Software Engineering Manager

Full Loop Interview Guide

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What You'll Find in This Guide

Welcome to your preparation guide for your interview at Meta! Use the sidebar to quickly jump to the section you are looking for. Whether you're taking your initial screen or your full loop interview, our engineering leaders and recruiters put together this guide so you know what to expect and how to prepare. We recognize that interviewing can be stressful, so we hope this guide provides the information and resources you need. Remember, your recruiter is there to support you, so please reach out to them with any questions.

Accommodations Process

Before you get started, it's important to note that Meta is committed to providing reasonable support (called accommodations) in our recruiting processes for candidates with disabilities, long term conditions, mental health conditions or sincerely held religious beliefs, or who are neurodivergent or require pregnancy-related support. If you need support, please reach out to accommodations-ext@fb.com or your recruiter.

Interview Process Overview

This guide will explain what to expect during your interviews with Meta. As part of your interview, you will have the opportunity to meet with peers, cross-functional partners, and other leaders at Meta. Your recruiter will be your guide throughout the process and aim to adequately prepare you to bring your best self to your interview.

What will your interview process be?

Your interview will include a number of the following 45-minute interviews, some of which may vary depending on your area of expertise. Each interviewer should

also leave a few minutes at the end for your questions.

- Design
- Behavioral
- Coding (if applicable)
- People management
- Project retrospective

The coding interview will not be required for all engineering manager roles. If you're unsure if you will need to prep for coding or have questions about the format or details of your specific interview, please contact your recruiter.

Video Conference interview best practices

- Make sure you're in a quiet environment.
- Double check that you have a reliable internet/phone connection.
- It's okay to ask the person you're speaking with to speak slowly if you can't catch what they're saying.
- You'll need a laptop with a webcam, speaker, and mic. We recommend using a headset or headphones with a mic for better quality audio, but this is optional.

Interview Dress Code

As you're probably aware, we promote a casual environment at Meta so that everyone can be their authentic selves. Formal dress is not required (jeans are definitely ok!). Dress comfortably. We care about what you can do, not what you wear.

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Design interview

This interview may be systems-focused or product architecture-focused depending upon the specific position for which you are interviewing. Much of the prep information will be the same across both interviews, but interview-specific example questions are highlighted below. Connect with your recruiter if you are unsure if you should prep for Systems Design questions or Product Architecture or Design questions.

What can you expect?

The design interview is 45-minutes and covers the design of complex systems or

products and the tradeoffs within your design. The scope of the question can vary widely. It's a challenging and deeply technical discussion around product ideas, usability issues, scalability, data structures, technologies used, and more holistic parts of building a software solution.

What do we look for?

One important piece of advice for your interviews: it's ok if you don't know! No one who works at Meta is an expert in all things, and we don't look for perfection in the people we interview. If you aren't sure of something during your interview, you're encouraged to ask clarifying questions and be upfront if there are topics that you have less experience with. Your interviewer will be thinking about how your skills and experience might help Meta as well as

For this interview, there often are many right ways to solve the problem. The interviewer will observe how you design a well-structured system or product. We'll look to you as the expert here and ask you to drive the design, starting with defining the high-level goals and then proposing a solution. In this interview, your interviewer will assess your performance on four focus areas:

- **Problem Navigation:** Are you demonstrating your ability to organize the problem space, the constraints, and the potential solutions? You should be asking questions to reduce ambiguity, identify the most critical problems, understand what is needed for quantitative analysis, and define a requirement set to design to.

- **Solution Design:** We are evaluating your ability to design a working solution that addresses either the complete problem/design or pieces of the problem/design. Are you able to consider the big picture in your design?

- **Technical Excellence:** Can you dive into the technical details when needed? Can you identify and articulate the dependencies and trade-offs? How are you mitigating potential risks and failure points?

- **Communication:** Can you articulate your vision and technical ideas clearly? We are assessing your ability to communicate your reasoning as well as understand and address feedback from the interviewer.

How to prep

Interviewers can only assess your skills and abilities based on what you show them during your interview, so it's important to plan and prepare to best showcase your strengths. As you begin preparing, please reference your Career Profile for additional role-specific prep materials, if available.

In addition to reviewing the above information, these tips may be helpful as you prepare:

- **Do a refresh** of your senior-level and/or master's level CS background (i.e. operating systems, networking, distributed systems). Focus on those you've

studied or worked in.

