BEHAVIORAL (CULTURAL FIT)

Note:
During a job interview, highlighting your achievements and providing specific examples of challenges you faced and how you overcame those can demonstrate your qualifications and showcase how you can add value to the company.

To-Dos:
In general, make sure to do the following for every company that you are about to interview with:

- Research the kind of work happening at the company. **Research on core principles** that a company values.

- Irrespective of the company, project yourself as a **team player and highly collaborative individual**. Someone who is proactive enough to provide inputs and, simultaneously, rational enough to evaluate the pros and cons of various suggestions and accept the better suggestion without ego.

- Discuss your **personal and professional values and how they align with the company's mission and culture.** For example, if the company values innovation and sustainability, you could discuss your passion for environmental issues and experience in sustainable projects. Also, discuss your work style and approach to teamwork to demonstrate how you can fit into the company culture.

- If it is a user-facing product, think proactively of at least **one interesting feature which would be a nice addition**. Or an area which has nicer opportunities. For example, social recommendations for Facebook or car-pooling / product delivery would be a nice add-on to Uber.

- Make sure you project yourself who is **very passionate about the company**.

Common Questions:

1. Why are you leaving your current job?

Have a great reason for why you are leaving your current job.

Bad Answers:
- Better salary
- Commute is a problem
- I don't like the people I work with
- Any kind of uncertainty
- I am just exploring better opportunities
- Lack of brevity

Good Answers:

Try to answer based on the company you are being interviewed for. Some of the good answers include:
- Work at the current office is not challenging enough. And then describe how the work at the new company is significantly better and more challenging. As stated earlier, take every opportunity to project yourself as passionate and excited about working at the company.
- If the company is impact-driven, then an answer which suggests that I like to see the impact of the work being done. My current work does not give me the correct opportunity to create a lot of impact. I feel company X is an ideal place to create a better impact with millions/billions of users.
- My friend works at the current company and I keep hearing about the work happening here. I am really fascinated by the scale of the company, and I believe I can grow better here.
- Is the new company startup-ish: I want to build something from the ground up. I see this new company as a place which gives me a chance to work on various pieces across the stack.

2. Did you have a conflict with your manager in the past? If so, how did you resolve it?

Bad Answers:
- I never had a conflict with my manager. This shows **you never had any opinion**. Your manager is a human and is likely to make mistakes.
- All the time. Again, just like earlier, your manager is not wrong every time. It's **essential to do certain evaluations of the pros and cons yourself.**

Good Answers:

Conflict is a strong word. There were a few occasions when **I did not completely agree with my manager's point of view**. In those cases, we **discussed them to help me better understand his point of view.** And then, I suggested improvements (OR we assess the pros and cons of both approaches) and made a decision based on the analysis.

- This is testing your **conflict resolution skills, problem-solving ability, and communication skills.**
- It is also checking how you handle difficult situations and how you deal with authority figures in the workplace. Your answer to this question can give the interviewer insights into your ability to work collaboratively, manage conflicts, and communicate effectively with superiors.

3. Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

Bad Answers:
- Any answer that shows that you do not have enough conviction or are not ambitious enough.

Good Answers:

The primary thing being evaluated here is **how ambitious** you are. Are you someone who switches jobs every year for better pay, or rather **focuses on setting goals for yourself** in your career **to keep growing in skills and capabilities**. So, answer with something that shows that you want to either:

- As an individual contributor, increase your **in-depth knowledge in a particular domain** so that you become someone indispensable to the organization.
- As an individual contributor, increase your **breadth** so that people look up to you as someone who seeks out your advice before taking a major architectural decision.
- Become a leader and be **capable of leading a team of more than 10 people** to execute something big or become capable enough to start your own company.

4. What are your weaknesses? (Asked very often)

Bad Answers:
- I don't have any weaknesses.
- An arrogant reply like "I am too honest" OR "I work too hard".

Good Answers:

Focus on a specific weakness: Don't try to deflect the question or give a generic answer. Instead, identify a specific weakness that you have been working on improving.

Frame the weakness positively: Instead of dwelling on the negative, focus on how you have worked to overcome the weakness and what you have learned from it.

Connect it to the role: Choose a weakness that is relevant to the role you are interviewing for, and explain how you are taking steps to improve in that area.

- "I prioritize getting stuff out as soon as possible. That sometimes leads to putting things which just work and are not as robust in place so that the feature goes out into production."

- "Sometimes, I cannot get enough motivation unless I see an impact. While I can churn out night outs after night outs for something where I see an impact, it's hard to do the same when the impact is unclear."

BEHAVIORAL (TECHNICAL FIT)

During a fit interview for a tech role, the interviewer may ask questions about your previous projects and the technologies you used. The purpose of these questions is to evaluate your role in the **projects, understand your problem-solving skills, and explore how proactively you thought about your work**.

