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Job Interviews

AI/ML Solution Architect role

H HgwX51
Sep 5

AWS AI/ML Solution Architect role at Amazon

Interview Amazon Solutions Architect AWS AI

Questions

1. From a technical perspective, how does Amazon gage if an individual would best fit an AWS AI/ML Solutions Architect role?
50 words minimum.
2. What kind of questions should I expect for a phone/onsite interview? Should I prepare for system design questions? Do they ask CS fundamentals/coding OR is more focused on AWS?
50 words minimum.
3. What's the expected Technical Code range for an AWS solutions architect at Amazon?
50 words minimum.

2 Answers

A Amazon
Sep 8

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1. From a technical perspective, how does Amazon gauge if an individual would best fit an AWS AI/ML Solutions Architect role?

A detailed role guideline is at the end of this answer, where you can see the responsibilities of a Solutions Architect. Hope that helps!

Usually super technical questions are not asked, unless you are going for an SDE role. It is not clear to me what is the job profile from AI/ML given everyone is using those now. Amazon has a standardized script for LP interviews, which is applicable for 99% of the job roles across all departments and geographies. Let me elaborate more on that (as these will have significantly higher weightage than any tech question to get an offer from Amazon).

Amazon Interview Process is extremely consistent: once your resume is shortlisted, it starts with recruiter screening / phonescreen with hiring manager, and if selected in those 1-2 initial rounds, you are invited for a loop (round of 4-5 interviews in the same day). All of these interviews are based on Amazon's 14 leadership principles (as you may have searches from the internet) to test whether you have demonstrated those competencies in your previous professional experiences. For Amazon LP behavioral competency interview, the exact phrasing of the question can change, but the central idea as defined within the descriptions of each LP would remain the same. For example, Customer Obsession could have something to do with a time when you took customer feedback or learnt from their pain-points and changed a process. For Dive Deep, you might have solved a complex problem by getting into layers of the issue. For Bias for Action, you might have prioritized quick & scrappy solution to move forward faster. For Ownership, you might have gone above and beyond your call of duty. For Earn Trust, you might have resolved a conflict/disagreement with a teammate/stakeholder. The sample list from the official interview bank is confidential, but I hope with my 5 directional examples, you have some idea on how a particular Leadership Principle is tested.

2. What kind of questions should I expect for a phone/onsite interview? Should I prepare for system design questions? Do they ask CS fundamentals/coding OR is more focused on AWS?

Definitely expect System Design questions and questions that will test your knowledge of AWS, but not really CS fundamentals/Coding questions. You will be tested with AWS solutions that are already used by existing customers. SSA is a customer-facing role and therefore it is important to have a good understanding of the AWS suite of products and why they are useful. I really doubt if you would be tested with coding questions.

In any interview lasting 45 minutes, 2 LPs are tested. For these scenario-type questions ("Tell me about a time when..."), perhaps you may have heard about the STAR method, and you should have at least 2-3 stories for each competency that you can confidently narrate and respond to follow-up questions. Spend 30-seconds setting the "S"ituation, another 15-20 sec to list the "T"asks ahead of you, then 60-75 sec to talk about all the "A"ctions you took, and summarize with a punch 10-15 sec "R"esult. That way, you'll articulate a powerful narrative from your professional experience where you have demonstrated the competency in question in 150-200 seconds (maximum 5 mins), and allow the interviewer to get deeper into any particular area that they are curious about. The best strategy to execute this would be to pick achievements you are most proud about and are aware of the deepest details about, this is come across as really positive during your interview.

First of all, I think you should prepare a diverse set of stories and practice narrating them so that even if you don't get an exact response for the question asked, you may be recycle another example to fit the situation. This reduces the risk that you don't have any relevant example narrative at all.



