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Introduction to Competency-Based Interviewing

Introduction

This document will provide the following information:

- Provide a quick introduction to competencies.
- Introduce applicants to competency based interviewing.
- Provide information on preparation for a competency-based interview.
- Provide competencies & definition for interview.

What are competencies?

Competencies are defined behavioral skills combined with technical knowledge and skills that will serve as indicators of success in a position. The competency tools that we are using at BPA are based on the Eichenger/Lominger tools.

Why use them?

- It is critical that organizations assess how selections are made. With limited promotional opportunities, and planned attrition, getting the right people into the right jobs becomes more critical to our success as an organization.
- The cost of an unsuccessful selection is an expense that organizations can't afford
- Competencies can be developed; the emphasis of a competency-based interview is the learning agility of applicants, and how that learning agility can be used to assess success in a position.
- Gives the organization a tool to evaluate known quantities and see them in a different light, and evaluate their ability to make effective contributions to the organization

What is a competency-based interview?

Competency based interviewing has a different focus; the focus shifting to assess the learning agility of applicants, based on identifying competencies, and using the interview process to obtain in-depth information about applicants, and how they perform, and translate learning to new situations.

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- As demonstrated in the questions, the emphasis of a competency based interview is on the applicants' life learning; interviews of the past have focused on accomplishments and future plans; competency based interviewing assesses the individual as a whole.
- Competency based interviewing emphasizes excellent communication throughout the interview; with the focus on learning, applicants with substantial learning generally interview better than those applicants with good interviewing skills, but who possess little self-awareness.
- Competency based interviewing places the emphasis on the applicant's individual ability to relate learning from experience to the position in question.

What will the interview be like?

The interview, will in general, will be conducted as follows:

- Introductions
- Brief discussion of job
- Competency based interviewing
- Validation of technical/functional skills where necessary
- Interviewee's opportunity to ask questions
- Close out/ next steps

Note: while a competency-based interview seems very different in certain perspectives, remember normal interview etiquette is applicable and appropriate.

How can an applicant prepare for competency based interviewing?

- Complete the attached worksheet for each competency that will be used.
- Spend some quiet time to focus on your learning, and how you would answer the following with regard to each competency:
 1. How you will explain the situation that provided the learning experience that applies to the competency
 2. How did you approach the situation?
 3. Why did you do it that way?

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4. What did you learn?
5. Have you had an opportunity to apply these learnings? Explain.

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How will competencies be used to make a final selection?

Your responses to the competency based interview questions, will be combined with other factors, that when summarized, will determine the selection for the position. Other factors that are used in consideration are technical and/or functional skill qualifications (in certain cases managerial), performance, responses to the knowledge's, skills and abilities, information provided by references, and training and development (where appropriate).

The following are a sample of competencies, including definitions, that might be used in an interview for a Senior Executive position:

STRATEGIC AGILITY

Sees ahead clearly; can anticipate future consequences and trends accurately; has broad knowledge and perspective; is future oriented; can articulately paint credible pictures and visions of possibilities and likelihoods; can create competitive and breakthrough strategies and plans

POLITICAL SAVVY

Can maneuver through complex political situations effectively and quietly; is sensitive to how people and organizations function; anticipates where the land mines are and plans his/her approach accordingly; views corporate politics as a necessary part of organizational life and works to adjust to that reality; is a maze-bright person.

NEGOTIATING

Can negotiate skillfully in tough situations with both internal and external groups; can settle differences with minimum noise; can win concessions without damaging relationships; can be both direct and forceful as well as diplomatic; gains trust quickly of other parties to the negotiations; has a good sense of timing.

BUILDING EFFECTIVE TEAMS

Blends people into teams when needed; creates strong morale and spirit in his/her team; shares wins and successes; fosters open dialogue; lets

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people finish, and be responsible for their work; defines success in terms of the whole team; creates a feeling of belonging in the team.

Instructions for Competency Based Interviewing

Task Directions: Thinking back over your career, jot down the 3 to 5 most memorable or influential developmental experiences and events you've had on or off-the job, at any point in your life. This is where you learned "hand over fist" things that you still use or do today.

Five Events or Experiences?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

What did you learn from those experiences?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Select some examples of how you used these learnings:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

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5) _____