Behavioral Interviewing

What is behavioral interviewing?
Behavioral interviewing has been used in the corporate sector and is becoming more common in the legal industry as well. As we continue to recover from the economic downturn, legal employers are taking additional steps to ensure candidates are a good fit by using behavioral interviewing. Behavioral interview questions offer a look into the past experiences of a candidate to better anticipate how the candidate will handle real-life work situations. The logic is that how you behaved in the past will predict how you will behave in the future i.e. past performance predicts future performance.

Employers using behavioral interviewing have determined the skills and qualities they are seeking and ask candidates to discuss past situations where they have demonstrated these competencies. Questions beginning with “tell me about a time when” are common in behavioral interviews.

It is difficult to predict what questions any particular employer may ask, but legal employers tend to place high value on candidates’ abilities to work as part of a team, take responsibility for their work, communicate clearly, and find solutions to complex problems. Thus, behavioral interviews may focus on these competencies among others.

How to prepare?
Students should think about their work, school, and other experiences to tell a story that demonstrates their strengths and skills. Using the following list of sample questions is a good way to begin thinking about possible experiences to highlight. Each answer should touch on the following areas: Situation or Task; Action; Response or STAR. Examine your personal and work histories to describe situations that illustrate core competencies. When responding to questions about a negative situation or problem, describe both your response to the situation and how you have improved in a competency area as a result.

Reviewing the job description of the position you are interviewing for may also help you determine what skills/behavioral characteristics the employer is seeking.

Practice some of these techniques and then schedule a mock interview with our office to experience a behavioral interview and receive feedback. You will be well prepared for your interview whether it is a traditional or behavioral interview.

### Competencies/Traits/Skills Sought

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<th>Taking ownership of assignments of projects</th>
<th>Talk about a time when you made a mistake and how you recovered from it.</th>
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<td>Team orientation</td>
<td>Discuss a situation in which you were on a team and disagreed with the team leader.</td>
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<td>Integrity/Ethics/Transparency</td>
<td>Describe a time when your own ethical boundaries were tested.</td>
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<td>Clear communication</td>
<td>Tell us about a time when you received an assignment or directive that you did not fully understand. or Tell us about a time when someone misunderstood your instructions.</td>
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<td>Problem-solving abilities</td>
<td>What did you do the last time things did not go according to plan?</td>
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<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
<td>Describe a time when you worked with someone with whom you did not get along.</td>
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<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Discuss a time when you served as a team leader.</td>
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<td>Client development/Networking skills</td>
<td>Describe how you have built relationships in the past.</td>
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<td>Ability to prioritize</td>
<td>Talk about a time when you had multiple high-importance projects with overlapping deadlines.</td>
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<td>Attention to detail</td>
<td>Describe a situation in which a detail you thought to be unimportant turned out to be very important.</td>
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<td>Follow-through</td>
<td>Discuss how you have managed long-term or ongoing projects in the past.</td>
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<td>Ability to handle stress</td>
<td>Tell us about a stressful situation you have encountered and how you coped with it.</td>
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<td>Motivation/Ambition</td>
<td>Describe a work or school situation on which your efforts had a direct impact.</td>
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Adapted from the May 2011 NALP Bulletin “Behavioral Interviews-Preparing Students to Tell Their Stories” by Amanda DiPolvere and Gwen Tolbert
Career Services has moved!
The Office of Career Services is no longer located on the 13th Floor of the Corboy Law Center. Our office has moved to the 7th Floor of the CLC to accommodate construction on the 13th Floor.

CSO Summer Hours:
We’re here all summer, so take advantage of whatever downtime you have to meet with your counselor to update your resume or revamp your cover letter. If you’re out of town and want to discuss an issue over the phone, we can do that too. Don’t be a stranger!

Job Postings:
We continue to receive job postings so keep checking Symplicity if you are still looking. And, if you get an interview and want help preparing for it, call the office and schedule an interview prep session with your counselor. Our telephone number is (312) 915-7160.

Grade Points & Class Ranks:
Each summer we receive calls from students asking when they will receive grade points and class ranks. The Registrar informs us that GPAs and ranks will be ready in early July. Look for an email from the Registrar’s office in late June or early July. We also often get the question: May I round up my GPA on my resume? You should always use the GPA the Registrar’s Office gives you, e.g. 3.167 (use all four numbers) - do not round up.

How to Request an Official Transcript
All transcript requests for the School of Law are handled through the University Registrar’s Office in Lewis Towers. When sending your transcript to employers, use a copy of your official transcript.

Why? Because it looks more official and is easier to read. Request an original official transcript by going to the University Registrar’s web page at: http://transcriptrequest.luc.edu/alumni/pages/jsp/.

After you receive the original official transcript, make multiple copies of it so you can use throughout the fall semester.

Labeling PDFs & Other Attachments in Emails to Employers:
Label all materials that you attach to emails clearly. Include your name, the name of the document you are sending and the date (i.e. SusieStudentResume06-2011).

If you plan to email several documents, consider creating one PDF with all of your documents in it and emailing that to the recipient. Label it: SusieStudentApplicationMaterials06-2011. Then the recipient will have only one document (PDF) to open.

Include the following as part of any application: Resume, Cover Letter, Transcript, Writing Sample & Reference List.

Deadlines for Post-Graduate Public Interest & Federal Government Jobs for 2012
This summer educate yourself about the various government agencies and public interest organizations that do the kind of work that interests you. Some federal agencies have early Fall deadlines.

Learn about the various agencies and organizations’ application processes and deadlines by going to: http://www.luc.edu/law/career/job_search_resources.html.

Post-Graduate Fellowships
For 3Ls interested in pursuing public interest work, post-graduate fellowships offer a wonderful opportunity to begin your career. The deadlines are in the early fall for most fellowships. Information on Equal Justice Works, Skadden and other fellowship programs is available on our website and on PSLawNet.

http://www.luc.edu/law/career/fellowships.html

Fall 2011 Externships
For students interested in participating in the Fall Externship program, you must secure an externship placement and complete the registration form & Honors Statement by July 29, 2011. Students with 51 credit hours are eligible to participate in all externships; students with less than 51 credit hours are eligible to participate in judicial externships.

See the externship website for details: http://www.luc.edu/law/career/externships.html