

An in-person interview is your opportunity to more completely understand who your candidates are, how they think, and how they would act in your practice. Additionally, in-person interviews are a good way to involve your current employees in the hiring process.

The in-person interview process follows a format similar to the phone interview process. This guide will help you to successfully execute all steps of the process: before, during, and after the in-person interview.

### **BEFORE THE INTERVIEW: Selecting Interviewers**

Choose 3-5 of your top performers to assist in the interview process. This involvement increases the engagement of your current employees and provides multiple perspectives and opinions.

Once you have your interview team, divide them into pairs, including yourself. Each pair should prepare for and conduct their own separate 30-60 minute interview with each candidate.

Dividing your interview team into pairs, instead of interviewing as one large group, will give you the advantages of having multiple interviewers with multiple perspectives without overwhelming or intimidating the candidates. Each interview pair will need a room in which to conduct their interview, so be sure to prepare the interview space in advance.

### **BEFORE THE INTERVIEW: Selecting Behavioral Interview Questions**

Use pages 2-6 of this guide to select or create at least three behavioral interview and follow-up questions for each interviewer. The behavioral interview questions will help to assess the fit of each candidate with the role you need to fill. Be sure to choose questions that were not asked during the phone interview. Once your questions are compiled, decide which interviewer will ask which questions.

# Attracting & Hiring Exceptional Talent

## In-Person Interview Guide

### Sample Behavioral Interview Questions

Behavioral Interview Questions	Follow-up Question(s)
Tell me about a time when you have been part of a big change that happened in your job or at your workplace. What was the change, how did you contribute and did the change go well?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did many people resist the change?</li> <li>• What was your role in making the change happen?</li> <li>• How did you feel about the change?</li> </ul>
Often in a workplace, an individual can show up with a bad attitude or in a bad mood and it can affect those around them. Describe a situation where you have seen that happen and what did you do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was the effect on the team?</li> <li>• Were you able to help the person change their mood?</li> <li>• What did the other team members do?</li> </ul>
Tell me about a time when you have set concrete work goals for yourself. What goals did you set, how did you measure progress, and did you achieve those goals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did you get any support with progress toward your goals?</li> <li>• Did you set additional goals after you achieved them?</li> <li>• How did you communicate your goals to your manager?</li> </ul>
Tell me about a time when you have gone above and beyond your specific job duties to help the team improve, the business get better, or to get work done more effectively. What specifically did you do and what happened because you did it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was the effect on the team?</li> <li>• Did you need to check with anyone else before taking that action?</li> <li>• How did others around you respond to your actions?</li> </ul>
Often in a fast-paced veterinary hospital there are differences of opinion or even personalities that clash. Tell me about a time when you had a conflict with another person. What was the situation, how did you deal with it, and what was the outcome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did the relationship change?</li> <li>• What was the effect on the team?</li> <li>• How did you feel about the situation afterwards?</li> </ul>
Sometimes team members don't always perform equally. Tell me about a time when you have been on a team when an individual wasn't performing well. What did you do to help and what was the outcome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was the effect on the team?</li> <li>• Did the performance improve and if so how?</li> </ul>

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Behavioral Interview Questions	Follow-up Question(s)
Sometimes as you go through the day you can come up with ideas for improvements or ways to make things better or more effective. Tell me about a time when you have had an idea for improvement and how you approached getting that idea implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How was your idea received?</li> <li>• Did the idea get implemented?</li> <li>• Did you come up with additional ideas after that?</li> </ul>
It can be challenging in a fast-paced environment to make enough time for training and team improvement. Tell me about a time when you had to learn something informally in order to do your job better. What did you need to learn and how did you go about learning it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What challenges did you face as you were trying to learn?</li> <li>• Did you teach anyone else afterwards? If so, who?</li> </ul>
Have you ever been singled out or rewarded for your achievements, accomplishments, or contributions at work? If so, tell me what the accomplishments were and how you were rewarded.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have there been other times as well?</li> <li>• Were others on the team rewarded for similar achievements?</li> </ul>
A new job presents many challenges and opportunities, but integrating isn't always easy. Tell me about a time when you have joined a new team or organization. What were the challenges and how did you deal with the situation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was the hardest part about integrating into an existing team?</li> <li>• How did you build relationships with the other team members?</li> </ul>
Tell me about a time when you had an extremely challenging day at work. What caused it to be such a tough day? How did you handle it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have there been a lot of tough days on the job?</li> <li>• How did you manage to recover from that?</li> <li>• Were others having a tough day too?</li> </ul>
Almost all of us have to deal with supervisors and managers and sometimes that can be a challenge. Tell me about a time when you disagreed with a manager or supervisor. What happened and how did you handle it? What was the outcome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did you discuss the situation with the manager?</li> <li>• How was it resolved?</li> <li>• Did others feel the same way about the decision?</li> </ul>

