

# Anticipated Growth in Behavioral Interviewing

By Aparna Nancherla

In preparation for an interview, job candidates often run through a mental checklist. Typical questions such as “where do you see yourself in five years?” or “what interested you in a position in this field?” come to mind. But in the near future, these traditional interview questions might be replaced by behavioral interview questions, a technique quickly gaining popularity with employers.

A December 2007 Internet survey conducted by Equation Research on behalf of Novations Group polled more than 2,500 senior HR and training and development executives. They found that close to 25 percent of employers plan to increase their use of behavioral interviewing, while more than half will continue using it in the same capacity. Less than 1 percent indicated plans to cut back on using the assessment.

The goal of behavioral interviewing is to extrapolate a job candidate’s suitability for a position based on his past behavior, says Tim Vigue, executive consultant at Novations Group, a global consulting organization based in Boston. The idea is that the most accurate predictor of future performance is past performance in similar situations. “In fact, the technique is now the norm—a best practice for hiring talent at all leading employers,” Vigue adds.

A demographic shift in the workplace is further motivating employers to

give the hiring process more than just the once-over. “An increasingly diverse talent pool demands that organizations hire the best from the broadest possible pool,” Vigue comments. “To do so, employers have to use objective methods that won’t screen out qualified candidates due to bias.”

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To gain the maximal benefits of behavioral interviewing techniques, employers must use the method the right way. An organization should create a short list of qualities that are crucial to success for the specific job in question. Sample behaviors might include critical thinking, demonstration of being a self-starter, willingness to learn, self-confidence, and professionalism. The interview should then work from a set of prewritten questions that would elicit past examples of displaying the competencies desired.

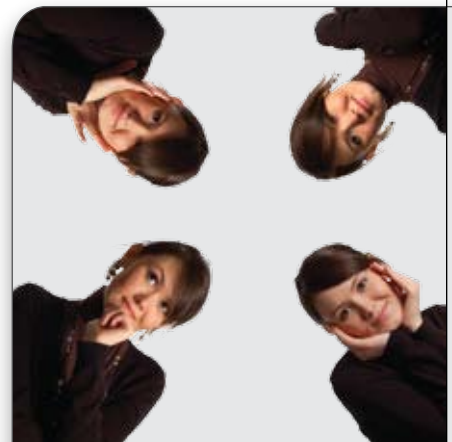
“Of course, just providing the interviewer with questions isn’t enough,” Vigue notes. “The interviewer ought to have a clear understanding of the selection process and the skills to conduct the interview effectively and evaluate the results. In the end, success is all about process, tools, and training.”

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## The BIG Number

# 81%

of employers plan to use behavioral interviewing more or as often as in the past.



>> **Which of the following best describes your organization’s use of behavioral interviewing?**

- We plan to use behavioral interviewing more often . . . . . 25%
- We plan to use behavioral interviewing as often as in the past. . . . . 56%
- We plan to use behavioral interviewing less often . . . . . 0%
- We don’t use behavioral interviewing . . . . . 19%

Source: Novations Group



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