Mastering Technical Interviews

ReDI meets Palantir | 05.11.2024 & 06.11.2024

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What is a Technical Interview?

Coding Challenge

Analytical Decomp

Learning Interview

Please note that we are not hiring in Germany at the moment

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Tips – Preparing for the Interview

Personal Prep

- **Past projects, challenges:** Think about what you learned, what you could have done better etc.
- **Motivation - what drives you?**
    - People, Tech, Project Management, Exciting problems, Real-world applications, Research, ...
    - Be prepared to answer "why" and to give examples

Company Prep

Research about the company
- What do you find interesting?
- How do people work there? Does this align with what you're looking for?
    - e.g. travel, office, WFH

Technical Prep

- **Basics of algorithms and data structures**
    - (and systems design for more senior positions)
- Book: **Cracking the coding interview**
    - Gayle Laakmann McDowell
    - Systems Design Interview books for more senior positions
- **Hackerrank / Leetcode**
    - Dive into tech challenges and get your hands dirty
- **Mock interviews** (e.g. https://www.pramp.com/#/) → **Super useful!**

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Tips – What Interviewers Look For

Communication = Key!

Motivation

What drives you? What types of problems do you enjoy solving? Do you seek out new opportunities or approaches?

Communication

Do you listen and ask clarifying questions when needed? Can you clearly articulate your thoughts and ideas?

Proactiveness

Can you independently identify tasks? Are you able to troubleshoot independently, but ask for help when you need it?

Intentionality

Do you think critically and thoughtfully about your choices when making decisions?

Collaboration

How do you work towards shared outcomes with varying opinions? How have you given and responded to constructive feedback?

Persistence

How do you handle unforeseen obstacles? How do you learn from mistakes?

Tips – Failure Modes

X Dive right into the problem solution

→ Ask questions first, repeat the problem statement

X Only sharing the final result with the interviewer

→ Explain your thought process while you solve the problem so the interviewer understands.

X Thinking your solution is perfect

→ Show introspection

X Focus only on technology

→ What do you like about it, what motivates you?

Summary - Tips

How to prepare – Non-Technical Tips

- Do your research – know what role you're applying for and have reasoning for why you want to work there.

- Show introspection and talk critically about your experiences. Don't be afraid to share missteps.

- Highlight your accomplishments and the hard work you put in!

- What do you want? Back your answers with reasoning.

- What motivates you? What gets you excited or helps you push through challenges?

- Be curious. Take time to pause and reflect throughout the conversation.

BE YOURSELF!

How to prepare – Technical Tips

- We look for fundamentals and problem solving skills, not just the right answer.

- Communication is key: ask questions, and explain your thought process as you go.

- Be critical of your code throughout, of yourself and the problem space.

- Write in the language that you feel strongest in.

- Practice!

How to prepare for a coding challenge

- Use fundamentals and problem solving skills, don't just try to get the right answer!

- Ask yourself questions and ensure you understand the prompt.

- Be critical of your code throughout, of yourself and the problem space.

- Write in the language that you feel strongest in.

- Practice!

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Thank you!

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