TWO SIGMA

1:30pm PT, Thursday, October 6, 2022

Technical Interview Workshop Day I @ CMU SV

Yongwhan Lim
Senior Quantitative Software Engineer

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Yongwhan Lim

Senior Quantitative Software Engineer at Two Sigma

- Currently:
  - Senior Quantitative Software Engineer at Two Sigma
  - Lecturer in EECS at MIT
  - Associate in Computer Science at Columbia University
  - Visiting Instructor at Cornell-Tech
  - ICPC Head Coach at Columbia University
  - ICPC Judge for Greater New York and Mid-Central Regionals in North America
  - ICPC Judge for North America Qualifier
- Previously:
  - Research Software Engineer at Google Research
- Education:
  - Stanford
    - Math (BS ‘11) and CS (BS ‘11)
    - CS (MS ‘13)
  - MIT
    - Operations Research (PhD, started in 2013 but on an extended leave-of-absence since 2016)

https://www.cs.columbia.edu/~yongwhan/

Overview

- Part I
  - Interview Types
  - Technical Interview
  - Interview Topics
  - 2 Sample Interview Questions
  - Interview Preparation Resources

- Part II: Questions and Answers (Q&A's)

Part I

Interview Types

- Technical Interview
  - tests technical skill-sets required for a job.

- Behavioral Interview
  - tests soft skills (e.g., effective communication, conflict resolution, etc.)

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Technical Interview Overview (Company Dependent)

- Recruiter Call

- 0-1 Online Coding Challenge
  - automated screening with 2-3 questions.

- 2-3 Technical Phone Screenings
  - first technical conversation with human.

- 4-7 Interviews Onsite
  - similar to phone screening but more in-depth.
  - you may get probed on your claimed expertise.

- 0-5 Fit Calls and Negotiation

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Interview Topics Overview

- Data Structures and Algorithms
- (> entry level) System Design Problems

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Interview Topics Overview

- **Fundamentals**
  - Primitive Types
  - Arrays and Linked Lists
  - Binary Trees
  - Heaps
  - Sorting
- **Important**
  - Stacks and Queues
  - Hash Tables
  - Binary Search Trees
  - Searching
  - Recursion
- **Real Differentiators**
  - Strings
  - Dynamic Programming
  - Greedy Algorithms and Invariants
  - Graphs

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Sample Interview Question #1

- **Problem Statement** (LeetCode #1201: Medium)
  - An **ugly number** is a positive integer that is divisible by a, b, or c.
  - Given four integers n, a, b, and c, return n^{th} **ugly number**.

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Ideas?

Sample Interview Question #1

- **Binary Search Solution (Logarithmic):**

Now, do you see it?

Sample Interview Question #1

- **Binary Search Solution (Logarithmic):**

```
#include<bits/stdc++.h>
using namespace std;

int nthUglyNumber(int n, int a, int b, int c) {
        int low = 1, high = INT_MAX;
        while(low < high) {
                int mid = low + ((high - low) >> 1);
                if(eval(mid, a, b, c) >= n) {
                        high = mid;
                } else {
                        low = mid + 1;
                }
        }
        return low;
}
```

```
typedef long long ll;

ll lcm(ll a, ll b) {
        return a/__gcd(a,b)*b;
}

ll eval(ll x, ll a, ll b, ll c) {
        return x/a + x/b + x/c - x/lcm(a,b) - x/lcm(a,c) - x/lcm(b,c) + x/lcm(a,lcm(b,c));
}
```

Sample Interview Question #2

- **Problem Statement** (LeetCode #1312: Hard)
  - Given a string s. In one step you can insert any character at any index of the string.
  - Return *the minimum number of steps* to make s palindrome.
  - A **Palindrome String** is one that reads the same backward as well as forward.

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  - $1 \leq |s| \leq 500$
  - s consists of lowercase English letters.

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Ideas?

Sample Interview Question #2

- **Dynamic Programming Solution (Quadratic):**

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Sample Interview Question #2

- **Dynamic Programming Solution (Quadratic):**

```
#include<bits/stdc++.h>
using namespace std;

int minInsertions(string &s) {
        int n = s.size();
        vector<vector<int>> dp(n, vector<int>(n,0));
        for (int i = 1; i < n; i++)
                for (int j = 0, k = i; k < n; j++, k++)
                        dp[j][k] = (s[j]==s[k]) ? dp[j+1][k-1] : min(dp[j][k-1],dp[j+1][k])+1;
        return dp[0][n-1];
}
```

Interview Preparation Resources

- **Popular Websites**
  - LeetCode
  - CodeForces
  - AtCoder
  - TopCoder
  - CodeChef

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- Try to solve all problems from biweekly/weekly LeetCode contest **fast**.
  - Here, fast means under 1 hour for all four questions!

- Aim to be on **division I** at CodeForces
  - This will trivialize most of the technical interview.

Interview Preparation Resources

- Standard
  - *Elements of Programming Interview* by Adnan Aziz, et. al.
  - *Cracking the Coding Interview* by Gayle Laakmann McDowell

- Overkill
  - *Competitive Programming 4* by Steven Halim, et. al.
  - *Guide to Competitive Programming* by Antti Laaksonen

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Part II
Q & A's

Q & A's

- How do you overcome nervousness?

Q & A's

- Could you provide a live solving of a technical question?

Q & A's

- Is interview process as an intern different from full-time technical interview?

Q & A's

- How do you get past the automatic filter?

Q & A's

- What are topics to prepare, the best way to prepare, and expectations on programming language?

Q & A's

- Will interviewer evaluate applicants' technical knowledge other than coding skills?

Q & A's

- Are there any specific machine learning and artificial intelligence technical questions that frequently show up in interviews (and that we should prepare for)?

Q & A's

- If I do not have too much background on a position I am applying for, how do I leave a good impression to interviewer still?

Contact Information

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  - Feel free to send me a connection request.
  - Always happy to make connections with promising students!