Interview Preparation Guide | Lead Software Development Engineer

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Document Revision History

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From being a payment gateway provider to a solutions-driven organization boasting an extensive product suite to accept and disburse payments to raising capital and parking money, Razorpay fits into every nook and corner where a business touches money.

We are India's first full-stack financial solutions company, on a mission to enhance the payment experience of over 300 million end consumers. We identify ourselves as disruptors in the digital payments space, and our vision is to power the financial ecosystem for other disruptors.

#OutgrowOrdinary

Our philosophy

● **We value people** - We value what you have to discuss in the interview process and then try to match how it fits our requirements, not the other way around. The team with whom you'll be working

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is the team that takes the interview, so you get a chance to get a glimpse of what your future team will look like.

● **Cultural fitment** - We seek people who are collaborative and can learn and grow on the job. Engineers are expected to be good at problem-solving and put the team ahead of personal glory. We seek candidates who live by our culture and values - Transparency, questioning the status quo, driving with autonomy, agility with integrity, and executing with a customer-first mindset.

● **Good candidate experience** - We want to ensure that you have a good interview experience. All our interviews are two-way conversations. While we are interviewing, you should also get a sense of whether your future potential colleagues are humble and smart, the culture of the company, and the vibe of the place. The interviews are typically focused on making you successful. We also constantly seek to improve your experience based on the feedback loop.

Interview Process:

Round 1 - Machine Coding Round (90 Minutes)

At Razorpay, we do not believe in whiteboard coding and testing candidates on arcane data structures and algorithms. The coding round closely mimics what happens on a daily basis at Razorpay.

Areas of Discussion:

- Problem statement discussion
- A whiteboard discussion to arrive at a workable approach for the problem statement discussed
- Code walk-through followed by questions around choices made and possibly discussing extensions to the code

* The candidate could pick an IDE and programming language of choice to code.

Sample questions:

1. Implement a messaging API.
2. Implement entities and interfaces for a price comparison website.

3. Implement backend entities for online cab booking.

Prep Tip:

● Brush up on your general coding, data structures, and algorithm skills.

Evaluation Criteria:

● The core expectation of the coding round is to be able to build a good solution while taking care of aspects like modularity, readability, extensibility, correctness, and validations (test cases).
● The clarity in the choices being made
● Will you be able to have a well-reasoned discussion with engineers that is practical and useful?
● Quality of conversation between you and the interviewer
● Familiarity with various design patterns and usages

Round 2 - System Design (60 minutes)

You will be given a real-world problem statement, and you will be expected to comprehend the requirements and come up with a high-level design.

Areas of Discussion:

● A real-world problem statement is provided
● One is expected to understand the requirements and come up with the HLD
● Discussion about design choices to see if you have made rational decisions and understand the pros and cons of the various choices made
● LLD - Discuss how each subsystem works
● Discuss non-functional requirements like scalability, reliability, availability, etc.

Sample questions:
1. Design a distributed cache.
2. Design an event throttling framework.

Prep Tip:

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Many online websites provide training material on high-level design. YouTube has many videos on this subject as well. If you are not sure, we recommend you go through them to be more comfortable with questions of this variety.

Evaluation Criteria:
- Low-Level Design and High-Level Design
- Rational decision-making ability
- Pros and cons of various choices made
- Good grasp of core tech - database systems   (SQL/NoSQL),   async processing (Kafka/Rabbit/MQ/etc), and caching (Redis/Aerospike).

Round 3 - Tech Deep Dive Round **(60 minutes)**

This round focuses on your past experience. It dwells on your journey, and discussions are centered around the complexity of the problem statements, the iterations on the product/service to morph it to a larger scale, personal failures, and learnings.

Areas of Discussion:

- Complexity of the problem statements
- The iterations on the product/service to morph it into a larger scale
- Personal failures and learning

Prep Tip:
There is no explicit preparation guide for this one. We recommend you brush up on your resume and work history and reflect on what went well/what could have gone better.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Discuss in detail on your design choices
- Understanding of the pros and cons of the decisions made
- Deeply understand what you have built (with associated design choices and tradeoffs)
- Know about the application end to end and its impact.

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HM Round - Hiring Manager Round (60 Minutes)

Areas of Discussion:

- The goal here would be to do a thorough evaluation in terms of skill set as well as cultural fit.
- Oftentimes, this round centers around past work history, situational questions, and behavioral traits. The interviewer will also try to understand very clearly your interests, ambitions, and alignment.

Sample questions:

1. Explain a situation where you felt overwhelmed with the project at hand.
2. Why are you looking for a job change right now?
3. What are you specifically interested in doing?
4. Please also utilize this round and ask as many questions as possible to understand the team, structure, and responsibilities.

Prep Tips:

- There is no explicit preparatory guide for this round. Be your true self and reflect on your resume and past experiences.
- This round is also a great opportunity for you to learn about the company - product lines, current challenges, organization/team structure, etc.
- We suggest you direct your questions to understand deeply the culture of the company and see if it matches your personality/interest.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Decision-making framework
- Complexity and variety of past experiences
- Learning from past experiences
- Role fitment

HR Round - HR Round (30 Minutes)

Areas of Discussion:

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- In this round, we discuss and try to understand your experiences as a leader and people manager.
- We focus on your career journey, your motivations, and your career aspirations. This helps us understand if we have a mutual fit of aspirations and role expectations. You can expect the discussion to be focused on specific situations from your career. We will ask you to do a deep dive and narrate a few incidents from your experiences at work.

💡 Quick tip: When answering behavioral or situational questions, you should try to cover what exactly happened (situation/context), what was your immediate feeling and thought process (reaction), what you did as an individual (action), and how things played out as a result (result/impact)

Prep Tips:
Retrospect thoroughly on your personal experiences.

Evaluation Criteria:

- **Mentoring Junior:** Your philosophy and experience in mentoring and growing your team
- **Culture and Values:** As a leader, you set the vibe for your teams, so we want to understand your values as a leader as well as the approach you follow to inculcate them within your team.
- **Ownership and Accountability:** Level of ownership taken and ability to execute tasks independently

Interview tips:

● **Think out loud:** Don't think of a solution in silence. Give the interviewer a sense that You're working towards the solution/answer.
● **Be specific:** Try not to get derailed from the conversation and be as specific as possible in your answers.
● **Hints:** When interviewers provide hints, value them and see if you can use them to arrive at a solution.
● **Plan your approach:** Don't directly jump into solutions; make sure that you spend time understanding all the cases and planning your approach.
● **Have a productive environment:** During online rounds, make sure the device(s) you'll use to connect is fully charged, you have a reliable and strong internet connection, and you

have a hands-free setup (headphones, quiet environment, etc.) so you can perform better.
● **Questions:** Don't hesitate to ask questions; they can be related to the work, team, or anything else. We value you.

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