

Structured Behavioral Interviews



A Structured Behavioral Interview

- Predicts future behavior
- Measures a candidates response to a situation, behavior, or outcome
- Focuses on DSP core competencies

Example:

NADSP Competency Area 1: Participant Empowerment

- Describe a situation when you assisted an individual in recognizing that they had several choices in how to handle a difficult problem.
- What did you do in the situation?
- What was the final outcome?

Structured Behavioral Interviews for DSPs

Behavioral Interview Questions

Sample Direct Support Professional Structured Interview Questions



Structured Interview Questions

COMPLETE LIST OF BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



Direct Support Professional Interview Questionnaire

STRUCTURED BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTION TEMPALTE



Structured Behavioral Interviews

- Determine screening or pre-interview questions
- Determine the behavioral / situational questions
- Determine the baseline for scoring the responses
- Determine how to make a hiring decision and job offer

Screening or Pre-Interview Questions

Are they qualified?

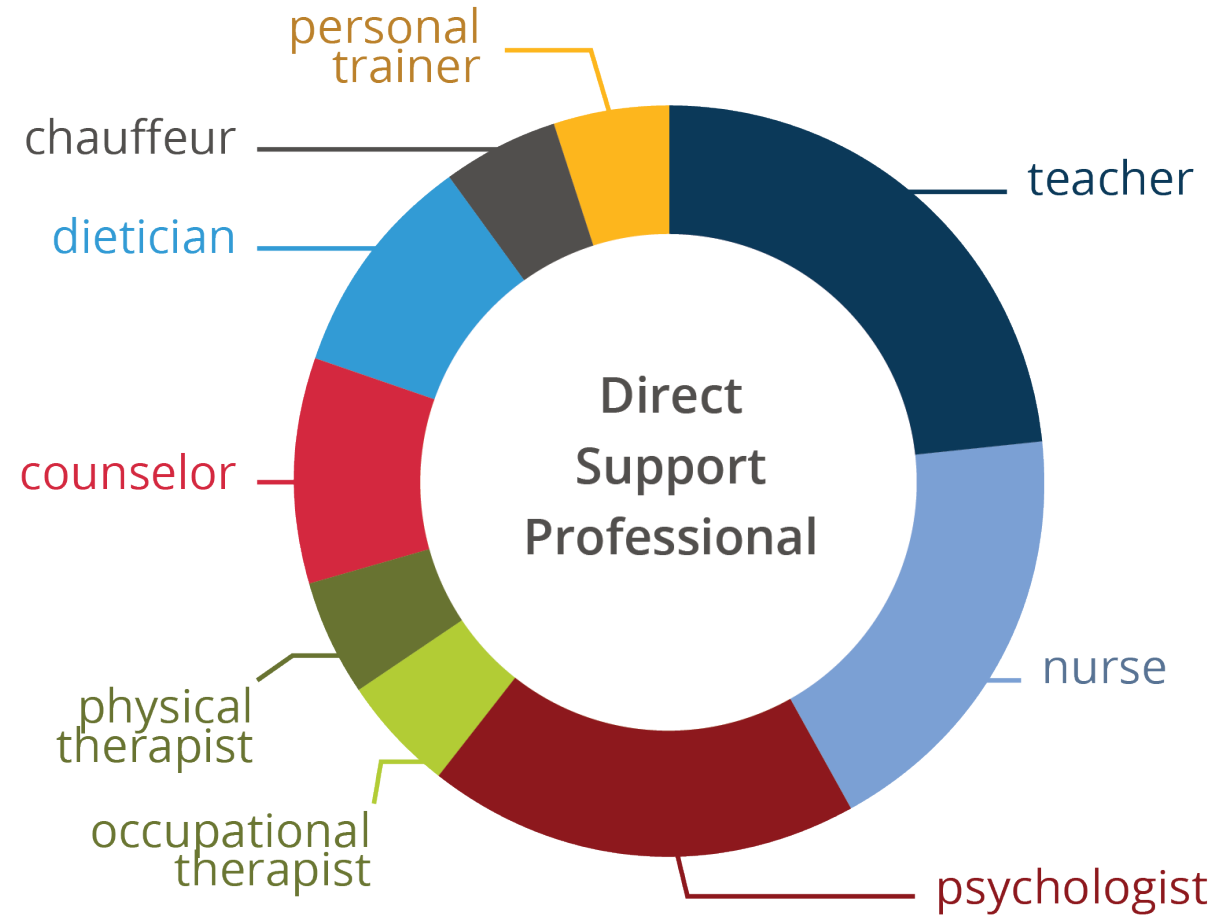
- What experience do you have supporting people with disabilities or children?
- How did you hear about this job?
- Do you have a valid driver's license?
- Can you lift a certain number of pounds?
- Have you ever been convicted of...
- Are you available to work specific days and hours when there are openings?

Components of the Structured Interview

Use consistent interview questions for all candidates.

- Include frontline supervisors and the best DSPs to determine the questions and the score guide
- Job-related questions may be based upon the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) Competency Areas
- Ask all candidates the same intentional, job-related questions

Direct Support Professionals Scope of Practice



Developing the Questions

All questions should be relevant to the job. For example:

We know that DSPs need to think on their feet.

Tell me a time when you had to make a quick decision.

Behavioral and Situational Questions

The best indicator of future behavior is:

- Past behavior in similar circumstances
- Past recent behavior or longstanding behavior

Behavioral Questions – Example 1

Behavioral questions ask the candidate to describe a situation that they faced, what they did, and what the result was. For example:

Describe a time when you didn't understand a task that you were asked to complete. What did you do and what was the result of your actions?