However, should you be in a situation where you don't have a perfect answer, but you can think of 2-3 weak answers, you can take advice of the interviewer in real-time (something like, "Hmm, interesting question. Couple of examples come to my mind; one instance when I investigated into root-cause of variable cost increase year over year, there's another one where a certain internal customer was unhappy with the delay in project deadlines, and lastly there's one where we didn't have any reference data to execute a new launch and I had to use my judgment to move forward. Which one would you like me to expand on?") and it will not only be very well received, but you'll get a instant sense of what your interviewer prefers. Lastly, I'd like to emphasize that there's a reason why Amazon does not focus too much on your skill-sets or your ability to respond to hypothetical case-studies: it wants to test you based on how you reacted to certain situations in your past professional life, and would you be able to demonstrate that competency when you're an employee. Therefore, it is perfectly acceptable to repeat a story as long as you are able to address it from another vantage point (situation might be same, but viewing lens can be different). Lastly, I'd strongly recommend against making something up totally randomly, because interviewers are trained to ask follow-up questions, and you'll find yourself trapped in a hole (after which you should stop digging further!)

3. What's the expected Technical Code range for an AWS solutions architect at Amazon?

Amazon doesn't expect AWS-SAs to be SWE-level coders, but have a general understanding of how software engineering works so that there isn't a huge communication gap between SAs, PM's and SWE's. If you're more junior you might be asked a simple coding question, a LeetCode easy-mid level. You're not expected to write real working code, just pseudocode describing algorithm is fine. If you're more senior or a specialized role you might be asked high-level system design, more focused on the product design (feature-scope, user flows, etc). If you have some software engineering background I would do some Leetcode questions, focus on the easy-mid level problems and you should be fine. If you have some experience as a product manager on a technical team, try to go through the high-level architecture and process that was used on that team in depth. Solution Architects shouldn't really care about how things are implemented, but have a general sense of how hard something is to do, the limits of software engineering, and defining user journeys that translate well into engineering work

Here's a list of questions I found online a few years ago, and I use them to conduct SA interviews (hope it's helpful):-

How do you prioritize among competing features?

How do you say no to people?

What is your favorite (software) product and why? How would you improve it?

Tell me about how use data to make decisions.

How would you describe our product to someone?

How do you know if a product is well designed?

What is one of the best ideas you have ever had?

What is the worst idea you have ever had?

What are some of the challenges working with development teams to create software?

What is your current role on your team: who else do you work with and in what capacity?

How do you decide what to build?

How do you interact with your users?

Tell me about an application you are very familiar with; what drives you nuts about it, how would you fix it; what would your next release look like (ask me the theme/top features).



Provide a number of products (websites) that you think are particularly well-designed.
Suggest how you would improve the targeted company's product/site
Talk about how you overcame product failures/challenges/poor feedback
What metrics do you think are important to track for our products?
What would you measure to tell if a new feature was successful or not?
Give an example of a well executed product. How would you improve it?
Describe what happens when you type a URL into your browser and press Enter.
How do you resolve conflict with engineers?

attachment 1

Only the Requester can download attachments.

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Great explanation!



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1. From a technical perspective, how does Amazon gauge if an individual would best fit an AWS AI/ML Solutions Architect role?

The interview will be two parts. Technician round and leadership principles round. You are expected to crack both to get an offer. For the technician chops, you will be given a situation or scenario and be expected to design the solution, write code and talk through your solution. Be ready to counter edge cases and ask questions if presented with ambiguity.

2. What kind of questions should I expect for a phone/onsite interview? Should I prepare for system design questions? Do they ask CS fundamentals/coding OR is more focused on AWS?

For the phone screen, the major focus will be on coding skills and a touch up on a one or two Leadership Principles (Invent and simplify and bias for action). The focus will be on coding and design and fundamentals. It's ok to not have great AWS knowledge though.

3. What's the expected Technical Code range for an AWS solutions architect at Amazon?



It's kinda hard to understand this question. However, if you mean how proficient should your be for an AWS solutions architect, I think it should be bar raising. You can also get away with pseudo code if you knock the design and leadership principles rounds out of the park. Good luck

H HgwX51 ★★★★★

Thank you!

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