It's important to be prepared to discuss the technical aspects of your previous projects and be able to explain the technologies you used, how you used them, and the impact they had on the project's success.

Therefore, it's essential to be thorough with the technologies you used in your previous projects and make sure you are able to speak about them confidently and clearly. Be ready to provide specific examples of **how you used the technology**, **what problems you encountered**, and **how you solved them**.

It is **ALWAYS** good to be in a position where you grew to own certain components of the project or a position where you were the code owner of certain components.

Common Questions:
Think about the questions like "Tell me about a project which was…"

Common Questions	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	Project 4
Most challenging				
What you learned				
Most Interesting				
Hardest Bug				
Enjoyed most				
Conflicts with teammates				

Most Challenging:

Bad Answers: "I had to learn a lot of new languages and technologies". This tells the interviewer that you have nothing better to say and nothing was really really hard.

Good Answers: **Be specific and do not give generalized answers.** For example: "We had more user growth than anticipated, and then the major challenge was to scale out to the same number of users without just throwing more machines at the problem. We tried to figure out bottlenecks in the system and improve it from there…"

What you learned:

Bad Answers: "I learned a lot of new technologies." / "I learned how to work in a big team." Again, it tells that you have nothing better to say.

Good Answers:
Instead, the same facts can be restated. For example, "I learned how to work in a big team" can be restated as "We faced a lot of challenges keeping the productivity high while maintaining the quality with a bigger team. Initially, there were a lot of miscommunications, and the code review standards would vary across different peers. I saw it as a problem and tried experimenting with ways to standardize the code deployment/code review process with rules to code structure and minimal unit test cover. I created private Facebook groups / slack groups to make sure people can easily share ideas. In the process, I learned how to set up processes and manage a big team going forward."

OR

"I learned a lot of new technologies" -> "We were facing issues with load balancing users across machines in case of machine failure. On exploring solutions, I learned about Consistent Hashing, which helped us load balance efficiently across machines"

In general, make sure your answers project the qualities described earlier in the doc. Passion about the company, a team player and a technically solid person who is eager to learn.

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

LAST BUT NOT THE LEAST, when the interviewer asks you, "Do you have any questions for me ?" **make sure you have at least one question ready for him.**

Some interesting questions:

1. What are your views on <insert some recent feature of the company>?
2. I noticed that you use technology X. How do you handle problem Y?
3. Why did the product choose to use the X protocol over the Y protocol?
4. How does X work where X is a very small component/piece about a feature? For example, how does Facebook web chat maintain connections to the server? Is it long polling behind the screens?
5. How much time do you spend writing code every day?
6. How do teams discuss new ideas?
7. How has your experience been in the firm?

Other commonly asked Situational/Behavioral questions

Kindly go through these questions and **write down an answer for each question and make sure to practice in front of the mirror or record yourself.**

1. Tell me about a time in which you had a conflict and needed to influence somebody else.
2. Tell me about a time you met a tight deadline.
3. Time management has become a necessary factor in productivity. Give an example of a time-management skill you've learned and applied at work.
4. How have you handled criticism/feedback of your work?
5. Tell me about a time you had to work closely with someone you didn't get along with. What did you do?
6. Tell me about a time you were in a high-pressure situation. How did you get through it?
7. What project are you currently working on?
8. What is the most challenging aspect of your current project?
9. What was the most difficult bug that you fixed in the past 6 months?

10. How do you tackle challenges? Name a difficult challenge you faced while working on a project, how you overcame it, and what you learned.
11. What are you excited about?
12. What frustrates you?
13. Imagine it is your first day here at the company. What do you want to work on? What features would you improve on?
14. What are the most interesting projects you have worked on and how might they be relevant to this company's environment?
15. Talk about a project you are most passionate about or one where you did your best work.
16. What does your best day of work look like?
17. What is something that you had to push for in your previous projects?
18. What is the most constructive feedback you have received in your career?
19. What is something you had to persevere at for multiple months?

Use the **STAR approach** for answering situational questions during an interview. The acronym stands for **Situation, Task, Action, and Result**, and it provides a structured way to answer questions and showcase your skills and experience.

Here is how you can use the STAR approach to answer situational questions:

Situation: Start by describing the situation or problem that you encountered. Provide some background information, such as the context, the people involved, and the challenges you faced.

Task: Next, describe the specific task or objective that you needed to accomplish. Be clear about what was expected of you and what you were trying to achieve.

Action: Describe the specific actions you took to address the situation or complete the task. Be specific about your role in the situation and the steps you took to resolve the problem. Explain your thought process and the rationale behind your decisions.

Result: Finally, describe the outcome of your actions. Explain how your actions contributed to the success of the project or resolved the problem. Quantify the impact of your actions if possible, such as the time or money saved, or the positive feedback received.

Using the STAR approach will help you provide clear and structured answers to situational questions and showcase your problem-solving and decision-making skills. Make sure to practice using this technique before your interview to feel confident and prepared.