## Course Title: Behavioral & Competency-Based Interviewing: Hiring for Performance & Fit

- **Duration:** 5 Days (approximately 35-40 instructional hours)
- **Course Goal:** To transform participants from traditional interviewers into highly skilled assessors of talent by providing them with a deep, practical mastery of behavioral and competency-based interviewing techniques. This will enable them to conduct structured, fair, and legally defensible interviews that accurately predict future job performance and assess a candidate's fit with the team and organizational culture.
- **Core Focus:** Mastering techniques to conduct structured interviews that predict job performance and assess cultural fit.

**Learning Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- **Explain** the core principle of behavioral interviewing: "Past behavior predicts future performance."
- **Differentiate** between traditional, situational, and behavioral interview questions.
- **Define** core and functional competencies required for a specific role.
- **Develop** a bank of powerful, targeted behavioral interview questions based on required competencies.
- **Master** the **STAR Method** (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to elicit detailed, evidence-based examples from candidates.
- **Utilize** effective probing and follow-up questioning techniques to uncover depth and detail in candidate responses.
- **Identify** and actively mitigate common interviewer biases (e.g., halo/horns, affinity, confirmation bias).
- **Design** a structured, consistent, and legally sound interview process and scorecard.
- **Conduct** fair and effective post-interview debrief sessions with a hiring panel.
- **Assess** a candidate's alignment with organizational values and culture through behavioral examples.
- **Create** a personal action plan to implement these advanced interviewing skills.

**Target Audience:**

- Hiring managers, team leaders, and supervisors at all levels.
- Recruiters, talent acquisition specialists, and HR professionals.
- Interview panel members and senior professionals involved in the hiring process.
- Anyone responsible for making critical hiring decisions.

**Prerequisites:**

- Some experience conducting or participating in job interviews is beneficial.

**Teaching Methodology:**

This is an intensely interactive and skills-based workshop with a heavy emphasis on practice and feedback. The methodology includes:

- **Interactive Lectures:** Introducing core theories, frameworks, and legal principles.
- **Live Demonstrations:** Instructor demonstrates effective and ineffective interviewing techniques.
- **Video Analysis:** Deconstructing recorded interviews to identify best practices.
- **Intensive Role-Playing & Simulations:** The core of the workshop. Participants conduct multiple, coached behavioral interviews in triads (Interviewer, Candidate, Observer) with structured peer and instructor feedback.
- **Practical Workshops:** Participants will actively write competency definitions, develop behavioral questions, and build interview scorecards.
- **Group Discussions & Problem-Solving Clinics:** Sharing challenges and best practices for tough interview situations.
- **Action Planning:** Developing personal plans to apply learning directly to their roles.

*(For **Online Delivery**, this will be adapted using breakout rooms for intensive role-playing, virtual whiteboards (e.g., Miro/Mural) for brainstorming questions, polls for engagement, and recording features for feedback.)*

**Materials Provided:**

- Comprehensive digital or printed workbook with key concepts, frameworks, question banks, and skill-building exercises.
- A "Competency Dictionary" with sample definitions and behavioral indicators.
- Templates for a Competency Profile, a Structured Interview Guide, and an Interview Scorecard.
- Detailed case study and role-playing profiles for candidates and roles.
- A checklist for mitigating interviewer bias.
- A personal action plan template.
- Certificate of Completion.

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## Detailed Day-by-Day Curriculum

### Day 1: The Foundation – Why Behavioral Interviewing Works

- **Module 1: The Problem with Traditional Interviewing (Approx. 2 hours)**
  - Welcome, introductions, and establishing a safe space for practice and feedback.
  - The limitations of "gut feel," hypothetical questions, and unstructured interviews.
  - The high cost of a bad hire.
  - The core principle of behavioral interviewing: Past behavior is the best predictor of future performance.
  - **Activity:** "My Worst Interview Question" – Participants share and deconstruct ineffective questions they've been asked or have asked.
- **Module 2: Introduction to Competencies (Approx. 3 hours)**
  - What are competencies? (The "how" vs. the "what" of a job).

    - Differentiating between core competencies (for all employees), functional competencies (for a specific role), and leadership competencies.
    - Defining competencies with clear, observable behavioral indicators.
    - **Workshop:** Participants work in groups to define 2-3 key competencies for a case study role, identifying positive and negative behavioral indicators.
- **Module 3: Crafting Powerful Behavioral Interview Questions (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
    - The anatomy of a good behavioral question ("Tell me about a time when...").
    - Techniques for mapping questions directly to the defined competencies.
    - Developing a bank of questions for common competencies (e.g., Teamwork, Problem-Solving, Adaptability, Initiative).
    - Avoiding leading questions and illegal questions.
    - **Workshop:** Participants write a set of behavioral questions based on the competencies they defined in the previous module.
    - **End of Day 1 Recap & Q&A.**

