



# Hiring Guide: Graphic Designer

Everything You Need to Hire Great Talent



## What's Included in This Guide?

1. **The State of Hiring:** How behavioral interviews help address some of the challenges facing HR professionals as they recruit talent today
2. **Behavioral Interviews 101:** What are they? Why use them? Tips and tricks
3. **How to Evaluate:** Tips on evaluating behavioral interviews
4. **Summary Job Description:** A sample job description for the Graphic Designer role, including:
  - Job summary
  - Responsibilities
  - Competency names, levels, definitions
  - Knowledge Areas
  - Education
  - Certifications
5. **Interview Questions:** 5 Behavioral interview questions related to job requirements
6. **Interview Guide Rating Scale:** Description of each level of the rating scale
7. **Summary Interview Rating Sheet:** Summary sheet to pull all competency ratings together

# State of Hiring

Hiring has undergone a fundamental shift in recent years, as companies are finding it more difficult to fill key positions with the right people.

A number of trends have contributed to this shift. The modern workforce is far more transient than generations past, so organizations are putting more emphasis on recruiting their next great candidate than developing them from within.

It has gotten so out of control, that according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 95% of external hiring is done to fill existing positions due to people voluntarily leaving. And this shortage of candidates has left HR in a difficult situation.

Talent is likely to be the main driver of business success in the coming years, and HR needs to drive a strategic hiring process that actively seeks out candidates with the right competencies to support the achievement of business goals.

The best way to explore a candidate's skill-set and fit with a particular job is using behavioral interviewing techniques.

Read on to find out how behavioral interview questions can help you make better hiring decisions and get the tools you need to hire your next top candidate!



# Behavioral Interviews 101

Behavioral interview questions (also known as competency-based interview questions) are designed to elicit information about the candidate's past experience and accomplishments that relate to the competencies required in the target job.



## The Goal: Behavioral Examples



Knowing a candidate's actions is of little use if you do not understand the circumstances surrounding the actions and the results produced by those actions. To fully understand a candidate's past behavior, make sure to explore the following three components in order to make an informed judgement about whether the candidate has displayed the level and quality of behavior required:

- The **Situation or Task** in which the candidate was involved;
- The **Action** which the candidate took to complete the task or address the situation; and,
- The **Result** of the candidate's action.

When the information provided by a candidate addresses all three areas, then the information is called a **behavioral example**.

## Deciding What to Evaluate:

When selecting the competencies to evaluate during an interview, it is important to consider two factors:

- What competencies are included on the competency profile for the target job?
- What other assessments methods will be used during the selection process?

A competency profile – *the collection of competencies used together to represent the most critical aspects of a job* – typically contains seven to ten competencies covering both the behavioral (soft-skills) and the technical requirements of the job.

It can be overwhelming to ask questions addressing every associated competency, so we recommend asking no more than five questions during a standard interview. This means that you will need to select the five most critical competencies to focus on for the interview.

For this interview guide, we have included five questions that provide coverage across the soft skills and technical requirements for the job.

If you will be including other aspects in your interview process, like a simulation or work samples, you may find that technical competencies are more easily assessed by those means.

# What to Watch Out For

When interviewing candidates, be careful not to let candidates provide **false behavioral examples**, which can be misleading. There are three common types of false behavioral examples to look out for:

## Theoretical or Future-Oriented Statements:

These statements indicate what a candidate thinks they would do, not what they have done, and provide no information about past behavior.

### **False Behavioral Example:**

*"I would make sure the client received the support needed to ensure on-time delivery."*

### **Behavioral Example:**

*"The client needed extra support to ensure their shipment arrived on time. To help with this, I made sure I understood when the shipment was required, I coordinated with the production and shipping departments on my end, and as a result, everything was delivered on time."*

## Feelings or Opinions:

These statements are simply an individual's emotional reaction to a situation or event, and provide no insight into behavior.

### **False Behavioral Example:**

*"I am really good at teaching myself new software packages."*

### **Behavioral Example:**

*"When I joined ACME Corp, they used a CRM that I had never used before. With no internal resources available to train me, I was able to learn the tool using online tutorials and videos. I became so well versed in the product, I ended up the go-to internal expert."*

## Vague Statements:

These are typically summaries or descriptions of several past actions reported in a general way, requiring you to probe further.

