How to Thrive in a Tough Job Market

Interviewing Techniques for Tech Professionals

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Story about me

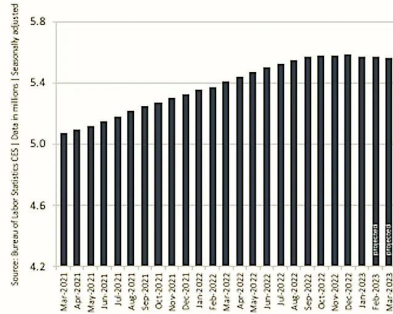**The start:**
Unconfident about Leetcode
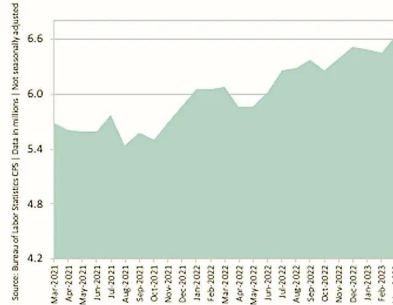Know little about system design interview
7 years in Startup
Laid off

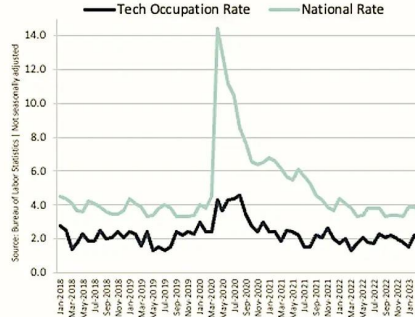# Tough, but let's try to be optimistic!

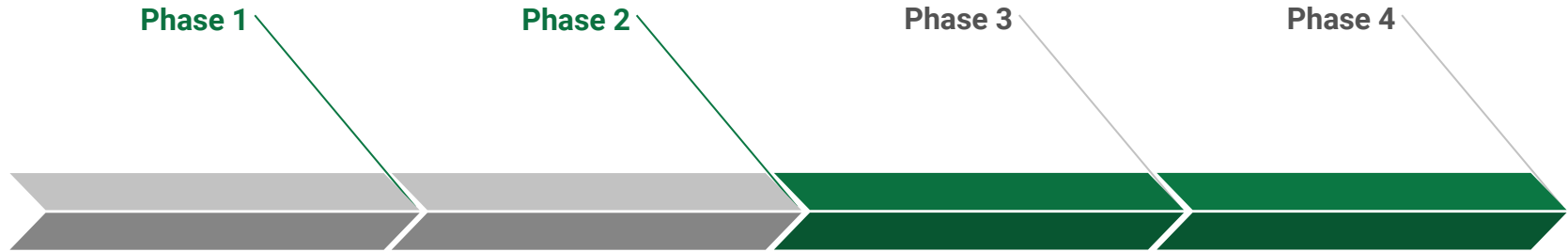
TECH INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE TRENDING
— Tech Occupation Rate — National Rate

TECH OCCUPATION EMPLOYMENT

TECH INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT | TECH JOB POSTINGS

	MAR	vs. FEB
TECH SECTOR EMPLOYMENT		
PC, Semiconductor, Components Mfg.	1,099,500	-1,800
Telecommunications	650,100	-3,100
Cloud Infrastructure, Data Processing, Hosting	482,600	+1,100
Other Info Services, Search, Platforms	202,100	+2,100
IT & Custom Software Services	Sys. Design	2,487,500	+2,100
TECH JOB POSTING ACTIVITY: TOP POSITIONS		
Software Developers and Engineers	87,643	+20,172
IT Support Specialist	30,840	+6,893
Systems Engineer and Architects	25,861	+7,344
IT Project Managers	21,041	+5,623
Cybersecurity Analysts and Engineers	15,572	+4,948

Employer job postings for tech positions for March, increased by 76,546 month-over-month, for a total of 316,000 openings; the tech unemployment rate remained unchanged from February at 2.2%.

–computerworld.com

Make plan for your interview timeline

Phase 1

Phase 2

Phase 3

Phase 4

Preparation / Apply

Sharpen your skills and send out the resumes **before you are ready and you can always schedule a later date.**

Phone Screen

Phone screens are 1 hour usually, so you can even **squeeze** more than one in a day, to **practice** for onsite intensity.

Onsite interview

Onsite interview is **intense**. Make sure you are in your best condition and **maintain your energy level** well. To make offers arrive at the same time, **ask how long** a decision is made and schedule accordingly.

Offer negotiation

If you have more than one offer, it's time to negotiate for more!

Preparation

- **How to choose materials**
  - Knowledge-oriented (better for career, if time permits) & interview-oriented (better for interview)
  - Choose one that you digest better to start, try popular ones later
- **Research on trends**
  - Search recent interview questions
  - Learn new knowledge that you don't know (e.g. Trie is not a popular algorithm 5 years ago)
- **Practice with peers**
  - Form study group with friends
  - Find online platform
- **Write your templates/scaffolder**
  - Especially useful for system design interview & behavior interview & project-based interview.

Apply

- **Resume**
  - Revisit your resume
    - Online course certificate
    - Projects linked towards target position
  - Resume writer service (if not confident)
  - Prepare your answers for resume
- **Referral**
  - Try different networks: school, work, friends etc.
  - Efficiency differs in companies.
- **Apply A LOT**:
  - Do not rely on referral only, apply more yourself.
  - Use a Spreadsheet to **track**.
  - Think about your **priority** (money or experience?) and target less-popular positions if possible.
  - Choose roles that **matches** your background most and **emphasize** corresponding experience.

Learn from your interview

- **During the interview:**
  - Ask the recruiter & interviewer which part of your experience **make them interested**
  - Ask about the **expectation** of the role
  - Make your answer **more match**
- **After the interview:**
  - Ask recruiter **reason** about refusal in a thank-you letter. Be polite and ask a favor. Sometimes you'll gain valuable reply. You may not receive reply for every asks.

Behavior interview

- Use **SMART** format
- **Research** the values/culture of your target company
- Use the **Amazon Leadership Principle** as example to practice
  - **Write down** 3 examples for each of the leadership principle

Salary negotiation

- **You need multiple offers to get a fair pay!**
- **Be bold & sincere.**
- **There are risks of losing offer.**
- **Learn strategies:**
  - Do not disclose your expectation, let them bid for you!
  - Ask about the pay ranges - this is required by law to disclose.
  - Coordinate the timeline of offers - offers should arrive within the same period.
  - Make sure your dream company knows you really want to go!
  - Search for more if you don't know how to phrase.

Market Challenges and Opportunities

- **Less big company opportunities**
  - Try more startups and non-tech traditional industries
- **Long queues for each role**
  - Make your resume match the roles better
  - Apply more!
- **Potentially less leetcode problems**
  - Because of possible Chatgpt cheat & startup have more diverse need
  - Prepare knowledge-based questions & quick project setup (A scaffolder?)
  - Sharpen your skills by practicing more real project coding if new graduate

Observe Changes, Make Smart Strategy, & Do Stupid Work

Thank you!

Speaker contacts:

Linkedin:https://www.linkedin.com/in/chengyang-sara/

Mentorship session booking (free consultation available):
https://introwise.com/yang-cheng

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