**Interviewing in the Tech Industry: Behavioral Interviews**

Some tips on how to handle a behavioral interview.

The original content of this blog post was authored by [Career Karma](https://careerkarma.com/). Career Karma is the easiest way to find a job training program online. They help over 1 million workers navigate their careers every month through advice and coaching. You can learn more by visiting [Career Karma’s blog](https://careerkarma.com/blog/) and you can read the original article [Interviewing in the tech industry: Technical and behavioral interview tips](https://www.codecademy.com/resources/blog/technical-and-behavioral-interview-tips/) by Christina Kopecky.

There is an art to interviewing in the tech industry. With the different types of interviews that you can encounter, practicing or studying for an interview may feel overwhelming. We’ve rounded up some tips to help you prepare.

In this article, we’ll talk about the one type of interview that interviewees encounter while on a job hunt in the tech industry — behavioral interviews. We’ll share tips that will help you put your best foot forward and feel confident during your interview process.

**What is a Behavioral Interview?**

The behavioral interview can take on many forms. More than likely, this interview will be with a recruiter or a senior company manager. It consists of questions focusing on your ability to react to certain industry situations, assesses the greatest strengths and weaknesses of your character, and your ability to overcome certain situations. In this section, we’ll take a look at some tips for how to approach this style of job interview.

**Before the Interview**

**Research the Company and the Interviewer**

You are likely to succeed in your interview if you are familiar with the products of the company you want to work for. Take a closer look and see if you can identify the company’s vision and mission. Why do they mesh with you? Also, do some research on the actual product you would be working on to make sure you are one step ahead of other job candidates.

Don’t stop at just the company! Most recruiters are happy to tell you who you will be interviewing with. Look your interviewer up on LinkedIn or GitHub to see if you can find anything out that’ll give you an edge – maybe your interviewer has a side business or hobby you can connect with and mention in your interview.

An interviewer is likely to remember you as that person “who plays the same musical instrument as I do” than the person “who can recite MDN backward and forward.”

**Career Changers: Why Did You Make the Switch?**

What’s your “why?” Many interviewers like to ask “why” to figure out who is in it for the money and who is in it because they are truly, genuinely interested in creating something awesome. Construct an elevator pitch if you don’t already have one – a short, 30-second snippet of who you are, what you do, and where you see yourself going. Here’s an example:

“Hi, I’m Christina. I’m a musician that took her love of practicing, mentoring students, and breaking down problems and turned it into a tech career, if you can believe it!” “I’m currently a technical writer, creating blogs and articles for beginner level to professional level developers and engineers. I see that you got your start in writing as well! I would love to be able to pick your brain about how to transition to web development.” When you create your elevator pitch, it helps guide you into thinking about why you are taking the coding or tech journey. Be thinking about this as you head into that initial interview.

**Questions to Think About**

There are several interview questions, that no matter the industry, always seem to pop up in interview situations. Think about or jot down anecdotes to share that answer the following questions:

What is your greatest strength?

What is your greatest weakness?

Tell me about a time you had a conflict with a coworker?

What makes you unique?

Why should we hire you?

**Knowing the answers to these questions will prepare you better for your interview. Keep a notebook or the notepad app open to jot down ideas and flesh out ones you’ve thought through.**

Know the Market Rate for Developers and Engineers in Your Area

If you happen to live in the middle of the Midwest but are interviewing for an engineering position in Seattle or San Francisco, it’s definitely a good idea to research median and average level salaries for a software engineer/developer in the area you will be living in before you comment on any salary requirements. Many times a recruiter will immediately ask for a salary expectation – if you don’t know the numbers for the area, you can possibly sell yourself short.

Hint: Respond with “What is the budget for this position?” and see what the recruiter has to say.

**Prepare a Q&A for the Interviewer**

Interviewers tend to leave 10 minutes or so at the end of the interview to open the floor for questions. This can be a time for you to shine. Take the time to ask the interviewer about the culture of the workplace, how the company responds to disease pandemic situations, what the work/life balance is like, etc. Remember, this is usually answered in your initial interview, so don’t bring up anything yet in relation to salary or bonuses/benefits unless they open the floor to that conversation.

**During the Interview**

**Use STAR Method to Tell Your Anecdotes**

In the previous section, we talked about coming up with anecdotes to talk about all of those really tough interview questions. There is a method, called the STAR Method, that can assist in crafting an engaging anecdote.

STAR stands for:

S - Situation: the basic setup or premise of your anecdote. It sets the stage.

T - Task: your responsibility within the situation. What can you quantify here?

A - Action: the breakdown of what it took to get you from point A to point B.

R - Result: the outcome of the action.

If you can follow these four guidelines when answering your questions, you will do very well.

**Ask Questions**

Don’t be afraid to ask questions! You are interviewing the company as much as they are interviewing you.

By the same token, if something is not clear, be sure to ask a clarifying question to make sure you understand the initial ask.

**After the Interview**

**Interview Follow-up**

After the interviews are over, keep in close contact with the recruiter. They will be the ones to help navigate you through the next steps. If you don’t have e-mail addresses for the interviewers who talked to you, ask the recruiter for them so you can send a thank-you note for taking the time to speak with you.

The thank-you note doesn’t have to be anything lavish or fancy. Here’s a simple example:

Dear [ name of interviewer ]:

I just wanted to take the time to thank you for meeting with me today about [ position applied for at [ company applied to ]. [ Mention something here about anything you’ve discussed during the interview that might be memorable so they will remember your meeting ]. If there are any other questions, please don’t hesitate to reach out. Thanks again.

Sincerely, [ Your Name ]

**Remember to Breathe**

This is the first interview of many if all goes well! Remember to take full breaths to keep yourself as calm as you can be, try not to interrupt the interviewer (It’s hard to do sometimes when you’re interviewing via phone or video conference!), and, most of all, have fun. You will only get better as you do more behavioral interviews!

**How to Succeed in A Behavioral Interview**

Learn how to mitigate stress in an interview and prepare yourself to respond effectively.

→ [How to Succeed in A Behavioral Interview](https://blog.pramp.com/how-to-succeed-in-a-behavioral-interview-796af6233dd1)

In this article, you will learn how to mitigate stress in an interview setting and prepare yourself to respond effectively. This is helpful if you would like further advice on preparing for the behavioral interview and how to “pivot” and think quickly on your feet when you are asked unexpected questions.

**Review: Interview Skills**

In this Unit, you learned the technical and behavioral skills needed to succeed in the developer interview.

Congratulations! The goal of this unit was to review some key technical interview topics as well as soft skills which employers are looking for in potential candidates. You practiced common JavaScript algorithms and prepared yourself for the whiteboarding interview. You also learned what soft skills will set you apart and leave a lasting impression on employers.

Having completed this unit, you are now able to:

* Think on the fly and show your thought processes in solving a problem
* Work your way through several common coding questions
* Respond comfortably to open-ended interview questions
* Set yourself apart and leave an impression on employers

If you are interested in learning more about these topics, here are some additional resources:

* Resource: [Daily Coding Problem](https://www.dailycodingproblem.com/)
* Resource: [LeetCode](https://leetcode.com/" \t "_blank)
* Article: [Educative’s Behavioral interviews: How to prepare and ace interview questions](https://www.educative.io/blog/behavioral-interviews-how-to-prepare-and-ace-interview-questions" \t "_blank)
* Video: [Google Coding Interview Question, First Recurring Character](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJdiM-muYqc)
* Video: [Facebook Coding Interview Question, How Many Ways to Decode This Message?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qli-JCrSwuk)
* Video: [Amazon Coding Interview Question, Recursive Staircase Problem?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5o-kdjv7FD0)