Behavior-Based Interviewing for Education Majors

HOW BEHAVIOR-BASED INTERVIEWING (BBI) HELPS CANDIDATES AND EMPLOYERS

Even if an employer isn't using questions structured in a BBI manner, candidates can build their answers to indicate positive past performances. When asked, "Tell me about yourself," a candidate prepared for BBI will answer, "I just finished 14 weeks of student teaching (situation), where I was required to teach five history classes a day to a total of 129 students (task). I used the active learning lesson plans I was taught by my professors, and at the end of the semester, 87 percent of our history students passed the pre-graduation sample test (action and result)." That answer will wow an employer.

From the employer's point of view, if the interview can't actually watch the candidate teach a group of students, BBI can be a reliable way to assess a candidate's ability to articulate teaching skills and describe past performance.

SAMPLE BEHAVIOR-BASED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Content knowledge and curriculum
- What are some math skills that students in your classroom have learned?
- Describe a two-week unit that you have taught.
- Tell me about a lesson on _____ that went well.
- How have you integrated writing skills into your curriculum?

Methods and planning
- Describe a lesson plan that exceeded your expectations when you taught it.
- Describe a lesson that did not succeed and how you would change it for a future class.
- How have you ensured coverage of state-mandated standards in your planning?

Classroom organization and management
- Describe an experience you have had becoming established with a new group of students.
- What rules and rewards have worked in your classroom in the past?
- Describe a conflict you encountered with a student and how you dealt with it.

Homework and grading
- Describe a grading policy that has worked well in the past.
- How have you assessed student achievement informally without grading?
- Tell me about a typical homework assignment in your class.

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Meeting student needs
- How have you modified assignments for gifted or special education students?
- What are some strategies for teaching your subject to students who may not be good listeners?
- Describe an experience where you identified a student's special need and modified lesson for that individual.

Student Diversity
- How have you modified or adapted lessons to meet the needs of special education students or English Language Learners (ELLs)?
- Today's students often have emotional issues and concerns. How have you been able to help or get help for a student with such a problem?

Technology
- Describe how you have used multimedia or other technology in teaching a lesson.
- How have you been able to get students to use computers and/or Internet resources?

Communication
- Share an example of a communication with a parent that helped you to understand a student in your class.
- Describe a time when you team-taught or co-planned with a colleague.
- Tell about a time when asked an administrator or teacher for help.

Professionalism
- What parts of your teacher education training do you use on a regular basis?
- How have memberships in professional organization or attendance at conferences and workshops improved your teaching?
- What have you read recently that led to an improvement in your classroom?

QUESTIONS STUDENTS SHOULD ASK EMPLOYERS

1. What is the school's average class size?
2. Are there mentoring programs for new teachers?
3. What types of technology are available for teachers and students?
4. What is a typical school day like?
5. What is the level of parent and community involvement in the school?
6. How does the administration work with teachers to improve instruction?
7. Tell me about the students who attend this school.
8. Are there school psychologists, counselors, or public agencies who help students and teachers?
9. How would describe the professional staff in this district?
10. Are there opportunities for team teaching or team planning?