Planned Behavioral Questions

**Planning & Organizing:** Establishing courses of action for self and others to ensure that work is completed efficiently

**Key Actions:** Prioritizes, Determines tasks & resources, Schedules, Leverages resources, Stays focused

**Question Pool:**
Describe a time when you needed to complete several things at the same time. What did you do to get the work done?
What have you done to make your team more efficient and organized? Can you provide a specific example?
What types of project planning have you done in your job as _____? Can you tell me about a specific project you planned?

**Initiating Action:** Taking prompt action to accomplish objectives; taking action to achieve goals beyond what is required; being proactive

**Key Actions:** Responds quickly, Takes independent action, Goes above and beyond

**Question Pool:**
Tell me about the last change or improvement you initiated in your job at ___________.
Everyone knows about something that should be changed or improved, but they don’t do anything because it’s not worth the effort. Give me an example of a time when you didn’t pursue a policy or procedure change that you knew should have been made.
While you were at ________, what changes were you able to bring about? How did you do that?

**Motivation Fit:** The extent to which activities and responsibilities available in the job and organization’s mode of operation and values provide personal satisfaction.

**Many opportunities:** Relationship building, continuous learning, challenging work, participative management

**Few or No opportunities:** Center of attention, promotion opportunities

**Question Pool:**
(Challenging work) Tell me about one of the most difficult and demanding tasks you have had.
(Participative management) Tell me about one of your past employers where management maintained complete control over all aspects of employees’ work.

(Center of attention) Tell me about a time when you worked on a high-profile assignment for which you received a lot of attention from others. How satisfied/dissatisfied were you with that?
When were you most satisfied/dissatisfied in your work? What was most satisfying/dissatisfying about that?

(Relationship Building) Tell me about a time when you had to work closely with others, building and maintaining relationships in order to accomplish a task. How satisfied/dissatisfied were you with that, and why?
(Compensation) Tell me about a time when you didn’t receive the salary you thought you deserved for the work you performed. How did you feel about that?
Tell me about a time when you had many/few opportunities for ________ in your work. How satisfied were you with that and why?
(Practical Results) Tell me about a job you’ve had where you could see the results of your actions or work. How satisfied/dissatisfied were you with that, and why?
(Achievement) Tell me about a situation in a job in which you easily achieved your goals. What did you like or dislike about that?
**Decision Making:** Identifying and understanding issues, problems, and opportunities; comparing data from different sources to draw conclusions; using effective approaches for choosing a course of action or developing appropriate solutions; taking action that is consistent with available facts, constraints, and probable consequences

**Key Actions:** Identifies issues, problems, and opportunities; gathers information; interprets information; generates alternatives; chooses appropriate action; commits to action; involves others

- Question Pool:
  - Give me an example of a time when you were able to identify a small problem and fix it before it became a major problem.
  - Describe the most complex problem you’ve been asked to solve recently. What did you do? What alternatives did you consider?
  - We all make decisions that turn out to be mistakes. Describe a work decision you regret making.

**Quality Orientation:** Setting high standards of performance for self and others; assuming responsibility and accountability for successfully completing assignments or tasks; self-imposing standards of excellence rather than having standards imposed

**Key Actions:** Follows procedures, takes action, sets standards for excellence, ensures high quality, takes responsibility, encourages others to take responsibility

- Question Pool:
  - What were your standards of success in (your last job/school)? What did you do to meet those standards?
  - Tell me about a research project you did that made you proud. What made it so good? What was your role?
  - Think about a time when your work was above standard and a time when it was below standard. What were some reasons for the differences in performance?
    - As a student, or in your last job, how did you define good performance? What did you do to perform according to that definition?
    - We’re not always satisfied with our performance. Tell me about the most memorable time that you weren’t pleased with your performance. What did you do about it?
    - What were the criteria for success in your job at _________? What did you do to meet the criteria? Give me a recent example.

**Building Positive Working Relationships:** Developing and using collaborative relationships to facilitate the accomplishment of work goals.

**Key Actions:** Seeks opportunity, clarifies current situation/task, develops others’ and own ideas, facilitates agreement, uses effective interpersonal skills

- Question Pool:
  - Working with others usually involves some give and take. Describe a time when you worked out an agreement with a peer or team member. What did you do?
  - Tell me about a recent idea you explored and developed with another peer/team member. Why did you share it with that person? Describe the situation.
  - From time to time, all of us have to deal with someone who takes significant time away from our own work. Tell me about a situation you’ve had like that. What did you do?
### Adaptability: Maintaining effectiveness when experiencing major changes in work tasks or the work environment; adjusting effectively to work within new work structures, processes, requirements

**Key Actions:** Tries to understand changes, approaches change or newness positively, adjusts behavior

Question Pool:

- We all have to make changes when the way we've been doing things is no longer effective. Tell me about a time when you've had to try a new approach to a task/project/assignment. What did you do? What were the results?
- Tell me about a manager/supervisor/team leader with whom you had the most productive work relationship. Why was it so productive?
- Unexpected absences can disrupt progress of work tasks/assignments/projects. Tell me about a time when this happened to you and explain what you did.

### Managing Work: Effectively managing one's time and resources to ensure that work is completed efficiently.

**Key Actions:** Priorities, determines tasks and resources, schedules, leverages resources, stays focused

Question Pool:

- We've all been in situations when we couldn't complete everything we needed to on time. Tell me about a time when this happened to you.
- Give me a recent example of a time when your schedule was disrupted by unforeseen circumstances. What did you do?
- Describe how you plan your daily or weekly work activities. Walk me through the process for yesterday (or last week).

### Applied Learning: Assimilating and applying new job-related information in a timely manner.

**Key Actions:** Actively participate in learning activities, quickly gains and applies knowledge, understanding or skill

Question Pool:

- Which course in school was easiest for you, and which was the most difficult? Why?
- We've all worked on projects when we felt confused or overwhelmed. Tell me about a time when that happened to you.
- In any new job there are some things we pick up quickly and other things that take more time. In your job at ____________, tell me about something you learned quickly and something you learned quickly and something that too more time.

Follow-up Questions:
For Situation/Task:
Describe a situation when...
Why did you...
What were the circumstances surrounding...
What were you reacting to?

For Action:
Exactly what did you do?
Describe specifically how you did that.
What did you do first? Second?
Describe your specific role.
Walk me through the steps you took.

For Result:
What was the result?
How did that work out?
What happened as a result?
What feedback have you gotten?

For Motivational Fit:
How satisfied/dissatisfied were you?
How did you feel?
What did you like/dislike?