- **Recall previous designs** and think about the questions below (see "During the Interview"). We won't be asking for confidential info, but your experience makes them a good starting point for you to think about how you'd answer these types of questions.

- **Do some research.** Read about how the hyper-scale companies have built their systems (i.e. Google File System, Facebook TAO cache, Amazon S3). Build out a short list of the basic concepts used across many of these systems as this is a good place to refresh your CS background.

- **Practice!** Find a few system design questions online and try to answer them on paper in roughly 30 minutes per question. For products, think about a product or service that you use. Talk through your thought process as you design that product in 30 minutes, from the core experiences and APIs, while keeping in mind other considerations like security.

- **Review the basics of hardware** (i.e. cost, performance, limits) across CPU, network, and storage to give you a physical sense of what systems are currently capable of.

- **Think through tradeoffs.** Avoid focusing on only optimal solutions. We're much more interested in seeing how you think through basic tradeoffs. For example, easy-to-build APIs vs. long-term APIs, UI complexity vs. server complexity, performance vs. scalability, latency vs. throughput.

During the interview

We may focus on specific types of systems (ads, distributed learning systems) or we may be more product focused. We won't expect you to know algorithms that you likely wouldn't know off the top of your head (i.e. quad trees or Paxos). Demonstrate an understanding of the low-level restraints and how they affect the high-level goals. Be sure to talk through your solutions while keeping in mind different tradeoffs. Some areas to discuss:

- **Testability:** formally, or otherwise, gaining confidence that the components are correct.

- **Usability:** customer's experience with the system or product and how to evolve it quickly.

- **Extensibility:** changing the software system over time.

- **Security:** can the system or product survive DDOS, spoofing, tampering, repudiation, etc.

- **Portability:** execution in different environments.

- **Availability:** how the system survives failures.

- **Scalability:** how the system can grow over time.

- **Operational characteristics:** diagnosing or debugging problems when they occur.

Example systems design questions:

- Design a key value store

- Design Google Search

- Architect a worldwide video distribution system

Example product architecture or design questions:

- Tell me how you'd design a client-server API to build a rich document editor

- Design a chat service or a feed API

- Design an email server

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Behavioral interview

What can you expect?
The behavioral interview will consist of a 45-minute session. Your interviewer will ask you to share stories and situations that present how you, as a leader, have navigated the complex business problems that affected the company at large.

What do we look for?
The purpose of the behavioral interview is to assess if a leadership candidate will thrive in Meta's fast-paced and highly unstructured environment. To that end, we assess candidates on five signals that correlate with success at Meta:

- **Partners:** How do you partner with cross-functional partners and stakeholders? What are some successful collaborations that you've had? Tell me how you'd design a client-server API to build a rich document editor

- **Resolves Conflict:** What kind of disagreements have you had with colleagues and/or team members? How have you resolved them? Can you empathize with people whose points of view differ radically from yours?

- **Grows Continuously:** Discuss a project that you led that failed. Why did it fail and what did you learn? Do you take constructive criticism as an opportunity to improve?

- **Embraces Ambiguity:** How do you operate in an ambiguous and quickly changing environment? Can you make quality decisions and sustain productivity when missing information? How did you react when you had to

pivot your team away from a project due to a shift in priority?

- **Communicates Effectively:** How well do you communicate with teams and cross-functional partners? How do you coach your team to effectively communicate with their stakeholders?

We may ask you to:

- Discuss and share examples of how you deal with conflict.

- Talk about how and why you become a people manager.

- Describe a few of your peers at your company and the type of relationship you have with them.

- Discuss available details of past and current projects (both successes and failures)

How to prep
Just like with other aspects of the interview, it is important to prepare ahead of time for interviews that are designed to get to know your background better. In this interview, you should focus on teamwork, leadership, and mentorship qualities.

- **Know yourself.** This interview will focus on your history and resume so take the time to review your own resume so that you're prepared to discuss key events in your work history.

- **Have concrete examples or anecdotes.** Support each question with practical experiences and examples. Avoid theoretical answers - if you go into a theoretical tangent, your interviewer will redirect you to provide a concrete example.

- **Use the S.T.A.R. method** to mentally organize your thoughts. This will provoke a well- thought-out and chronological action of events. Easy to describe, easy to follow.

  - **S**—One or two sentences about the **SITUATION**: What happened?

  - **T**—Describe the **TASK**: What was your specific goal?

