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Ubisoft Reflections' top tips when prepping for a game developer job interview

GUEST CONTRIBUTOR · APR 20, 2018

Ubisoft Reflections' devs give advice to help candidates better prepare for interviews at the studio – and elsewhere in the industry

Ubisoft Reflections' talent acquisition manager Craig Pearn asked developers in the studio what advice they can give to help candidates better prepare themselves for interviews and technical tests

Do your research

It goes without saying that before an interview you should find out some interesting facts about the company you intend on being your future employer. You will 100% get asked a question on your motivations to join whatever company you're interviewing with in some way, shape or form. Of course you can give the same high level answer as we typically get but this isn't going to show that you've gone the extra mile to find out key facts about us. Research the company's history, research the back catalogue, play the back catalogue, play the recent games and make notes about what you found interesting / not interesting, what you'd do differently etc. Check out key people on LinkedIn and what games they have worked on, great way to start off a conversation. It can be a lot of information to remember especially if you're interviewing with several companies so feel free to bring notes with you, it also tells us that you you've done some research.

Practice makes perfect

Having an attractive and readymade portfolio that shows off your talents is likely to be one of the reasons you have made it to an interview but once you're onsite you're most likely to be asked to talk in detail about your work. If you don't get asked then you should make it your job to bring it up, after all you've put the effort in to create it so you should want to showcase it. Have in your mind how you would like to present this (i.e. navigate your website, talk about your methodology, what tools you used, what you like and what you'd do differently and so on). Practice makes perfect so run through this with friends, colleagues, lecturers before interviews. If you know your subject and can talk critically about your work, you're in a good position.

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We've all been in your shoes

Nerves are expected but remember that your interviewers are just normal people who like games, and they have been in same position as you at some point. Don't think of the interview as something where you'll be judged, but instead treat it as an opportunity to discuss games and game development with people in the industry. Make the most of it and enjoy the experience. It is absolutely fine to admit when you don't know an answer. It actually shows that you are honest and you can take the opportunity to ask interviewers more about that topic. Every interview is a good experience so you'll always be making progress no matter what the result is.

Be you

Its important to be yourself during an interview! You are a gamer being interviewed for a game dev position, chances are your interviewers are gamers too. Talking enthusiastically about how games are a part of your life will definitely ensure you find some common ground very quickly. You may like games that are very niche. It's fine. You may have a strong passion or hobby: we'd like to know about them. It's okay to have a personality as at the end of the day you will spend a large percentage of your time at work beside lots of other personalities so it's important you're comfortable being you.

"So, do you have any questions?"

Come to the interview prepared to ask questions. When you're preparing for your interview it's important that you think carefully about what questions you would like to ask. Planned questions at the end of an interview are part and parcel of a standard interview however, at Ubisoft Reflections, we prefer to make interviews a two way process so don't be afraid ask questions if something isn't clear!

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Once the interviewers have wrapped up all their questions don't feel like you have to rush and make a swift exit. This is now another opportunity for you to shine; you should be using this time to gather information that maybe wasn't clear during the interview but more importantly setting yourself up to promote your skills and abilities or to tell us about your motivations and your inquisitiveness. Whatever you do, don't look blank faced when you're asked "so do you have any questions?"

The night before

We ask candidates to bring whatever they like to the interview that will support their application. Usually candidates will bring a laptop or tablet to demo their work or play with some playable content during the interview so it's important that you check everything is in good working order. Get a good night sleep, have breakfast, if you're onsite for a while take some water or a snack for when you have a break. Check your travel plans in advance so you're not late and come in comfortable clothing.