### **False Behavioral Example:**

*"I always had the customer's best interest in mind and never got pushy or argumentative."*

### **Behavioral Example:**

*"As an Implementation Specialist, I always had the customer's best interests in mind. In one situation, a client was feeling pressured to purchase an upgrade. I stepped in to ensure our team understood the client's needs. Although the Sales Rep was angry with me for stepping in, I explained the client's perspective and got everyone on the same page. Three months later, the client upgraded anyway."*

# The Structure of Behavioral Interview Questions

The interview questions included in this guide are all structured in the same format. Each question applies to the specific competency being evaluated. Follow-up questions are included to help you probe further into a candidate's past experiences, and behavioral cues are provided to illustrate examples of what to look for in a candidate's answer.

## Question 1: Creativity and Innovation – Level 3

Generating viable, new approaches and solutions.

Competency name and definition

### Question:

**Describe the most complex problem that you were faced with and how you generated a new approach or explanation or solution.**

Job specific question

- What was the problem?
- What was complex about it?
- What new approach or explanation did you come up with?
- What was new about it?
- How did this benefit your work (or the work of others)?

Probes to help elicit greater specificity from candidates

What to look for:

Identifies new approaches.

- Creates new ideas, solutions or approaches to ongoing challenges.
- Uses unconventional areas as sources of inspiration and insight into new options and solutions.
- Solves complex problems through developing new explanations or applications.

Behavioral indicators to look for the specific competency at the required level of proficiency



Rating scale (See Appendix A for details)

# How to Evaluate the Interview



All of the energy and effort devoted to capturing good job-related information during the selection interview will be lost if this information is not evaluated consistently for all candidates. Use the following instructions to evaluate candidate information from a behavioral interview.

## Step 1: Classify All Behavioral Examples

Each behavioral question is designed to elicit information relevant to a **specific competency**.

However, candidates may provide information that goes beyond the specific competency, resulting in one of the following situations:

- A question will be asked focusing on one competency area, but the candidate provides a behavioral example that demonstrates another.
- Examples are provided that relate to more than one competency area.
- Examples that relate to the required competencies will be provided during the introductory phases of the interview, or during the close of the interview.

The whole interview should, therefore, be reviewed carefully for evidence of the competencies being assessed.



### Tip

When reviewing a behavioral example given by the candidate, make clear notes along-side the example the competency actually demonstrated.

This can then easily be cross referenced in the section of the Interview Guide devoted to that competency.

## Step 2: Weigh the Behavioral Examples

The next step is to weigh each example in terms of its overall contribution to the rating for each competency. This is not simply a process of averaging all of the positives and negatives to arrive at an overall rating. The following factors should be taken into account:

- **Significance:** The importance of the examples provided should be carefully considered. If the candidate provides two examples, one from a trivial situation, and one from a situation that had significant impact, the example with greater importance should be considered more significant.
- **Recency:** The more recent the behavior, the better it predicts future behavior. If the candidate provides a number of negative examples of a competency earlier in their career, but also provides several more recent positive examples, then the recent examples should be given more weight in the overall rating of the competency, other things being equal.

- **Trends:** Consistent with the concept of recency, examples which show a trend either positively or negatively should be taken into account. It is likely that a trend would continue if the candidate were selected for the target position.
- **Job-Relatedness:** How closely related is the behavioral example to the job that they are interviewing for? In cases where the candidate gives more than one example, the most relevant behavioral example to the job they're interviewing for should be considered most significant.



### Tip

When assessing relevance, carefully consider the situation.

A candidate may provide good examples of team building skills in volunteer situations involving children, but a number of negative examples with adults on the job.

Although volunteer experience is perfectly acceptable, the latter examples must be given more weight if the candidate is expected to demonstrate this skill with adults on the job.

## Step 3: Assign a Rating to Each Competency

The next step is to assign a rating to each competency based on the candidate's demonstration of the relevant behavioral indicators.



### Tip

When running a panel interview, have each interviewer complete a summary interview rating sheet to save time when reviewing results.

A summary rating scale is provided in [Appendix A](#).



# Job Description: Graphic Designer

## Job Summary

The Graphic Designer presents design solutions as related to marketing objectives, involving producing print and digital marketing materials. This position is also responsible for web design and maintenance.

**Job level:** Individual Contributor



## Responsibilities

### General Marketing

- Gather client requirements for design projects
- Follow usability principles for all digital design projects
- Demonstrate design excellence in both print and digital applications
- Present design solutions as they pertain to marketing objectives while justifying design direction
- Create graphic layout and design concepts using standard design software
- Collaborate with team members to ensure consistent design and implementation of brand guidelines across platforms
- Design and improve layouts for multiplatform content initiatives
- Conduct oral presentations on graphic design concepts
- Create user flows and design thinking diagrams that strengthen design decisions
- Estimate cost of materials and time to complete graphic design



## Competencies

### Advertising and Sales Promotion (Level 3)

Developing corporate advertising and promotional materials and tools in line with identified business needs.