  - **A**—**ACTIONS** you took to overcome the obstacles and complete your objective.

  - **R**—The tangible / quantifiable **RESULTS** of the situation: How did it help the team / company?

- **Be honest.** Not every project is a runaway success and we may not always interact perfectly with our peers. Being transparent in these situations won't be counted against you in the interview. In fact, sharing & discussing how you learned, improved, and grew from your past experiences is valued.

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Coding interview

Please skip this section and proceed to the People management interview section if you have confirmed with your recruiter that you do not need to prepare for a coding interview.

What can you expect?

This interview focuses heavily on coding. Be prepared for one to two basic coding questions covering coding, algorithms, data structures, design patterns, system design, and scalability. Your interviewer will ask you to write out your solution using a programming language of your choice, unless otherwise noted by your Recruiter.

What do we look for?

Your interviewer will be thinking about how your skills and experience might help Meta. In your coding interview, your interviewer will assess your performance on four focus areas:

- **Problem Solving:** We're evaluating how you comprehend and explain complex ideas. Are you providing the reasoning behind a particular solution? Developing and comparing multiple solutions? Using appropriate data structures?

- **Coding:** Can you convert solutions to executable code? Is the code organized and does it have the right logical structure?

- **Verification:** Are you considering a reasonable number of test cases or coming up with a good argument for why your code is correct? If your solution has bugs, are you able to walk through your own logic to find them and explain what the code is doing?

- **Communication:** Are you asking for requirements and clarity when necessary, or are you just diving into the code? Your coding interview should be a conversation, so don't forget to ask questions.

How to prep

Interviewers can only assess your skills and abilities based on what you show them during your interview, so it's important to plan and prepare to best showcase your strengths.

We use many different coding languages at Meta so practice in the coding language that you are most confident unless otherwise informed by your recruiter.

Do not attempt to learn a new one for the interview. You should expect to solve about two problems in the course of about 40 minutes. When you have a solution, be sure to review it. Make sure that it's correct, that you've considered the edge cases, that it's efficient, and that it clearly reflects the ideas that you're trying to express in your code.

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In addition, these tips may be helpful:

- **Review basic-problem solving skills.** How do you break down a problem, how do you map a problem to practice, how do you express a solution in code, how do you test, what is a good API (and why), what are the tradeoffs you are making in your solution?

- **Analyze the problem** and make sure that you fully understand it before jumping in. It's OK to ask clarifying questions during the interview to ensure you understand the exact problem you are trying to solve. Also, breaking down the problem into smaller pieces can be helpful.

- **Practice using your favorite language** to solve some basic programming problems (i.e. print a binary tree in-order, add two binary numbers passed to a function as a string with the function call: string AddNumbers (string firstNum, string secondNum)). As a reminder, we don't expect you to learn a new language just for the interview.

- **Get comfortable with the medium you'll use in the interview.** In other words, try writing code with just a plain text editor with no compiler, linter, syntax highlighter, autocomplete, and so on. Please also practice talking through a problem before you start coding. Your interviewer will be evaluating how you explore the problem space and weigh different possible solutions so it's crucial to help the interviewer understand your choices.

- **Think about different algorithms and algorithmic techniques** (e.g., iteration, sorting, divide-and-conquer, recursion). We do not ask dynamic programming questions so don't spend time prepping for that technique and focus your efforts elsewhere.

- **Think about data structures**, particularly the ones used most often. For instance, array, stack (or queues), hashtable, trees (including specialized trees like binary trees and binary search trees), graphs, and heaps.

- **Keep things simple.** If you find the solution getting excessively complex, step back and ask if there's a simpler way to solve it. It may also be helpful to write everything out so you can see insights and bugs faster and make fewer mistakes.

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People Management interview

What can you expect?
This is a fairly unstructured interview, and is generally focused on philosophy, process, and strategy around your management experience.

What do we look for?
This interview will help us to learn more about your people management experience and how that might translate into leading a team here at Meta. Your interviewer

will ask you to share a few stories that highlight your people management, coaching or mentorship, team-building, and talent acquisition skills.

For this interview, we will assess your performance on three focus areas:

- **Building the team or org:** How do you anticipate the needs of your team or org and build a team around that? How do you ensure a diverse slate of experiences and perspectives? How do you evaluate a good team?

- **Developing the team or org:** How do you help develop the people in your team or org? What practices do you employ to foster an environment of both continuous learning and inclusivity? How do you hold yourself and/or others accountable for managing team performance?

