Leadership Competency
Interview Guide

Process and Instructions
Introduction

The purpose of this interviewing guide is to provide the user with the foundational tools to accurately assess the leadership skills of candidates, both internal and external, as they interview for roles with CVS Health. The competency-based questions provided in the companion guide are samples only, and do not encompass the full range of questions that can be used to assess leadership skills and experiences.

Goals of Guide

After using this guide, you will be able to do the following:

- Apply Behavioral Event Interviewing best practices and elements of interviewing
- Understand CVS Health’s commitments to hiring legally
- Identify what can and cannot be asked during an interview
- Leverage questions aligned to CVS Health’s Leadership Competency Model:
  - Sets Direction
  - Delivers Results
  - Leads Others
  - Thinks Enterprise

Please note – suggested interview questions can be found in the companion guide – Interview Questions.

When to use this Guide

Please note that this guide is intended to be used when interviewing candidates for Leadership positions, as well as high-level Individual Contributor roles. Please use the ‘Interview Questions for Hourly Colleagues’ guide when interviewing candidates for positions that are paid hourly, or for entry-level Individual Contributor roles. The suggested methodologies are the same, but the content of the interview questions themselves has been tailored to meet the needs of the appropriate audiences.
Behavioral Event Interviewing (BEI)

Behavioral Event Interviewing, also called BEI, is a systematic approach to interviewing that asks candidates to demonstrate their skills and experiences by describing how they behaved in specific situations in the past. The questions are tied to competencies and experiences that are required for leadership, and set a framework that allows the candidate to demonstrate their past behaviors and experiences.

BEI is considered a best practice because:

- Past behavior is the best indicator of future behavior
- Asks for concrete examples, not hypothetical answers (*Tell me about a time when...*)
- Prevents prepared stories
- Allows the interviewer to steer the interview instead of letting the candidate speak only about what they want
- Includes note-taking and systematic scoring of interview performance

Step 1: Prepare for the Interview – Identify Critical Competencies and BEI Questions

BEI does require that you as an interviewer do some preparation prior to meeting your first candidate. To prepare, review the job description as well as what you know about the role. Think carefully about what elements are required to be successful in this role. Include functional skills, experiences, and behaviors when making your list. The interview process should cover all of the required elements for this role. You can select BEI questions from the Interview Questions guide, or you can write your own that align with the elements you have identified as important. Original questions must be approved by Talent Acquisition prior to use.

Use the same set of BEI questions when speaking with all the candidates you meet for a particular role – this ensures that all candidates are assessed on the same criteria, and works towards CVS Health’s goal of *hiring the best candidates for each job solely on the basis of qualifications*.

**Best Practice: Have a consistent interview team for each role. Assign specific competencies to each interviewer to explore in-depth with every candidate you see for a role.**

In addition to ensuring a fair interviewing experience, it is important that you avoid asking personal, non-job-related questions. By focusing only on professional qualifications, you are facilitating a non-discriminatory hiring process. Please see the appendix for a table of protected areas, and questions that you may and may not ask during an interview, or take the LEARNet course 600225, *Hiring Legally*.

CVS Health is firmly committed to the following:

- Fair Employment Laws
- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Non-Discriminatory Workplace
Step 2: Conduct the Interview –

A. Open the Interview

Interviewing is a two-way street. Not only are you interviewing the candidate to determine if they are a fit for your open role, they are assessing CVS Health to see if they want to work here. It is crucial that we treat all candidates fairly and with respect – even if they are not right for your particular role. One way to do this is by opening the interview professionally. Follow these steps to open the interview, ensuring the candidate feels welcome and comfortable during their time with you:

- Welcome the candidate to CVS Health
- Introduce yourself and your role
- Put the candidate at ease and build rapport
- Ensure that the candidate is familiar with the open role
- Tell the candidate that you will take notes

B. STAR Model

Once you have opened the interview, you can start asking the candidate the BEI questions that you have selected. While you are asking these questions, it is important for you to listen to and record their answers in your notes. You will also be listening to make sure that they have fully answered your questions. Using the specific language of BEI sets the interviewee up to deliver a strong answer in the form of the STAR Model. The STAR Model consists of the following pieces:

- **Situation**: Provides specific background or context for answer
- **Task/Action**: Specific steps or actions taken; demonstrates actual behaviors
- **Result**: Changes or differences that the actions made; efficacy of actions
- **Best Answers include all elements**: STAR

Often times, however, the answers people give will not be complete STARs and you may need some probing questions to get a satisfying answer for all of the elements. Needing to ask a few probing or follow up questions is natural, and it can be helpful to have several probing questions prepared in case they are needed. The sample interview questions in this guide include ideas for probing questions to help you get all of the information you need from a candidate.