**Day 2: Mastering the STAR Method & Probing Skills**

- **Module 4: The STAR Method for Candidates & Interviewers (Approx. 3 hours)**
    - Deep dive into the **STAR** method as a tool for structuring answers:
        - **S**ituation: The context of the story.
        - **T**ask: The specific goal or challenge.
        - **A**ction: The detailed steps the *candidate* took.
        - **R**esult: The measurable outcome of their actions.
    - The interviewer's job: To listen for and guide the candidate through all four parts of the STAR.
    - **Workshop:** "Deconstructing STARs" – Analyzing sample candidate answers to identify missing components and strong examples.
- **Module 5: The Art of Probing & Follow-Up Questions (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
    - Moving beyond the initial question to get the full story.
    - Techniques for effective probing:
        - Clarifying questions ("What do you mean by...?").
        - Action-focused questions ("What were *your* specific steps?").
        - Result-oriented questions ("How did you measure success?").
    - How to handle vague or theoretical answers and bring the candidate back to a specific example.
- **Module 6: Initial Interview Practice Lab (Approx. 2 hours)**
    - **Role-Play Workshop:** Participants conduct their first short, coached behavioral interview in triads (Interviewer, Candidate, Observer).
    - Focus is on asking a behavioral question and using probing questions to elicit a full STAR response.
    - Structured feedback from the observer and instructor.
    - **End of Day 2 Recap & Q&A.**

**Day 3: Structuring the Process & Mitigating Bias**

- **Module 7: Designing a Structured & Consistent Interview Process (Approx. 2.5 hours)**

    - The importance of consistency for fairness and effective comparison.
    - Creating a structured interview guide for a specific role.
    - Assigning competencies to different interviewers on a panel to ensure full coverage without repetition.
    - The role of a standardized interview scorecard.
    - **Workshop:** Participants create a full structured interview guide and scorecard for the case study role.
- **Module 8: Unconscious Bias in Interviewing (Approx. 3 hours)**
    - Understanding the common cognitive biases that sabotage hiring decisions (Affinity, Halo/Horns, Confirmation, Contrast Effect, Stereotyping).
    - How these biases manifest in an interview setting.
    - Practical, in-the-moment strategies for mitigating bias during and after the interview.
    - The importance of diverse interview panels.
    - **Workshop:** "Bias Spotting" – Participants analyze interview transcripts and videos to identify interviewer biases in action.
- **Module 9: Note-Taking for Objective Evaluation (Approx. 2 hours)**
    - The challenge of listening actively while taking effective notes.
    - Techniques for capturing behavioral evidence, not just general impressions.
    - Using the STAR framework to structure your notes.
    - Writing notes that are objective, legally defensible, and useful for the debrief.
    - **End of Day 3 Recap & Q&A.**

**Day 4: Advanced Interviewing & The Hiring Decision**

- **Module 10: Assessing Cultural & Values Fit (Behaviorally) (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
    - Moving from the vague "do I like them?" to a structured assessment of values alignment.
    - Defining your organization's core values in behavioral terms.
    - Developing behavioral questions to assess how a candidate has demonstrated those values in the past.
    - Differentiating between "culture fit" (hiring people like us) and "culture add" (hiring people who enrich our culture).
- **Module 11: Advanced Behavioral Interview Practice Lab (Approx. 3.5 hours)**
    - **Capstone Role-Play:** Participants conduct a longer, multi-competency behavioral interview in coached triads.
    - The focus is on managing the flow of the interview, probing deeply, taking effective notes, and managing time.
    - Candidates will have more complex profiles, requiring interviewers to adapt and probe.
    - Detailed feedback from the observer and instructor.
- **Module 12: The Post-Interview Debrief & Making a Data-Driven Decision (Approx. 1.5 hours)**
    - Facilitating an effective and fair post-interview debrief (or "wash-up") meeting.
    - Using the scorecards and behavioral evidence to guide the discussion.
    - Techniques for building consensus and making a final, defensible hiring decision.
    - **Activity:** A simulated debrief session for one of the role-play interviews.
    - **End of Day 4 Recap & Q&A.**

**Day 5: Application, Legalities & Your Action Plan**

- **Module 13: The Candidate Experience & Selling the Role (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
  - Remembering that an interview is a two-way street.
  - Creating a positive and respectful candidate experience.
  - How to effectively answer candidate questions and "sell" the opportunity without overselling.
  - Providing timely and professional follow-up.
- **Module 14: Legal Considerations in Interviewing (Deep Dive) (Approx. 2 hours)**
  - (This module must be reviewed/delivered by an HR or legal expert for the specific location).
  - A deeper look at protected classes and discriminatory questions.
  - Rules around reasonable accommodations.
  - Best practices for documentation and record-keeping.
- **Module 15: Your Personal Interviewing Action Plan (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
  - **Action Planning Workshop:** Participants reflect on their key learnings and feedback.
  - They create a personal action plan to:
    1. Identify and mitigate their top 1-2 interviewer biases.
    2. Develop a plan to work with a hiring manager on defining competencies for an upcoming role.
    3. Commit to using a structured interview guide and scorecard in their next interview.
- **Module 16: Course Review & Commitment to Hiring Excellence (Approx. 1 hour)**
  - Review of the key principles of behavioral and competency-based interviewing.
  - Open forum for final questions and sharing key insights.
  - Participants share one key commitment from their action plan.
  - Course evaluation and closing.