

BEHAVIORAL (CULTURAL FIT)

Prenote

If you are experienced, every company values the kind of work that you have done before. There are certain companies like Facebook and Uber who value the aspirations and cultural fit of the person.

In general, make sure to do the following for every company that you are about to interview with :

- Research on the kind of work happening at the company. **Research on core principles** that a company values.
- If it is a user facing product, think proactively of at least **one interesting feature which would be a nice addition**. Or an area which has nicer opportunities. For example, social recommendations for Facebook, or car-pooling / product delivery would be a nice add on to Uber.
- Make sure you project yourself who is **very passionate about the company**.
- Irrespective of the company, project yourself as a **team player**. Someone who is proactive enough to provide inputs and at the same time, rational enough to evaluate pros and cons of various suggestions and accept the better suggestion without ego.

Common Questions

1. Why are you leaving your current job ?

Have a great reason for why you are leaving your current job.

Bad Answers :

Better salary

Commute is a problem

I don't like the people I work with

Any kind of uncertainty

I am just exploring better opportunities

Lack of brevity

Good Answers :

Try to answer based on the company you are being interviewed for. Some of the good answers include :

- Work at the current office is not challenging enough. And then describe how the work at the new company is significantly better and more challenging. As stated earlier, take every opportunity to project yourself as really passionate and excited about working at the company.
- If the company is impact driven, then an answer which suggests that I like to see the impact of the work being done. My current work does not give me the correct opportunity to create a lot of impact. I feel company X is an ideal place to create better impact with millions / billions of users.
- My friend works at the current company and I keep hearing about the work happening here. I am really fascinated by the scale of the company and I believe I can grow better here.
- Is the new company startup-ish : I am looking to build something from the ground up. I see this new company as a place which gives me a chance to work on various pieces across the stack.

2. Did you have a conflict with your manager in the past? If so, how did you resolve it?

Bad Answers :

* I never had conflict with my manager. This shows you never had any opinion. Your manager is a human and is likely to make mistakes.

* All the time. Again, just like earlier, your manager is not wrong every time. It's essential to do certain evaluations of pros and cons yourself.

Good Answers :

Conflict is a strong word. There were a few occasions where I did not completely agree with my manager's point of view. In those cases, we had a discussion to help me better understand his point of view. And then I suggested improvements (OR we assess the pros and cons of both approaches) and made a decision based on the analysis.

3. Where do you see yourself in 5 years ?

Bad Answers :

* Any answer that shows that you do not have enough conviction or you are not ambitious enough.

Good Answers :

The primary thing being evaluated here is how ambitious you are. Are you someone who switches jobs every year for a better pay, or rather focuses on setting goals for yourself in your

career to keep growing in skills and capabilities. So, answer with something that shows that you want to either :

- * As an individual contributor, increase your in depth knowledge in a particular domain so that you become someone indispensable to the organization.
- * As an individual contributor, increase your breadth so that people look up to you as someone who seek out your advice before taking a major architectural decision.
- * Become a leader and be capable of leading a team of more than 10 people to execute something big or become capable enough to start your own company.

4. What are your weaknesses ?

Bad Answers :

I don't have any weaknesses.

An arrogant reply like "I am too honest" OR "I work too hard".

Good Answers :

Something which can be perceived as both strength and weakness.

- "I prioritize getting stuff out as soon as possible. That sometimes leads to putting things which just work and are not as robust in place so that the feature goes out into production."
- "Sometimes, I cannot get enough motivation unless I see impact. While I can churn out night outs after night outs for something where I see impact, it's hard to do the same when the impact is not clear."

BEHAVIORAL (TECHNICAL FIT)

The purpose of these kind of questions is to evaluate your role in the projects that you did, and explore how pro-actively you thought about your current work. It might involve some technical questions to evaluate whether you actually know what you claim on your resume. So, be very thorough with technologies you used in your previous project.

It is ALWAYS good to be in a position where you grew to own certain components of the project or a position where you were the code owner of certain components.

Common Questions

Think about the questions like “Tell me about a project which was ... “

Common Questions	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	Project 4
Most challenging				
What you learned				
Most Interesting				
Hardest Bug				
Enjoyed most				
Conflicts with teammates				

Most Challenging :

Bad Answers : “I had to learn a lot of new languages and technologies”. This tells the interviewer that you have nothing better to say and nothing was really really hard. “

Good Answers : “We had more user growth than anticipated and then the major challenge was to scale out to same number of users without just throwing more machines at the problem. We tried to figure out bottlenecks in the system and tried to improve it from there. “

What you learned :

Bad Answers : “I learned a lot of new technologies.” / “I learned how to work in a big team”. Again, tell that you have nothing better to say.

Good Answers :

Instead the same facts can be re-stated. For example, “I learned how to work in a big team” can be restated as “We faced a lot of challenges keeping the productivity high maintaining the quality with a bigger team. Initially, there were a lot of miscommunications and the code review standards would vary across different peers. I saw it as a problem and tried to experiment with ways to standardize code deployment / code review process with rules to code structure and minimal unit test cover. I created private Facebook groups / slack groups to make sure people can easily share ideas. In the process, I learned how to setup processes and manage a big team going forward. “.

OR

"I learned a lot of new technologies" -> "We were facing issues with load balancing users across machines in case of machine failure. On exploring solutions, I learned about Consistent Hashing which helped us load balance efficiently across machines"

In general, make sure your answers project the qualities described earlier in the doc. Passion for the company, a team player and a technically solid person who is eager to learn.

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

LAST BUT NOT THE LEAST, when the interviewer asks you "Do you have any questions for me ?", **make sure you have at least one question ready for him.**

Some interesting questions :

- 1) What are your views on <insert some recent feature of the company>.
- 2) I noticed that you use technology X. How do you handle problem Y ?
- 3) Why did the product choose to use the X protocol over the Y protocol ?
- 4) How does X work where X is a very small component / piece about a feature ? For example, how does Facebook web chat maintain connections to the server ? Is it long polling behind the screens ?
- 5) How much time do you spend writing code everyday ?
- 6) How do teams discuss new ideas ?