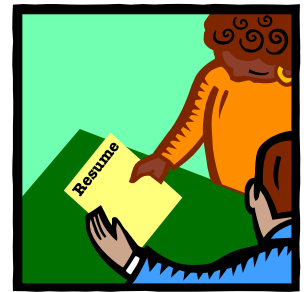


## Quality Patient Experience Tool: How to Institute Effective Interview Questions



### Guidelines

- Start with set phrases that will help you keep your questions on past experiences and push for details about those past experiences. For instance:
  - “Tell me about a time when....”
  - “Describe a situation in which you...”
  - “Tell me in detail about an experience in which you...”
  
- You might need to vary the wording a little depending on the candidate’s background.
  - For an experienced person – “Tell me about a time when you.....on the job.”
  - For a person with no job experience – “Tell me about a time when you... It can be from any situation (e.g. school, community, peer group, sports participation). It’s not necessary that it be a job situation.”

### Questions in Traditional vs. Behavioral Interviews

Traditional Interviewing	Result	Behavioral Interviewing	Result
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Should” or “would” questions</li> <li>• “How do you usually....”</li> <li>• --<i>Hypothetical</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You hear <i>theories</i> of appropriate behavior.</li> <li>• You hear generalities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Tell me in detail about a time when....”</li> <li>• --<i>Actual</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The candidate’s level of detail tells you whether you are hearing <i>truth</i> or <i>fiction</i>.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asks “what” have you done?”</li> <li>• Candidate lists <i>activities</i></li> <li>• Goes off on tangents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You might learn about their activities, but nothing about their <i>competency</i>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competency-focused</li> <li>• Asks for details about <i>how</i> they actually handled situation</li> <li>• <i>Stays focused; controls the interview</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You learn about <i>how</i> they did it—their <i>competencies</i> in depth.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You ask <i>many</i> different questions</li> <li>• Few probes</li> <li>• Interviewer talks more than he/she listens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No depth</li> <li>• You get vague generalities.</li> <li>• You don’t learn much.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You ask <i>few</i> questions</li> <li>• You probe for <i>depth</i> (<i>situation, thoughts, feelings, actions, dialogue, results</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You learn a lot about the candidate, including specifics about how they think, feel and act.</li> </ul>

### Examples

NOT Behavioral	Behavioral
What do you look for in a supervisor?	Describe to me an experience in which your supervisor acted toward you in a manner that you really respected.
How would you deal with coworkers who ask you to cover their responsibilities when you are way too busy?	Tell me about a time when a coworker asked you to do something for them when you were way too busy.

## Make Questions Behavioral

<b>THIS IS NOT BEHAVIORAL!</b>	<b>MAKE IT BEHAVIORAL: Start with one of these leads –</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Tell me about a time when...”</li> <li>• “Describe a situation in which you...”</li> <li>• “Tell me in detail about an experience in which you...”</li> </ul>
What do you look for in a supervisor?	Describe to me an experience in which your supervisor acted toward you in a manner that you really respected.
How would you deal with coworkers who ask you to cover their responsibilities when you are way too busy?	Tell me about a time when a coworker asked you to do something for them when you were way too busy.
Tell me about your ideal job.	Tell me about an experience in which you had a chance to do what you really love to do.
How would you deal with a situation involving an upset customer?	Tell me about a time you handled a really upset customer.
This job calls for initiative. Tell me how you think you rate on initiative?	Tell me in detail about a situation in which you demonstrated initiative and were satisfied with the result.
What was most frustrating about your previous job?	Tell me about a job experience job that you found very frustrating.
How would you assess your ability to stay organized?	Tell me about a job situation that called for your organizational skills.
Do you keep up-to-date in your field? Or how do you keep up in your field	Tell me in detail about a time when you took initiative to learn about best practices in your field. What did you do—and learn?
How would you handle a situation in which the customer is annoyed with you?	Tell me in detail about a time when someone you considered a customer was annoyed with you.
What are your strengths?	Pick a situation in your last job when you felt particularly successful and effective. Tell me about that situation and how you handled it.
What are your weaknesses?	Tell me in detail about a time when you were disappointed with your own performance?
How do you learn?	Tell me in detail about a time when you learned something important to your job effectiveness
What parts of your previous job did you like the best?	Pick a situation in your last job when you felt particularly gratified. Tell me about that situation, including what you did in the situation.
How good are you at (name a competency)?	This job calls for (name a competency, e.g. team leadership, or business savvy, or customer orientation). Tell me in detail about a time when you demonstrated that competency in a previous job
Which parts of this job appeal to you most? Why?	Think about the competencies you think this job requires. Tell me about a time when you demonstrated in the past a competency that you think will prove important in this job

## Question with Caution

<b>Beware!</b>	<b>Instead--</b>
<p><b>Don't give yourself away. Don't give hints. Don't ask leading questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These give clues and direction about the answer you're hoping for.</li> <li>• They encourage the candidate to exaggerate or enlarge on their accomplishments.</li> <li>• Don't bring up topics or words that the candidate hasn't mentioned first.</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b> "How do you schedule your time so that you have a reasonable workload and focus on priorities?"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prompt the person to give you the details that mattered to <i>him/her</i>.</li> <li>• Provide <i>very little</i> information about the situations the candidate chooses to describe</li> <li>• Offer <i>no</i> information about desirable answers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b> "Your resume shows you've had a broad span of responsibility. Tell me about a time when you had multiple priorities?"</p>
<p><b>Avoid "Yes/No" Questions!</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These yield very little information.</li> <li>• These don't encourage the candidate to say much.</li> <li>• "Did you find your last job satisfying?"</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Have you ever handled a really difficult customer?"</li> <li>• "Are you willing to work at odd hours when you're trying to meet a deadline?"</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ask <i>open-ended</i> questions</b> that make them think and say more.</p> <p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Tell me about a time when you found your job particularly satisfying."</li> <li>• "Tell me about a time when you were involved with a very disgruntled or upset customer."</li> <li>• "Tell me about a time when you ran out of time when you were facing a deadline."</li> </ul>
<p><b>Don't ask <i>multiple</i> questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you ask more than one question at a time, the candidate is likely to answer only one of them (usually the last).</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "What were your thoughts and feelings when this happened?"</li> <li>• "Tell me about a time when you showed initiative and compassion."</li> </ul>	<p>Ask one question at a time.</p> <p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "What thoughts ran through your head when this happened?" Then, "What feelings did you have when this happened?"</li> <li>• "Tell me about a time when you showed initiative." Then, "Tell me about a time when you showed compassion on the job."</li> </ul>
<p><b>Don't ask <i>hypothetical</i> ("should" or "would") questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates are likely to tell you what they think you want to hear, not realities about their performance.</li> <li>• Don't ask about "typical" or "usual" behavior</li> <li>• Don't ask about the future</li> <li>• Don't ask "Why?"</li> </ul>	<p>Ask about actual details about the past.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "What did you do?"</li> <li>• "How did you do it?"</li> <li>• "What was your thinking?"</li> </ul>