*Interview Tip: BEI questions reveal not only what the person did or said in a specific situation, but also what they failed to do or say, which can also give you good information about their skill set and/or experience.*
C. Taking Notes

Studies show that without notes, most of us remember only a quarter of what is said immediately after the conversation is over. Relying on your memory to determine the best candidate for any given role is not enough – it is important to take notes, especially when you interview multiple candidates over the span of several days or weeks. Taking notes can also help you identify where within the STAR Model you need to probe further. Consider developing a short-hand or system for your notes to make it easier to record answers while actively listening to the candidate.

Notes are essential to the interview process, but they are also discoverable in court and therefore there are some general guidelines for what you should and should not be recording in your interview notes.

- Record what the candidate says or does ONLY; not your personal impressions or interpretations
  - For example, it is fine to record that a candidate was 10 minutes late for their interview – it is not okay to write that he was “a total mess.”
  - Recording direct quotations can be useful. If you choose to do so, be sure to delineate that the statement is a quote in your notes.
- Record ONLY what is pertinent to the job
  - Candidates may choose to volunteer personal or non-relevant information with you during an interview. It is fine for them to do so, within the limits of what is appropriate in your professional setting, but you do not need to record it.

Best Practice: For legal and compliance purposes, interview notes must be retained for 10 years for unsuccessful candidates, and for the length of employment plus 10 years for successful candidates. Your Talent Acquisition Partner can help you with strategies for appropriate record retention.

D. Closing the Interview

Just as you opened the interview by welcoming the candidate, it is important that you close the interview by thanking them for their time. Before you get to the closing, make sure that you have left time for the candidate to ask you their questions about the role or about CVS Health. To close an interview, consider the following steps:

- Maintain rapport – build the relationship
- Describe the next steps in the hiring process
- Provide a time frame for decision making
- Do not make any commitments
- Thank the candidate for their time
- Follow up promptly with Talent Acquisition
Step 3: Select the Candidate

A. Evaluate and Score Interviews

Once you have finished your interview, it is time to score the candidate’s responses. This is one way to ensure that all interviewers are using the same yardstick to evaluate candidates, and that a decision is made based on competencies. Using your notes, evaluate the quality of the candidate’s answers to your BEI questions. Consider the following factors that comprise a high-quality response:

- Directly answers the question and stays focused without tangents
- Specific, tangible, concrete answers – not hypothetical!
- Supported by data and facts
- Related to the candidate’s actual behavior

Using these criteria, score each competency. An example of a scoring system you might use is located below, and a full table in the Appendix. Provide an overall rating for the candidate, and a recommendation for next steps (if any). Be prepared to support your ratings with specific examples and observations from your notes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Insufficient Evidence of Competency (e.g. Not Assessed)</th>
<th>Little Evidence – Did not demonstrate behavioral examples</th>
<th>Some Evidence - Demonstrates a few or weak behavioral examples</th>
<th>Strong Evidence - Demonstrates many and strong behavioral examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(NA)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Compare and Rank Candidates

Once you have finished all of your interviews, it is time to select a candidate. Using your ratings for each candidate that you have seen, compare them, and decide which candidate(s) you recommend moving forward with in the hiring process. Once you have decided on your personal recommendations, it is time to collaborate with your interview team, and listen carefully to their feedback and recommendations as well. If there are no further rounds of interviews to take place, it is time to make a hiring decision. Because you have systematically approached this hiring process, you will now be able to make an informed decision, and select the candidate whose past behavior best indicates their potential for success at CVS Health.

Selection Tip: Before extending an offer to your first-choice candidate, determine if your ‘silver medalist’ candidate is a viable option and do not reject him or her until your first-choice candidate has accepted your offer. This allows you to move quickly with qualified talent should your first-choice candidate not accept the role for any reason.
Leadership Competencies

Leadership competencies communicate the expectations of leaders at CVS Health. They are aligned to CVS Health’s purpose of helping people on their path to better health. By understanding and using these competencies for assessment of talent – both internal and external – we ensure that CVS Health recognizes and promotes leadership that will help to drive our business and our purpose forward.

For a copy of the Leadership Competency model, visit the mySuccess tool.
## Appendix

