

## Addressing Behavioral Interview Questions

One of the most popular techniques in interviewing today is the use of behavioral questioning. It's when the interviewer asks you a series of open-ended questions designed to force you to give a detailed answer. The theory is that through your response, the interviewer can better understand not just your level of experience, but also your personality and aptitude - which are equally, if not more important, in determining if you're a fit for the job. Unfortunately, this technique can make some job seekers become rambling fools in interviews. Causing them to lose out on their dream jobs in the process.

Your answers should be like a ruler - a straight line.

When responding to behavioral questions the important thing is to stay linear in your response. By that, I mean it should feel logical and sequential. Otherwise, your answer can sound all over the place and make it difficult for the interviewer to connect the dots. Or, even worse, you may lose their attention (and respect!) too.

Experience + Learn = Grow Model

For years, I've been teaching this simple equation for answering behavioral questions. It's not rocket science, but it does require you to think about in advance some of the questions you might get asked. Then, you simply map out your response in the following way:

Experience - provide an example of a time when you were in a similar situation and provide a short, objective summary of the details.

Learn - summarize what valuable professional skill you gained or critical information you learned as a result of this experience.

Grow - close by outlining how you now apply this knowledge consistently in your work to insure your employer benefits from what you've learned.

To give you an example, imagine you're a customer service rep on a job interview.

The hiring manager asks you, "Tell me about your greatest accomplishment as a customer service rep?" Using the model above, a good response would be:

Experience: "I once fielded a phone call from a very angry customer. She was yelling and cursing at me. We had double charged her for our services. I tried putting myself in her shoes and reminded myself she wasn't really angry at me. This helped me to stay calm so I could focus on fixing her problem. I was able to give her a credit and get her laughing. By the time we were done she was apologizing for swearing at me. She even gave me a 4-star customer review."

Learn: "That day, I learned by effectively using empathy and patience, I could have a lot more control over the outcome of difficult situations like this one."

Grow: "Now, I always focus on using this process when dealing with upset customers so I can make sure they are happy by the time their interactions are completed with me."

See how the flow of the answer is impactful AND easy to follow? This is how you can avoid rambling on so you don't come across as unorganized in your thoughts and actions.

Getting interviews is tough enough, don't bomb it because you don't know how to properly answer behavioral questions. With a little preparation and practice you can sound confident and collected in your responses in order to impress the interviewer and land the job!

Credit: <https://www.inc.com>