Behavioral Questions – Example 2

The best behavioral interviews ask the candidate to describe the greatest extent of a situation:

- best/worst
- most/least
- hardest/easiest

Behavioral Questions – Example 3

Effective behavioral questions ask the candidate about the first and the last time a situation occurred and how they handled the situation each time.

Did they handle it the same each time or did they change their response based on what they learned the first time the situation occurred?

Behavioral Questions – Example 4

Describe the **first time** you dealt with a child or adult who was upset and acting out.

- What did you do? What was the result?

Describe the **last time** you dealt with a child or adult who was upset and acting out.

- What did you do? What was the result?

Behavioral Questions – Example 5

Ask the candidate about their most significant accomplishments.

What will you learn about the person through this question?

Situational Questions

Are based on goal-setting theory

- Suggests that intentions are related to actual behavior.

Are situational dilemmas

- Forced to choose between two or more equally desirable or undesirable courses of action.

Which type of interview question is most effective?

Studies have shown that both behavioral and situational questions can help identify the best candidate if:

- Questions are based upon the job responsibilities
- All candidates are asked the same questions
- Scoring guides are used
- Panels are used rather than one-to-one interviews

Larson, S., & Hewitt, A. (2012). Staff Recruitment, Retention, Training Strategies for Community Human Services Organizations. Chapter 4, Hermedin and Robertson, Retrieved from: <https://ici.umn.edu/products/view/580>

Eliciting More Information

- Clarifying questions such as “What do you mean by...”
- Seeking more information to build on previous statements, such as “Could you tell me more about...?”
- Repeating a question that was asked but not answered
- Clarifying what has been said that seems to be inconsistent
- Summarizing key ideas

Bonus Question to Gauge Their Interest

On a scale from 1- 10, with 1 being the least interested and 10 being the most interested, how interested are you in the job and why?

If they aren't at a 8-10, ask "What could get your score higher?"

Additional Considerations

- Does information in the interview match or conflict with anything on the application?
- Does the candidate show discomfort in discussing certain information regarding their background?
- Was the candidate on time or early for the interview? This could be a predictor if they will be on time or early for work.

Work Samples

Have candidates complete a work sample

- The sample would be a task that is related to the actual job.
- It gives the candidate the opportunity to experience a bit of the job.

For example, the candidate could use an augmentative or alternative communication device to interact with individuals who receive services.

The Score Guide

After determining the interview questions, establish clear criteria for evaluating responses to the questions.

- Identify what makes up an excellent vs. poor response
- Involve your best performing DSPs and Frontline Supervisors to determine the questions and what constitutes the best to worst responses
- Write down the scoring guide that everyone will use for all candidates.

Consistency in Scoring

Studies show that the consistency of interview scoring across raters can be increased if:

- Questions are based on a job description and are closely related to the job
- There is a written scoring guide
- Interviews are scored question by question
- An interview panel is used rather than a single rater to evaluate responses
- Interviewers take notes during the interview

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Developing the Score Guide

- Best performing DSPs and FLS should help develop the guide
- Discuss and agree on a rating scale for question responses.
- Score guides allow:
 - An interview panel to be consistent in scoring
 - A solo interviewer to be consistent with themselves.

Example Interview Question:

Describe the household chore that you like least. How do you ensure that the chore is completed?

Example Response Score Guide

- **Excellent** (5 Points) – I negotiate with my housemate or partner to do a task they strongly dislike in exchange for helping me or for completing the chore. This way, the chore is complete when needed and is done well.
- **Average** (3 Points) – I do the task as required, but if I can find someone else to do it or hire someone to do the chore for me, I do.
- **Poor** (1 Point) – I yell at my kids, partner, or housemate until they complete the chore, or I just don't do it.

Know your expectations

Make hiring decisions based upon pre-determined scores

If you use a rating scale, you may pre-determine what score meets your hiring expectations.

- Example: On a rating scale of 1-5. candidate must score an average of 4 to be considered

Pre-determining these criteria can be very helpful when either one or multiple people are interviewing for the organization.

Making a Final Hiring Decision

Assess if the person has met your hiring expectations based upon the candidate's:

- Application and resume
- Interview
- Work samples
- References
- Background check
- Their fit for the people receiving services?
- Their fit for the team?
- Their interest in the job

Matching

If you have more than one qualified candidate for a position, you can compare candidates using:

- Interview scores
- Interest in the job
- References
- Background check
- Their fit or match with the:
 - Specific job/role
 - Person(s) they will support
 - Team members

Job Carving

- Looking at the skills of the candidate
- How skills can be applied to the work that needs to be done.
- Create a position that is different than before. A new position based upon:
 - The person's skills
 - Match with the team
 - Match to person(s) they would support.

Extending a Job Offer

Once a candidate has been selected, it's time to make an offer.

- The offer should be in person, on the telephone, or via video conferencing.
- Follow up with an email with the same information.
- Include the name of the position being offered, starting date, and the salary.
- Candidates may have questions at that time and/or ask for time to make a decision.

“No Offer” Communication

- Once an offer has been accepted or the job is no longer available, it is time to contact the other candidates.
- The hiring authority should keep all the applications and other documentation, including the completed rating scale.
- Candidates not offered a position should be notified.
- Candidates not interviewed should also be notified the position is no longer available.

Take Always

The Structured Behavioral Interview

- Helps you learn what you need to know about the candidate.
- Informs the candidate about the job and its duties.
- Informs the candidate about the culture, mission, and values of the employer.
- Helps you make better selection choices leading to better retention.

Questions?

- Thank you!

Resources

Contact your UMN Consultant for:

- *Behavioral Interviewing: A User's Quick Guide*
- *Structured Interview Questions: A Complete List of Behavioral Interview Questions*
- *Interview Questionnaire: Interview Template*

Contacts

For more information contact your consultant
or dsp-tn@umn.edu

tenncare.ici.umn.edu