



PRACTICE MANAGEMENT: Behavioral-Based Interviewing

Theory

Last week we discussed some tips on how to hire the right employee. In the last Animal Matters, we mentioned Behavioral-Based Interviewing as a part of the hiring process. As promised, here is more information on this type of interviewing: “Traditional interviewing is based on asking hypothetical, situational questions focusing on what the candidate might do rather than what they have done. Behavioral-based interviewing is derived from the principle that past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior. First, it focuses on those behaviors that are most important to success on the job; then, questions are created that probe for specific examples of when the candidate did or did not display these behaviors.” (Plante Moran Assessment Material) It is harder for applicants to fabricate his or her skills and experience with this interview approach.

Example

Traditional - Hypothetical, situational questions

“What would you do if ...”

Example: “Explain how you would handle a client who is upset over the final bill for services.”

Behavioral-Based - Job-related, based on prior behavior

“What did you do when ...?”

Example: “Describe a time when you faced a client who was upset over a bill, what did you say and do to resolve the client’s upset?”

Application

While preparing for an applicant’s interview, keep in mind the skills needed to be successful in the position to which the applicant is applying. Compile your behavior-based questions. During the interview, it’s great to build rapport with the applicant and also let the candidate interview you. When asking open-ended questions for specific job-related behavior, listen carefully, take notes, allow silence, and persist for specific answers by probing with follow-up questions.

Benefits

- Behavioral-based questions target specific behaviors important for successful job performance.
- This method makes it easier to identify the applicant’s true skills and experiences.
- It’s more difficult for candidates to “fake” their responses.
- Interviewers use the same criteria to make hiring decisions.
- Interviewers’ final decisions are based on important job-related data.
- The interview process is more legally defensible.
- Candidates feel like the interview has given them a fair chance to discuss their skills.

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Questions?

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