicity’s sake, I am going to assume that there are an equal number of people in each age group. So 250 million people divided by 75 different age groups equals 3.3 million people in each age group. Children wear diapers from age zero to age three, so that’s three years. 3.3 million Children times 3 years equal 9.9 million, so let’s say 10 million children. Out of those 10 million children, I am going to assume that 80% of them wear disposable diapers. That’s 8 million children. I also think that children go through about 5 diapers a day. Newborns maybe more than 5, 3-year-olds maybe less, so we will assume 5 diapers a day. 8 million kids times 5 diapers a day equals 40 million diapers a day. So 40 million diapers a day times 365 days a year is your answer.

To learn more about case interviews, visit http://www.joinbain.com/apply-to-bain/interview-preparation/

Questions asked by the interviewee:
You should be prepared to ask the interviewer questions, which indicates your job search has been well thought out and that your interest in the organization has resulted in thorough research and preparation.

• Will I work independently or with others?
• To whom will I report?
• Who will evaluate my work?
• Does the organization endorse promotion from within?
• What industry trends will occur in this company?
• What makes your firm different from its competitors?
• What qualities are you looking for in your new hires, and what are your expectations for new hires?
• What do you feel are your company’s strengths and weaknesses?
• Describe the typical first year assignments that I would be working on?
• What is the overall structure of the department where the position is located?
• What type of training do you provide new hires and what will it involve?
• What type of continuous training is provided to your staff?
• What professional development opportunities will be available to me?
• Will I be assigned a mentor my first year of employment?
• What kind of person do you find to be successful in this job?
• What skills have you found to be valuable in this job?
• What are the department’s/company’s strategic goals? How are they developed and reviewed?
• Who is the competition in this field and what are you doing to get ahead of them?
• How long have you been with the organization?
• What are your short-term and long-term expectations of me?
• What do you consider ideal experience for this job?
• What is the largest single problem facing your staff now?
• At what step are you in the hiring process?
• Can I provide you with any other information to help you in the decision making process?