

The Eugene Water & Electric Board

Human Resources

Interview Process Tips

In the interview, panel members will assess your communication skills, analytical skills, preparation for the job/career, and knowledge of a particular subject.

- Be prepared. Find out a bit about The Eugene Water & Electric Board and the department you would be working for. You may choose to do research at the Eugene Public Library or by visiting our website at www.eweb.org.
- Be on time or early.
- Be prepared to speak about your past and current job responsibilities, as well as the reasons for leaving former jobs.
- Think about your strengths and weaknesses and be able to talk about them.
- Listen to the question in its entirety, think first, and then answer what you think or believe. Don't try to anticipate what you think the evaluators want to hear.
- Try to make eye contact, be relaxed and personable, and be yourself.
- Be prepared to give *specific examples* of your past work experience that illustrate your knowledge, skills and abilities.
- Be aware of your mannerisms and try not to distract the panel members. Some nervousness is natural, but the more confidence you display, the better.

Interview Format

Behavior-Based Interviewing

What Is It?

Behavior-based interviewing is one of the most commonly used interview techniques. It's based on the idea that your past performance is the best predictor of your future performance. In other words, how well you behaved or performed in past activities will help the interviewer decide how well you'd do in

the new position.

When you're asked behavior-based interview questions, you're asked to describe situations in which you've displayed the skills, abilities and personal traits being sought for the position you're applying for. In the sample questions section on back, we list some of the typical traits and skills potential employers seek.

How These Questions Work and How to Answer Them:

The interviewer will ask you to describe a time when you demonstrated a specific behavior (for example, leadership, communications skills, teamwork, etc). The interviewer might say "Tell me about a time you _____ (*had to handle a conflict OR contributed to a team success*)."

In response, you'll describe a relevant experience you had in a job, internship, class project, volunteer activity, team, or similar. To answer these questions successfully, you'll need to:

- Be very familiar with the job description and the skills and qualities being sought for it.
- Anticipate the questions or topics you'll be asked about. (*Scroll down for common questions.*)
- PRACTICE how you'll answer these questions, or what examples you'll give. Be sure your examples illustrate the skills being sought for the position.
- Use examples that are as recent as possible.
- Avoid using examples from your personal life (like relationships, friends, family).
- Vary your examples—don't just talk about one project or one area of your life.

Your examples will basically be brief stories. Give each story a beginning, middle, and end. To help you do that, prepare stories that follow the **STAR model**. STAR stands for **S**ituation, **T**ask, **A**ction, **R**esult.

Stories that Follow the STAR model incorporate these elements:

- **Situation:** Briefly set up the situation by describing the context of your example (who, what, where, when, how).
- **Task:** Explain the task you had to complete, or the problem you had to solve.

- **Action:** Describe the actions you took to complete the task or solve the problem.
- **Result:** Close by explaining the result of your efforts. Quantify that outcome if possible. (*Examples: how much you helped raise fundraising, how many kids you tutored, how many people you helped to train, etc.*)

Sample Interview Question and Answer

Below is an example of a behavior-based interview question, followed by sample answers that use the STAR model.

SAMPLE QUESTION #1: Tell me about a project that required you to track small details while still managing the big picture.

STAR-BASED ANSWER:

SITUATION = When I worked as a Peer Advisor at my school's career services office, I was responsible for helping to train new Peer Advisors. These advisors help students explore academic majors, write resumes, apply to graduate schools, and learn how to conduct a job search.

TASK = Last year I was asked by my supervisor to develop a new training program for 5 new Peer Advisors. To do this, I worked with a fellow Peer Advisor to create new materials, and also to schedule training topics and presentations. My goal was to be sure the new advisors received all the information they'd need to effectively advise students, while also making the training enjoyable and interactive.

ACTION = I identified and worked on materials needed for the training binder, created a schedule for the daily training activities, identified and contacted appropriate speakers, and created fun and interactive training activities.

RESULT = In the end, the training was a solid success. It was well-organized and stayed on schedule. My supervisor gathered feedback, and all 5 trainees reported that it was an informative and fun training.

More Examples of Behavior-Based Interview Questions

As you read through these sample questions and consider how *you'd* answer

them, it's helpful to be familiar with the skills and qualities interviewers look for in candidates. **Those skills and qualities include:** Job Knowledge and Technical Skills, Skill & Proficiency, Quality Results & Goal Achievement, Judgment and Decision Quality, Customer Focus, Productive Interactions, Teamwork, Interpersonal Awareness, Respectful Communication and Conduct, Time and Priority Management, Policy and Procedure Compliance, Initiative, Adaptability & Composure, Attendance & Punctuality, Quality & Quantity of work, Accountability, Responsiveness to Feedback, and Safety.

- **Tell me about a time you solved a difficult problem that could have had significant impact.**
- **Describe the most difficult decision you've made in the last 6 months.**
- **Tell me about a time you took initiative to do something that needed to be done, even though it wasn't really your responsibility.**
- **Describe an important goal you have achieved, and how you achieved it. Tell me about set-backs you experienced.**
- **Describe a time when you had difficulty communicating your thoughts clearly to an individual or group.**
- **Tell me about a time you voiced a concern or disagreement to a coworker, supervisor, or professor.**
- **Tell me about a situation in which you had to collaborate with several people to achieve a goal.**
- **Describe your most disappointing experience. How did you cope with it? What did you do to move beyond it?**
- **Describe a time when you were faced with a stressful situation that required coping skills.**
- **Give me a specific example of a time when you convinced your supervisor or professor of an idea. How did you accomplish this and what was the result?**
- **Tell me about a time when you took on a leadership role.**
- **Tell me about a time you provided excellent customer service.**

Interviewing is just like anything in life – the more you do it, the better you'll get. Hopefully this gives you some good insight into the process and what you need to do to be successful. Keep in mind the competitive nature of interviewing. It's not enough to do well, you have to do better than the others interviewing for the same job!

Stay positive, stay focused, be persistent, learn from your failures and, most of all, BE PREPARED! It is just as much about you interviewing EWEB, as it is about EWEB interviewing you. We hope that you find this information helpful and please let us know if you have any questions or if we can provide any additional information.

Potential Interview Locations

Please park in the Visitor parking spaces.

EWEB Headquarters:
500 E 4th Ave
Eugene, OR 97401

Roosevelt Operations Center:
4200 Roosevelt Blvd.
Eugene, OR 97402

EWEB Filtration Plant:
3957 Hayden Bridge Road
Springfield, OR 97478