



JOB INTERVIEW CHEAT SHEET #2

Welcome to the next phase of your job interview preparation journey! In this section, we dive deep into competency-based behavioral interview questions, which are critical for showcasing your real-world experience and problem-solving abilities. These questions help interviewers assess not just what you've done, but how you did it – highlighting the skills and mindset you bring to the table.

This guide is designed to arm you with powerful examples and strategies to answer these questions with confidence and clarity. By reflecting on your past experiences, you can offer responses that demonstrate your value and potential impact on a prospective employer. Whether you're a seasoned professional or a newcomer to the job market, this cheat sheet will ensure you're prepared to excel in any interview setting.

Let's dive into these targeted questions and get you one step closer to landing your dream job!

1. What motivates you at work? – interviewers are seeking to understand what drives you professionally and what keeps you engaged and productive. This question provides an opportunity to discuss your passions, values, and career aspirations, demonstrating your alignment with the company's mission and goals.

- Be genuine in discussing what truly motivates you at work.
- Emphasize internal factors that drive your motivation, such as a sense of purpose, achievement, or fulfillment in your work.
- Discuss why you're drawn to the organization and how its goals and objectives resonate with your own aspirations.
- Highlight your desire for continuous learning, skill development, and career advancement.
- Discuss how you thrive in team environments and value the opportunity to contribute to collective success.
- Illustrate your motivations with concrete examples from your past experiences.

2. Can you share an experience where you turned a negative situation into a positive outcome? – Interviewers are interested in assessing your resilience, problem-solving skills, and ability to adapt to challenges. This question provides the opportunity to demonstrate your ability to overcome adversity and create positive outcomes, even in difficult circumstances.

- Select a specific situation from your past experiences where you encountered a challenging situation in which you turned it around to achieve a positive outcome.
- Explain the challenges or obstacles you faced and the impact they had on the project, team, and organization.
- Highlight the strategies and techniques you used to address the negative situation and create a positive outcome.
- Discuss the steps you took to analyze the situation, identify potential solutions, and develop a plan of action.
- Discuss any setbacks or obstacles you encountered and how you persevered in the face of adversity.
- Share the results of your efforts and the impact of your actions on the situation.

3. Describe a time you learnt a skill quickly. How did you approach it? – the interviewer is interested in assessing your ability to adapt and acquire new skills efficiently. This question creates an opportunity to showcase your learning agility, problem-solving abilities, and proactive approach to personal and professional development.

- Choose a specific skill that you learned quickly and that is relevant to the job you're applying for.
- Describe the circumstances that prompted you to learn the skill quickly.
- Be specific in describing the strategies and techniques you used to expedite the learning process.
- Share the specific steps you took to address difficulties and refine your approach to learning.
- Highlight your proactive approach to learning by discussing how you sought out opportunities to apply and practice the skill in real-world situations.