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Behavioral Interview Questions	Follow-up Question(s)
Tell me about a time when you had to make a change at work. Why did you feel the change was needed? How did you make the change and what were the results? What did you learn from that experience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was this change mandated or did you make the change proactively?</li> <li>• What did you learn from making this change?</li> <li>• Do you feel that you have more ability to be adaptable because of this experience?</li> </ul>
Tell me about a time when someone asked you to do something you didn't think was appropriate. What was the most challenging part of this situation? How did you respond? What happened to the relationship?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why was this situation challenging for you?</li> <li>• Do you feel that you resolved this situation well?</li> <li>• How was this situation resolved?</li> </ul>
Often in veterinary medicine we are faced with challenges of how to balance the best care for the pet with what we believe the pet owner can afford. How have you balanced that in the past and what guides your decision making in those situations? How have you handled situations where clients stated that they simply can't afford the care their pet?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did pet care or cost guide your initial thinking?</li> <li>• Were you able to maintain a positive relationship with the client when having this conversation?</li> </ul>
What have you done to foster the growth of a team or an organization? What was your unique contribution? What was the result?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did your effort make a difference?</li> <li>• Was your contribution recognized by others?</li> </ul>
Have you ever worked on a pet care team that you believed needed to be more effective or more efficient? What did you do and what were the results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you describe specific examples of how you contributed to the team's improvement?</li> <li>• How did you approach the team to initiate a change?</li> </ul>
What is more important in veterinary medicine, being able to care for more pets or devoting more time to each pet to ensure effective care? How do you balance the competing priorities of quality and speed when it comes to pet care?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do you feel this way?</li> <li>• How does your approach to pet care affect clients and the practice?</li> </ul>

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Behavioral Interview Questions	Follow-up Question(s)
Tell me about a time when you have taken accountability for the outcome of a situation involving others. What was the situation and what did you do to help create a positive outcome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did you engage others to improve performance?</li> <li>• Did you involve others and solicit ideas and input?</li> </ul>
Think of a time when there was a poor performer on your team. How did you handle the situation and what were the results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did you address the performance issues quickly?</li> <li>• Did the poor performance affect the performance of others and how did you handle this?</li> <li>• Did you provide coaching to help this person improve their performance?</li> </ul>
How would you articulate a vision for the ultimate veterinary hospital? Describe in your words what that hospital would be like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you feel that this vision would inspire others and create engagement? Why?</li> </ul>
What steps have you taken in the past to create a strong team culture and a high performance environment? How did it affect team performance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you inspire a team?</li> <li>• How would you describe your approach to leading a high-performing team?</li> </ul>
In the fast-paced world of veterinary medicine, it's easy to make mistakes. Tell me about a time when you made a mistake that had significant consequences. What mistake did you make? What were the results? What did you do to prevent similar mistakes in the future? What did you learn from the experience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you feel that this mistake could have been prevented?</li> <li>• What did you do to remedy this situation?</li> <li>• Did your mistake affect others? Do you feel that others appreciated how you handled the situation?</li> </ul>

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### Create Your Own Behavioral Interview Questions

If you find that none of the sample behavioral interview questions on pages 2-5 meet your needs, you can build your own questions based on information captured in your Success Profile. When creating these questions, be sure they focus on “*how have you,*” not “*how would you.*” Asking a question starting with “*how have you,*” or “*tell me about a time*” helps to identify patterns or habits that candidates already have. This is a much better indicator of how candidates might perform in your practice than how they think they might handle a situation in the future.