### Creativity and Innovation (Level 3)

Generating viable, new approaches and solutions.

### Fostering Communication (Level 3)

Listening and communicating openly, honestly, and respectfully with different audiences, promoting dialogue and building consensus.

### Attention to Detail (Level 2)

Working in a conscientious, consistent and thorough manner.

### Content Marketing (Level 1)

Developing content strategies, programs and tools in line with the organization's marketing framework and objectives.



## Knowledge Areas

- Adobe After Effects (Intermediate)
- Adobe Creative Suite (Intermediate)
- Adobe Illustrator (Intermediate)
- Adobe InDesign (Intermediate)
- Adobe Photoshop (Intermediate)
- Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) (Intermediate)
- Adobe Dreamweaver (Intermediate)
- Flash (Intermediate)
- Graphic Design Software (Intermediate)
- Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) (Intermediate)
- JavaScript (Intermediate)
- QuarkXPress (Intermediate)
- Typography Marketing (Intermediate)
- WordPress (Intermediate)
- Microsoft Office Suite (Intermediate)



## Education

- Commercial Art (College diploma) **or**
- Marketing (College diploma) **or**
- Graphic Arts and Design (College diploma)

# Graphic Designer Interview Guide

Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

## Question 1: Advertising and Sales Promotion – Level 3

Developing corporate advertising and promotional materials and tools in line with identified business needs.

### Question:

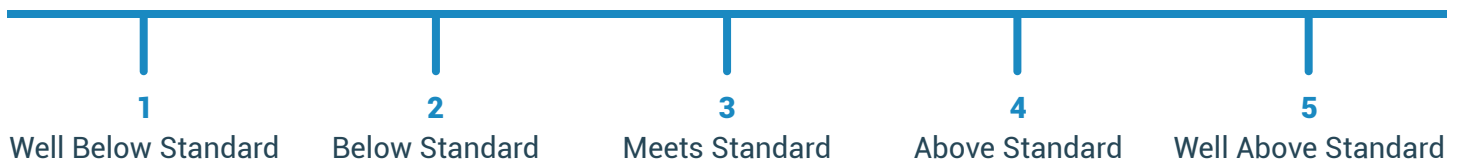
**Tell us about a time when you monitored advertising performance indicators and adapted strategies in response to those indicators.**

- What was the situation?
- What were the performance indicators you were monitoring?
- How did you adapt your strategies?
- What was the impact?

What to look for:

Applies the competency in the full range of typical situations, requiring guidance in only the most complex or new situations.

- Inspires and manages the generation of creative concepts and ideas.
- Keeps up-to-date on trends and developments in design, materials, techniques and technology.
- Initiates and manages discussions and sales with sponsors and agencies.
- Develops corporate advertising specifications/contents for larger, more complex assignments e.g. a national program.
- Consults with advertising agencies or staff to arrange promotional campaigns in all types of media for products, organizations, or individuals.



### Notes (Situation, Action, Results):

## Question 2: Creativity and Innovation – Level 3

Generating viable, new approaches and solutions.

### Question:

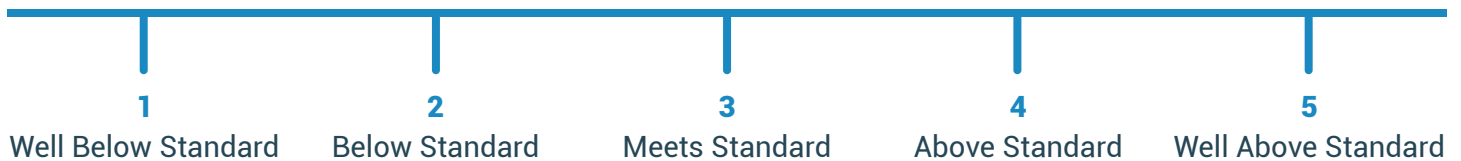
**It is often surprising how effective it can be to look at something in a new or unconventional way. Tell us about a time when looking at a problem from a unique or unconventional angle helped you to come up with a solution.**

- What was the problem?
- What was unique about the way you approached the problem?
- What solution did you come up with?
- How did the solution work?

What to look for:

Identifies new approaches.

- Creates new ideas, solutions or approaches to ongoing challenges.
- Uses unconventional areas as sources of inspiration and insight into new options and solutions.
- Solves complex problems through developing new explanations or applications.