- **Supporting the team or org:** How do you course-correct a team or org that's become unhealthy? Describe the systems or frameworks that you've created to resolve conflicts quickly. How do you recognize your team's successes and empower them to celebrate one another's achievements?

How to prep

To prepare for this interview, think of examples that show both success and failures in which you've navigated the complexity of growing, developing, and supporting the people in your team and / or organization. Your interview will likely ask you to describe:

- How you supported the growth and development of members of your team.

- How you navigated particularly challenging people management situations.

Project Retrospective interview

What can you expect?

This discussion-based interview covers project implementation details, potentially across the full project lifecycle. The interviewer will ask you a variety of questions related to project management situations focusing on business acumen, strategy, and execution. You will be expected to be able to deep dive into some of these projects. You will want to provide enough detail to explain the project at both high and detailed levels.

What do we look for?

In your Project Retrospective interview, your interviewer will assess your performance on three (3) focus areas:

- **Project direction**: How do you set and drive success metrics? How do you influence stakeholders to implement the most impactful solution? Discuss how you align your projects to the objectives of the organization at large.

- **Project execution**: How do you identify and address gaps? What tools and /or

systems have you utilized or built to ensure quality work across complex problems?

- **Stakeholder influence and engagement**: When have you had to influence and negotiate with stakeholders and peers? How do you build strong partnerships across the organization? How do you foster engagement?

How to prep
Recall two to three different projects you've been responsible for and map out the various aspects of the project. Focus on how to best describe the high and detailed levels of the project.

- **Be clear and concise.** The interviewer won't have any background knowledge of your example(s), so please practice providing enough context. Avoid overly complex examples that are difficult to describe or require too much context (i.e. company-specific knowledge for which your interviewer doesn't have a frame of reference).

- **Map your project retrospective** back to basic management principles.

- **Provide clear examples** that don't require too many details.

- **Focus on your ability to zoom out** and look at each project or product more holistically.

- **Think about the following for each example you are preparing**
    - How did you define project scope, key stakeholders, deliverables, and success metrics for tracking?
    - Project planning, roadmapping and prioritization
    - How did you empower people on your team to execute on project milestones?
    - Overall outcomes: big wins, failures, reflection on what you might do differently next time
    - Cross functional work
    - Roadblocks and how you removed them
    - How and when you got involved

Final Tips for your Interview

- **Be yourself.** This means being open and honest about your successes and ways you've improved throughout your career. Also, be sure to call out how you have specifically added value to your team or projects you've contributed to. We value teamwork and what each individual member brings to the table.

- **Carefully review and familiarize yourself with the job description and perform**

research on Meta and the role. Be prepared to answer why you are interested in this specific role and in working at Meta.

- **Please take the time to review our [mission statement](#) and [core values](#)**. These values influence how we work together to fulfill our mission of bringing the world closer together. We also encourage you to take time using our products such as Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, and WhatsApp.

- **Prepare thoughtful questions for the interviewer(s).** Your interviewer may challenge your ideas, and you should be ready to speak not only to what you recommend or have experienced but the why as well. It is important to think outside the box and to approach problems from creative and different perspectives.

Post Interview – What to Expect

You can expect your recruiter to provide a specific timeline or updates along the way. Your recruiter will inform you of next steps after your interview as soon as they are available. Feel free to follow up with them if you have not heard within a week of your interviews.

Appendix / Resources

Below is a curated list of resources to get started and help you prepare.

Connect with Meta Employees

- Once you've made it to the onsite interview stage, request to interact with an employee and learn what it's like to work at Meta through the [Meta Connections Program](#).

Meta Resources

- [About Meta](#) website

- [Meta Newsroom](#) website

- [Meta Careers](#) website & [Meta Careers for Interns & New Graduates](#) website [ETR resource only, remove if not ETR]

- [Meta Life](#)website

- [Meta Diversity](#) website

- [Meta Employee Benefits](#) website

- [Interviewing at Meta: The keys to success](#) blog

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- [Life at Meta as an Engineering Manager](#)

- [Founder's Letter](#)

Update personal information, track interview progress, and send thank you notes.

At any time during the interview process, you can track your progress, send thank-you notes and update your personal information all via the [Career Profile](#). If you do not receive a link from recruiting, you may create one.

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Thank you for taking the time to review this guide!