

How I got into a tier 1 product-based firm after working 7 years in service-based industry.

It all started when I met Suraj , an IITian and a seasoned coder. We used to have our tech discussions on weekends and one day I asked him about how to get into good product-based firm or is it even possible for me now as I have almost 7 years of experience in Service industry. Then he became my mentor and guided me on every step, even took my mock coding interviews. I am going to list down some important things which helped me immensely.

Prerequisites:

- 1: Change your mindset and keep away from people who say you aren't capable of something.
- 2: Please make sure your cv is of 1 page.
- 3: Plan your next 3-4 months. Make sure you stick to it.

Coding:

- 1: I hadn't done any competitive programming during my college days, but I was pretty good in my CS subjects. 6 months back I started competitive programming. I would recommend Interviewbit because I found it very organised and interview focused.
- 2: To revise DSA I watched Algorithms and DS playlist of Abdul Bari , which gave me a good head start.
- 3: it's not mandatory that you will be asked to write code in every interview, this depends on your experience among other things but if you are good at DSA then you might have edge over other candidates. Let's say you are giving System design interview and explaining the architecture, and someone asks about NLB or LRU cache then they would be impressed if you will explain the underlying algorithm associated with it.
- 4: Practice DS, Algo questions every day. Sometimes you will feel like you won't be able to do it. Take a break, come back and start again.
- 5: While solving coding questions don't jump to the questions directly. Read the problem, think about the solution, write the brute force approach and then think about optimising it. It's very much possible that in the beginning you are not able to write optimised code because either you aren't aware of the relevant algorithm or the Data structure which can optimise the solution. So don't get disheartened, by the time you will finish the modules of interviewbit , you will get a very good idea on which Algo or DS to use on which problem, then you can go back and optimise your solution. Never go for hint or solution approach during first 7-8 days, try to think about the solution on your own, even though it's a brute force approach.

System Design/Design Patterns/Others:

- 1: Highly recommend the Grokking course on system design.
- 2: Please make sure that at least you know the basic but very important design principles like SOLID, DRY, KISS etc . Remember anybody can write code but the most important thing is it should be clean, readable and maintainable.
- 3: Do follow naming conventions while writing the code even though if it's just a pseudocode.

4: be very thorough about your project architecture because high chances are there you might be asked about questions pertaining to your project architecture. In my case I focused on a project which I build from scratch during my tenure at PwC .

5: Read the JD carefully and don't hesitate to ask the hiring team, what to expect during technical interview. They will be more than happy to answer that.

6: know your language: let's say your primary language is an OO language then you should know about OO concepts and OO concepts aren't just about the definition of class or object. It's so much more than that. There are so many concepts in inheritance and polymorphism itself that if you don't know about it then it might lead to a rejection because the interviewer of these big firms have their basics clear and it's assumed that if you are not good at your basics then you might not be a good fit for the organisation. For C# folks I would recommend the book by Herbert Scheildt.

Few important points:

1: Don't give mugged up answers during an interview.

Let's say someone asks you any questions about Dynamic dispatch or a simple definition of polymorphism. Then try to accompany a real time example with your answer. It shows that you know what you are talking about.

2: If you don't know about any answer then clearly say so, never try to bluff.

3: Remember it's ok to be nervous. I remember during my System Design interview I did a very silly mistake in the last question due to nervousness but the interviewer were kind enough to ignore it because my rest of the interview went pretty good.

4: When you go to sleep watch the interview experience of people who have cleared such interviews. You will be able to validate your progress and path.

5: Once you are bit confident of your preparation then start giving interviews in order to gain the momentum and reduce the interview pressure.

6: Finally look for relevant job openings on the career portal of your dream firm and reach out to your connections to refer them. Internal referrals have very high chances of getting interview call.

7: Even if you get rejected, don't lose your hope. Analyse your mistakes, correct them and try again.

8: during these 3-4 months manage your time very efficiently.

Youtube channels which are very helpful:

Abdul Bari, GATE Lectures by Ravindrbabu, CS Dojo, Kevin Naughton jr., TechLead , MIT OpenCourseWare, TECH DOSE , Rachit Jain ,freeCodeCamp.org , Christopher Okhravi