### Notes (Situation, Action, Results):

## Question 3: Fostering Communication – Level 3

Listening and communicating openly, honestly, and respectfully with different audiences, promoting dialogue and building consensus.

### Question:

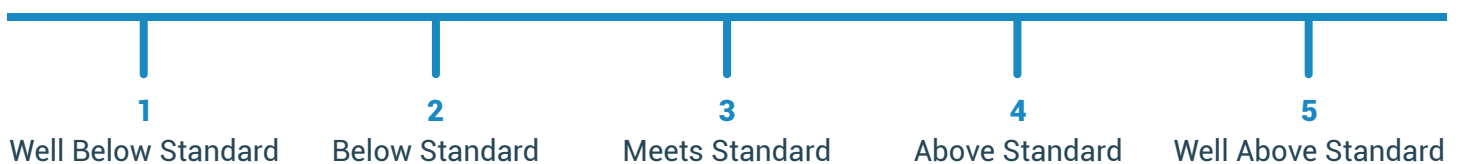
**Describe a time when you had to adjust your communication for a diverse audience to produce the desired effect.**

- What was the purpose of your communication?
- In what way(s) was the audience diverse?
- How did you try to tailor your communication to achieve its purpose?
- How did you ensure that people had gotten the information they were looking for?
- What was the outcome?

What to look for:

Adapts communication.

- Tailors communication (e.g., content, style, and medium) to diverse audiences.
- Reads cues from diverse listeners to assess when and how to change planned communication approach to effectively deliver message.
- Communicates with all organizational levels.
- Understands others' complex or underlying needs, motivations, emotions or concerns, communicating effectively despite the sensitivity of the situation.



### Notes (Situation, Action, Results):

## Question 4: Attention to Detail – Level 2

Working in a conscientious, consistent and thorough manner.

### Question:

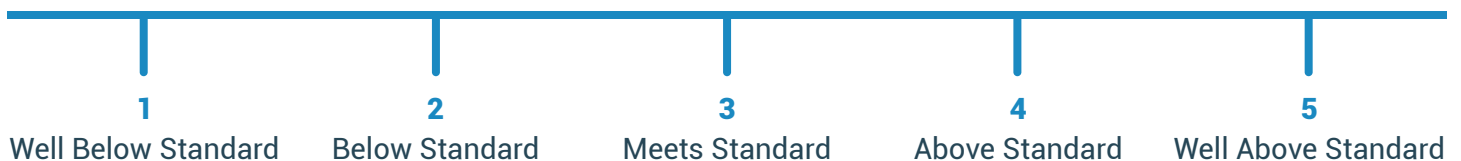
**Describe a situation where you examined the underlying assumptions or the information received prior to starting a project.**

- What was the project?
- What assumptions/information did you challenge? And why?
- How did you proceed to verify the assumptions/information?
- How was your intervention received/perceived?
- What was the impact on the overall project?

What to look for:

Confirms details before deciding how to act.

- Seeks out others to check or review own work for accuracy and completeness.
- Verifies assumptions and information before accepting them.
- Reviews all relevant information or aspects of a situation before taking action or making a decision.



### Notes (Situation, Action, Results):

## Question 5: Content Marketing – Level 1

Developing content strategies, programs and tools in line with the organization's marketing framework and objectives.

### Question:

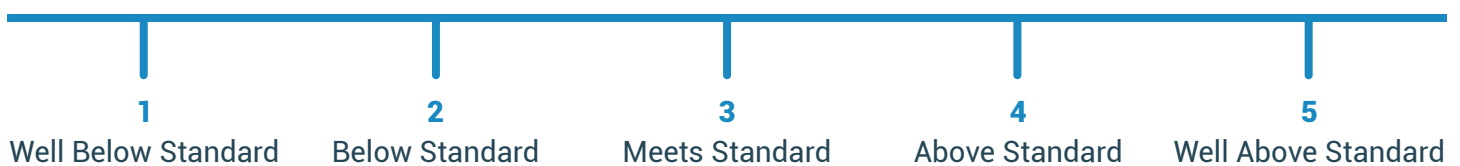
**Provide an example of how you have gathered the required content information for your tasks.**

- What did you do?
- Why was this necessary?
- How was the information used?
- What were the results?

What to look for:

Demonstrates introductory understanding, directing people to the appropriate source for further information.

- Monitors content consistency across digital properties and between the publicity and marketing departments.
- Collaborates with design team to create new social media content that embodies the brand.
- Works closely with marketing team to write user stories and requirements.
- Participates in the implementation and quality analysis of new content and functionality of the site.
- Performs basic content development activities under direction (e.g., product updates, brand reviews, partner information).
- Applies integrated content principles, practices and tools to own work when developing simple digital marketing communications products.



