

TIME TO SMASH THE INTERVIEW

TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF

Everyone wants to sound confident and put their best foot forward in an interview. After all the goal is to land the job, right? One step to doing that is starting with a well prepared elevator pitch, this will set the right tone for the interview. There are different kinds of elevator pitches and they can be used for networking at events, selling a product or service, and showing value in an interview. [Check out](#) these great tips and examples on how to write a successful elevator pitch.

1.) Share your skills (past and present).

- What is your background in?

I worked at Meridian Technical Charter High School and at Nerdy Dragon as a coding intern. I also code as a hobby, often taking on projects that use a new tool, language, or software/engine. I went to BSU for a few semesters, working towards the Games, Interactive Media, and Mobile (GIMM) degree. I then graduated from the Boise CodeWorks bootcamp, because it was far faster and more focussed, but would end with the same results as the GIMM degree.

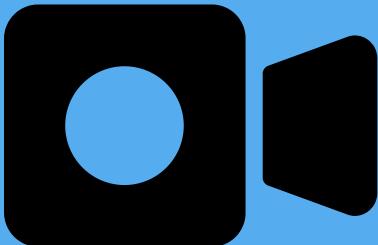
- What are some accomplishments you want to share? What is the value you can bring?

I've worked with the MVC design pattern, and have experience with SCRUM. I can also write code in HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and C#. I've also used Node.js and the Vue3 framework. I've created a few full stack applications, both individually and with a team.

- What are your career goals or aspirations?

I am currently a hobbyist coder, but I'm looking to become a professional. In the future, I'd like to be a game developer, but that's more of a dream job.

Remember this is who you are as a professional. There will be plenty of time to share who you are as a person outside of a professional setting. You should always share a little bit of why you're interested in the company. Show them you did your research.



"Practice, practice, practice. The best way to feel comfortable about giving an elevator speech is to practice it until the speed and "pitch" come naturally, without sounding robotic. You will get used to varying the conversation as you practice doing so. The more you practice, the easier it will be to deliver it when you're at a career networking event or job interview."

Homework:

- Write out your elevator pitch and attach it to your readme
- practice with friends and family until you feel more comfortable
- Record a 90-120 second elevator pitch and attach to your github readme
- Before mock interviews re-record your elevator pitch and see if you can see the difference just a little bit of practice makes.

BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS



YOUR TURN

Pick five questions from this [list](#) of 30 common behavioral questions and fill out the section below.

Situation:

Task:

Action:

Resolution:

S.T.A.R ANSWERS

Employers will often use behavioral questions to help assess a candidate's skill in certain areas. The goal of behavioral questions is to identify if a candidate has experienced something similar to what they might experience at the current company. Candidates can use the S.T.A.R method to provide a focused story answer. By following these steps it can help the candidate feel prepared and relaxed in the interview. To learn more about this method click [here](#).

"Example:

Tell me about a time you had to solve a complex problem?

Situation: I was working with 4 other developers building a trivia application. We had some disagreements on which direction our application should take and this prevented us from moving forward.

Task: We had two weeks to build this full stack application and needed to make some decisions quick. Two team members had very different visions that we needed to overcome.

Action: I suggested that we create mock ups of the two choices we were torn between using Figma. Then the two team members had to present to the rest of the team, we then took a vote on which direction the team wanted to pursue.

Resolution: This was a great option as it allowed us to see both sides but ultimately come up with the best design for our application and group. Ultimately the application came out really great and our Senior team was very impressed.



The Key to Success

Preparation

The key to a successful interview is preparation. Review the job description and prepare some STAR scenarios based on the job description. Know who you are interviewing with, the culture of the company, look at employee/customer reviews on Glassdoor/yelp and other sites, reach out to employees on LinkedIn, and look into the tech stack you would be working in.

You should be able to answer certain questions like:

- Why do you want to work here?
- What do you know about our company?
- Which of our values describe you best?

"Be excited about the company or project, and that positivity will come across in the interview.

- Know your audience. If you're interviewing with a recruiter (with no programming knowledge), play up your soft skills and don't get too technical.
- If you're interviewing with a software developer, show off that tech knowledge!