Behavioral Interview Question
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow-up Question: _____</li><li>• Follow-up Question: _____</li><li>• Follow-up Question: _____</li></ul>

Behavioral Interview Question
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow-up Question: _____</li><li>• Follow-up Question: _____</li><li>• Follow-up Question: _____</li></ul>

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## DURING THE INTERVIEW

To begin the in-person interview, each interview pair should start with introductions. Then, the interviewers should take turns asking their behavioral interview and follow-up questions. Each interview pair should end by giving the candidate an opportunity to share any questions and letting the candidate know how to proceed next. For example, if the candidate still needs to complete another interview, tell them where to go next. Or, if this is the candidate's last interview, thank them for coming and show them out of the office.

### DURING THE INTERVIEW: Score Candidate Responses

During the interview, each interviewer should use the scale below to score candidate responses to behavioral interview questions. A rating scale will help you quickly and efficiently record your impressions of candidate answers and analyze each candidate's fit in a more concrete way.

Use the space on pages 8-9 to record the behavioral interview questions you plan to ask, any follow-up questions, notes about candidate answers, red flag responses, and scores for candidate responses.

Behavioral Interview Rating Scale		
1 - 2	3	4 - 5
<p>Did not fully answer the question, was not able to articulate a response.</p> <p>Answered the question, but gave a response that clearly was not in alignment with our culture or practices.</p>	<p>Gave an adequate answer, had some level of detail, and was able to provide some specifics.</p> <p>The answer was on target with regard to what we are looking for and aligned with the role, profile, and our culture.</p>	<p>The answer was specific, thorough, and the candidate gave a complete and detailed account of the situation and the results.</p> <p>The candidate demonstrated that s/he would significantly contribute to helping the practice grow, the culture improve, and would be an overall asset to our business.</p>

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Candidate Name	Interviewer

Behavioral Interview Question	Follow-Up Question(s)
Notes	Red Flag Responses
Rating (1-5)	

Behavioral Interview Question	Follow-Up Question(s)
Notes	Red Flag Responses
Rating (1-5)	

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Overall Rating (1-5)			
All Rater Score (Total After In-Person Interview)			
Rater Name		Score	
<b>TOTAL</b>			
Recommendation to Proceed to In-Person/Working Interview			
Yes		No	

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### **AFTER THE INTERVIEW: Interview Team Debrief Meeting**

After the interview is complete, the interview team should have a debrief meeting. This meeting should happen as quickly as possible after the interview.

Before this meeting, make sure that each interviewer has independently recorded their thoughts and scores to the candidate's responses. It is important that interviewers do not share or discuss their impressions of the candidate before the meeting as doing so can lead to interviewers influencing one another's opinions.

Once each interviewer has submitted their notes and ratings, compile the candidate's total score and debrief by discussing the interviewers' impressions of the candidate. Ultimately, you will need to come to a consensus on which candidate(s) should be invited back for a working interview.

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### Practicing for the In-person Interview

Although the steps for the in-person interview process are similar to the steps you completed when conducting phone interviews, it is recommended that you practice before the interviews. This additional round of practice will help you get even more comfortable asking behavioral interview and follow-up questions. In addition, it will allow you to practice coordinating the logistics around conducting interviews in pairs.

To practice:

1. Divide your interview team into pairs.
2. Choose which behavioral interview and follow-up questions each interviewer will ask.
3. Determine where each interview will take place.
4. Be sure each interviewer has a copy of pages 7-9 of this guide to rate and record their responses during the interview.
5. Each pair should practice asking their behavioral interview and follow-up questions to one another. One person should play the role of the “interviewer” and one person play the role of the “interviewee,” then switch roles.
6. After each practice interview, the “interviewee” should provide feedback.
  - Did the “interviewer” ask the questions well?
  - Did s/he remember to ask follow-up questions?
  - What, if anything, can s/he do to improve?
7. When each interview pair is finished practicing, meet as an interview team and discuss the following questions:
  - What was easy about this process? What was difficult?
  - Is there anything we should do differently on the day of the actual interviews?