### Notes (Situation, Action, Results):



# Appendix A: Interview Guide Rating Scale

Level	Description	Weight
Well Below Standard	Falls significantly below requirements. Evidence of candidate's demonstration of the competency is far from adequate in all or most respects.	1
Below Standard	Below expected requirements. Evidence of candidate's demonstration of the competency is inadequate in key respects.	2
Meets Standard	Meets requirements. Evidence of candidate's demonstration of the competency meets expectations and reflects an adequate ability to perform; candidate may have demonstrated minor weaknesses in some aspects of the competency, but non of major significance.	3
Above Standard	Exceeds requirements. Evidence of candidate's demonstration of the competency is above average and reflects more than an adequate ability to perform; all or most aspects of the competency are demonstrated at an above average level.	4
Well Above Standard	Significantly exceeds requirements. Evidence of candidate's demonstration of the competency is exceptional and reflects superior ability to perform; all aspects of the competency are demonstrated to a high degree.	5

# Appendix B: Summary of Interview Ratings

Candidate:

Position:

Date of interview:

Interviewer:

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Competency	1 Well Below Standard	2 Below Standard	3 Meets Standard	4 Above Standard	5 Well Above Standard
Advertising and Sales Promotion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creativity and Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fostering Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attention to Detail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Content Marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Recommendation:

Continued Consideration

Reject

## General Comments:

# About HRSG

For three decades, HRSG has delivered products and services to define talent needs, address skill deficiencies and improve individual and organizational performance.

Our Products division has distilled that 30 years of expertise into a competency, job description and career management software solution. Leveraging the power of AI, CompetencyCore™ is unlike any other product on the market, bringing together the power of competencies and the utility of job descriptions.

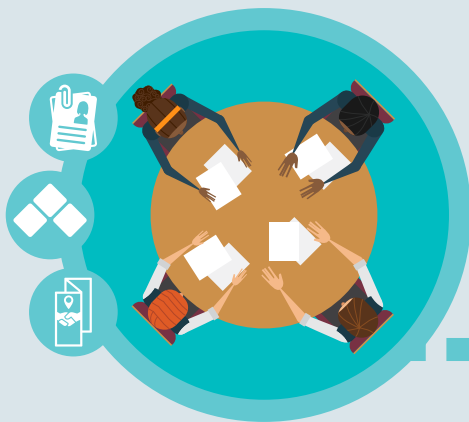
Our Talent Management Solutions division delivers best practice professional services in competency-based management, testing and assessment. In addition, we train HR professionals worldwide in our competency-based management methodologies.



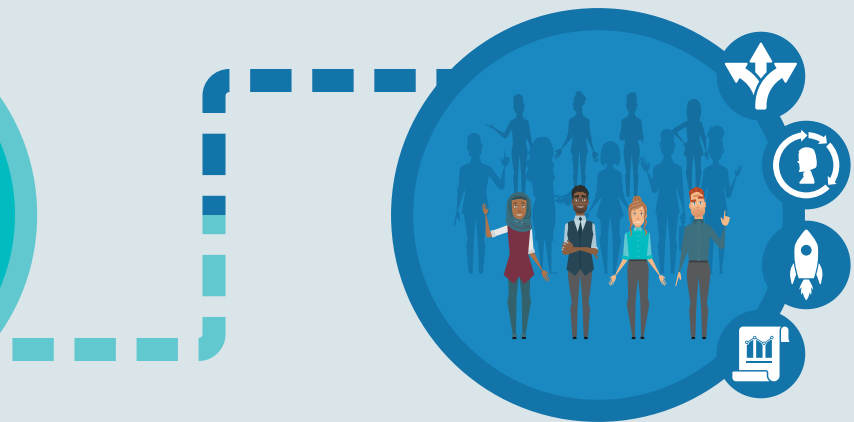
**CompetencyCore** by HRSG makes use of our exclusive **Smart Job Description Technology** to power every stage of the employee lifecycle through competencies.

Start with *Mapping* to map your jobs and competencies, then add *Navigating* to engage your employees.

## MAPPING



## NAVIGATING



Use Smart Job Description Technology to unify your company's **job descriptions**, **competencies** and **interview guides**.

Empower your talent with career management software that offers competency-driven **career pathing**, **assessment**, **development** and **insights**.

## See it in Action

**Schedule a live demo to see the easiest way to start using behavioral interviewing across your organization.**