Be honest: tell the interviewer what most interests you in a job and what kinds of projects you'd like to work on."
(learntocodewithme)

Have questions already prepared and written down to ask at the end of the interview. You should not be put on the spot at the end or have nothing to ask. Having no questions is a bad sign!

Have a notepad, pen, copies of your resume ready for every interview. Go one step further and have your computer ready to show off your applications or a candidate summary you can provide.

NAILING THE TECHNICAL INTERVIEW



TECHNICAL INTERVIEW TYPES

Check out this reference [guide](#) for technical interview tips 101. Remember to land a job as a software developer will require a multi-step interview process. Typically the first step will be with a recruiter or someone from the HR team to do a basic pre-screening call. From there it could be one of these or a few of these steps:

- Remote Coding Interview/assignment- this could be conducted over zoom or be given as a take home assignment.
- Onsite Interview/Whiteboard challenge- This is usually completing a technical challenge in front of the interviewer(s).

HOW TO STAND OUT

The technical interview process is in place to not only test your skill but to see how you think and go about solving problems, how resourceful you are, how creative you are, and are you willing to admit when you don't know something. Just like with anything the best way to tackle these is by practicing.

You can use sites like:

[Edabit](#)

[LeetCode](#)

On take home assessments make sure you add a sense of creativity, reach for stretch goals, and you are familiar with the code- do not cheat and use snippets of code.

During onsite interviews follow these steps:

- Ask clarifying questions before you begin writing code
- Write some psuedo code on the whiteboard to keep the tasks/goals organized
- Talk through your code- this gives insights into how you're thinking. Don't just face the whiteboard, include your audience in the process.
- Speak clearly and precisely
- Stay calm, if you're stuck think outloud.





Additional prep

As mentioned before it's important to feel as prepared as you can going into the interview. The more prepared you are, the better off you will be.

- Have your elevator pitch ready to go and feel comfortable with it, not like it's memorized. Have STAR answers prepared for traditional behavioral questions.
- Know the company as mentioned before- culture, values, product/service and who you are meeting with if possible.
- Look into the language(s) they use, this does not mean you need to be an expert but be familiar with some syntax and can you make comparisons to languages you already know.
- Study up on terminology and other concepts not taught in our program (data structures and algorithms). Here's a great [resource](#) for free Computer Science lessons Also this [link](#) - scroll halfway through to find additional resources on computer science topics.
- Do regular coding challenges as practice- mentioned above.
- Feel comfortable talking about your project (using STAR to outline your thoughts)
- Come prepared with questions to ask the interviewers

Common Interview Mistakes

- **Not preparing enough-** There's no such thing as too much interview preparation, this can really help separate you from the competition as most candidates don't put in the proper time for preparation.
- **Jumping into code without taking a moment to think-** Often starting to write or type out code before thinking about the problem or question gets them in trouble and often leads to confusion or feeling lost.
- **Being too arrogant or opinionated-** Don't be afraid to say you don't know something, that's ok. Be confident in what you know, but don't sound like an expert.
- **Not making conversation or small chit-chat-** Hiring for cultural fit is a huge part of the process. Are you someone the team will get along with? Soft skills are just as important as hard skills.

Homework

- Create an account on Edabit or Leetcode or another code practice site.
- Practice 2 whiteboard challenges with a classmate- write up a summary of the challenges you did, who it was with and what you think you could do better.
- Come up with 5 questions that you would like to ask at the end of the interview- not regarding pay and benefits and submit to me. Use this [link](#) for recommendations.

REQUIREMENTS

- Read all worksheets and articles.
- Create a draft of an elevator pitch.
- Record a 90 second elevator pitch.
- Pick 5 questions from the [Common Interview Questions](#) article and create STAR responses to each question.
- Write out a brief summary of some things you can do to prepare for an interview or make yourself stand out as a candidate.
- Practice 2 whiteboard challenges with a peer, write a brief summary about the experience. What challenge, who was your partner, and what do you think you could do better.
- Write down 5 questions you would like to ask an employer at the end of an interview (not regarding pay and benefits). Use the above article as a guide.
- Finalize your resume
- Attach all items to Github
- Slack Github to Brittany- due next Thursday by 9am