- Share the results of your efforts and the impact of acquiring the skill quickly.
4. **What achievement are you most proud of? Why?** – the interviewer is seeking to understand your accomplishments and what you value most in your professional life.
- Choose an example that you genuinely feel proud of and can speak passionately about.
 - Explain the specific challenge or goal you faced, why it was important, and the role you played in achieving it.
 - Clearly articulate your role in the achievement and the specific actions you took to contribute to its success.
 - Whenever possible, quantify the impact of your achievement to provide tangible evidence of its significance.
 - Share why this achievement is particularly meaningful to you.
 - Show the interviewer how your past successes can translate into future contributions.
5. **When was the last time you changed your opinion about something significant after being presented with new information?** – the interviewer is interested in assessing your open-mindedness, critical thinking skills, and ability to adapt to new information.
- Select a specific situation from your recent experiences where you changed your opinion about something.
 - Explain what information or evidence was presented to you and how it challenged your previous beliefs or assumptions.
 - Describe your initial stance or opinion on the matter before being presented with new information.
 - Outline the new information or evidence that caused you to reconsider your opinion.
 - Share the steps you took to evaluate the new information and assess its validity and relevance.
 - Explain how you approached changing your opinion in light of the new information.
 - Share the outcomes or consequences of changing your opinion and how it impacted your actions or decisions moving forward.
6. **What's the most constructive feedback you've ever received? How did you apply it?** – the interviewer is interested in understanding how you handle feedback and use it to improve your performance.
- Select a piece of constructive feedback that had a significant impact on your personal or professional development.
 - Detail the circumstances surrounding the feedback you received.
 - Describe the specific feedback you received and why you considered it constructive.
 - Share the steps you took to process and internalize the feedback.
 - Describe the actions you took to apply the feedback and improve your performance.
 - Share the outcomes or impact of applying the feedback.
 - Conclude your response by reflecting on what you learned from the experience and how it has influenced your approach to receiving feedback and personal development.
7. **Describe a complex decision you made with limited time and information. What was the outcome?** – the interviewer is interested in assessing your decision-making skills, ability to handle pressure, and capacity to manage uncertainty.
- Choose a specific situation from your past work experiences where you were faced with a complex decision under time constraints and with limited information.
 - Describe the circumstances surrounding the decision you had to make.
 - Describe the steps you took to assess the situation, gather relevant information, and evaluate potential courses of action.
 - Share how you managed the uncertainty and risk associated with the decision.
 - Share the outcome of the decision you made and its impact on the situation.
 - Conclude your response by reflecting on what you learned and how you have applied these lessons to continue improving your skills.
8. **What are your career goals for the next five years?** – the interviewer is seeking to understand your long-term aspirations and how they align with the company's objectives.
- Share your career goals in a clear and specific manner, but ensure they are achievable within a five-year timeframe.
 - Tailor your career goals to align with the job you're applying for and the company's mission, values, and objectives.
 - Emphasize your desire for continuous learning, skill development, and career advancement.
 - Demonstrate your commitment to the industry or field you're applying for by outlining how your career goals reflect a long-term commitment to professional growth and success.

- Acknowledge that your goals may evolve over time and that you're open to new opportunities and challenges.
- Share how achieving your career goals will not only benefit you personally but also contribute to the success of the company.

9. How do you ensure your decisions are fair? – the interviewer is interested in assessing your ethical reasoning, integrity, and commitment to fairness and equity.

- Describe the steps you take to make informed and fair decisions.
- Highlight your commitment to remaining objective and impartial in your decision-making.
- Share how you actively seek out and consider diverse perspectives and opinions when making decisions.
- Discuss how you adhere to established policies, guidelines, and ethical standards in your decision-making process.
- Share how you solicit feedback and input from relevant stakeholders when making decisions, especially those that may have significant impacts on others.
- Reflect on the outcomes of your decisions and assess whether they align with principles of fairness and equity.
- Illustrate your approach to ensuring fairness with specific examples from your past experiences.

10. Tell me about a project that failed. What did you learn from it? – the interviewer is interested in assessing your ability to reflect on setbacks, learn from failures, and apply those lessons to future endeavors.

- Select a specific project from your past experiences that did not meet its intended goals or objectives.
- Describe the project and its objectives, as well as the factors that contributed to its failure.
- Articulate your role and responsibilities in the project, as well as any contributions you made to its execution.
- Reflect on what you learned from the experience and how it has influenced your approach to similar projects in the future.
- Discuss changes or improvements you've made to your approach, processes, or strategies to mitigate similar risks and improve outcomes.
- While the project may have failed to meet goals, emphasize any positive outcomes or achievements that resulted from the experience.
- Conclude your response by discussing how you're applying the lessons learned from the failed project to your current or future work.

11. Can you describe when you had to give difficult feedback? How did you handle it? – the interviewer is interested in assessing your communication skills, emotional intelligence, and ability to navigate challenging conversations.

- Pick a specific example from your past experiences where you had to give difficult feedback to someone.
- Explain why the feedback was difficult to deliver, the relationship dynamics involved, and the potential impact of the feedback on the recipient.
- Acknowledge the emotional impact of the feedback and strive to create a safe and supportive environment for dialogue.
- Clearly articulate the feedback you needed to deliver and the reasons behind it.
- Describe the communication techniques you used to deliver the feedback effectively.
- Share how you encouraged open communication and collaboration throughout the feedback conversation.
- Conclude your response by discussing how you followed up with the recipient after the feedback conversation to offer ongoing support and assistance.