### Table 1 – Ask This, Not That

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Area of Discrimination</th>
<th>Cannot Ask This</th>
<th>Can Ask This Instead – Essential Job Functions Only</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Marital Status, Gender, Sexual Orientation, & Pregnancy** | • What is your marital status?  
• What is your maiden name?  
• Why aren’t you married?  
• Questions about living arrangements.  
• What is the name of your spouse?  
• What is the employment status of your spouse?  
• Are you pregnant?  
• How many children do you have and what are their ages?  
• Are you planning to start a family?  
• What are your childcare arrangements?  
• How will your spouse feel about your travel schedule? | • What are your career goals?  
• Will you be able to meet the required hours of the position?  
• Are you able to travel as the job requires? |  |
| **Race and National Origin Citizenship** | • Where are you/your parents/your ancestors from?  
• Where were you born?  
• Where is your spouse from?  
• Are you a US citizen?  
• What is the origin of your last name?  
• What language do you speak at home?  
• What is your race? Color? | • Are you eligible to work for CVS Health at ___ location?  
• In what countries do you have the legal right to work?  
• Fluency in Spanish is required for this position; do you speak Spanish? |  |
| **Age** | • How old are you?  
• When were you born?  
• Are you over 40?  
• When did you graduate from high school? | • Are you under 18?  
• When were you last trained on (essential technical skill), and describe your experience in that area. |  |
| **Religion** | • What religious holidays will you need to take off?  
• What are your religious obligations?  
• Do you go to temple or church? | • This job may require you to work weekends, will you be available?  
• If the employee requests certain days or holidays off for religious purposes, we have a duty to treat that as a request for a religious accommodation and to engage in the interactive process. |  |
Table 1 – Ask This, Not That (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Area of Discrimination</th>
<th>Cannot Ask This</th>
<th>Can Ask This Instead – Essential Job Functions Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health, Disability &amp; Genetics</td>
<td>• Are there any health or disability related reasons that you may not be able to perform the duties of this job?</td>
<td>• Will you be able to perform the essential functions of this job, with or without accommodation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How many sick days did you take last year?</td>
<td>• Can you meet the attendance requirements?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Have you ever filed a worker’s compensation claim?</td>
<td>• This role requires you to drive a car, can you do so?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Have you ever been treated for drug or alcohol abuse?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Do you have any disabilities or mental health issues? Have you ever been in therapy?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Does your spouse or your children have a disability?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Do you have a predisposition or family history of any particular type of illness or condition?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military Service and Veteran Status</td>
<td>• Are you eligible to be drafted?</td>
<td>• Note: You may only ask the following question if the resume states military experience</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <em>If in military</em> – will you be deployed anytime soon?</td>
<td>• Did you receive job related training in the military?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• <em>If candidate was in the military</em> – what was the nature of your discharge?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Do you receive any veteran’s related benefits?</td>
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<td>Arrest Records</td>
<td>• Have you ever been arrested or convicted of a crime?</td>
<td>• Nothing – this is covered in our standard employment application</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender Identity &amp; Expression</td>
<td>• What is your sex?</td>
<td>• None.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• What is your gender? Which gender do you identify with?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Comments about appearance or attire.</td>
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<td>Other Areas to Avoid</td>
<td>• Do you own your home or rent?</td>
<td>• Can you arrive promptly for your assigned hours?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Do you own a car?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Questions related to height and weight.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Questions about personal finances or financial status.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Questions about the applicant’s involvement in non-work related organizations.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Questions about prior or current lawsuits.</td>
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</table>
Table 2 – Leadership Competency Scoring Sheet

Directions: At the close of your interview, review your notes and assign a ranking to the candidate based upon their responses and examples provided. Score your rankings. The point values for each ranking are delineated in parentheses on the chart. Using their total score, as well as considerations regarding technical skills and other areas that you may have probed on during your interview, give your recommendation regarding the candidate. If you do not recommend moving forward, please share any recommendations about where the candidate may be a fit within the organization.

Candidate: ____________________________  Interviewer: _______________________
Role: ________________________________  Date of Interview: _________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Insufficient Evidence of Competency (e.g. Not Assessed) (NA)</th>
<th>Little Evidence – Did not demonstrate behavioral examples (1)</th>
<th>Some Evidence – Demonstrates a few or weak behavioral examples (2)</th>
<th>Strong Evidence – Demonstrates many and strong behavioral examples (3)</th>
<th>Subtotal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sets Direction</td>
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<td>Delivers Results</td>
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<td>Leads Others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thinks Enterprise</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Total Score</strong></td>
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</table>

Notes:

Recommendation:

- [ ] Do Not Recommend Moving Forward
  Insufficient evidence of key behaviors
- [ ] Recommend with Reservations
  Did not sufficiently demonstrate key behaviors
- [ ] Recommend Moving Forward
  Demonstrated some key behaviors
- [ ] Strongly Recommend
  Clearly demonstrated many or all key behaviors
Table 2 – Continued

Directions: Translate your individual candidate feedback to this chart for comparison of scores. Remember that you also need to share your full feedback, not just numerical scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate Name</th>
<th>Competency 1</th>
<th>Competency 2</th>
<th>Competency 3</th>
<th>Experience or Expertise</th>
<th>TBD</th>
<th>Total</th>
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Links and Resources

- For further information on Behavioral Event Interviewing, click here or contact your Talent Acquisition Partner
- For further information on Hiring Legally, go to LEARNet and search for training # 600225
- Our Legal department can be found here for further questions
- For questions on our Leadership Competencies, please contact your HRBP