Interviewers often ask behavior-based questions—questions about your experiences that may indicate how you would handle tasks and problems in the future. (The job competencies they’re designed to measure are in parentheses.)

Here are some examples:

- Describe a situation in which you had to use reference materials to write a research paper. What was the topic? What journals did you read? (research)

- Give me a specific example of a time when a co-worker or classmate criticized your work in front of others. How did you respond? How has that event shaped the way you communicate with others? (communication)

- Describe a situation in which you recognized a potential problem as an opportunity. What did you do? (initiative)

- Give me a specific example of a time when you sold your supervisor or professor on an idea or concept. How did you proceed? What was the result? (assertiveness)

- Describe the system you use for keeping track of multiple projects. How do you track your progress so that you can meet deadlines? (commitment to task)

- Tell me about a time when you came up with an innovative solution to a challenge your company or class was facing. What was the challenge? What roles did others play? (creativity and imagination)

- What, in your opinion, are the key ingredients in building and maintaining successful business relationships? Give me examples of how you’ve made these work for you. (relationship building)

- Describe a time when you got co-workers or classmates who dislike each other to work together. How did you accomplish this? What was the outcome? (teamwork)

- Tell me about a time when you failed to meet a deadline. What things did you fail to do? What were the repercussions? What did you learn? (time management)

- Describe a specific problem you solved for your employer or professor. How did you approach the problem? What role did others play? What was the outcome? (decision making)