

Draft of Elevator Pitch:

I'm a graduate of Codeworks, a coding bootcamp right here in Boise. It was an intense program where we learned JavaScript, Css, HTML, Vue, Node.js, C#, and SQL. That really solidified my passion for coding, and I discovered that I really enjoy user interfaces and the rhetorical side of coding. In the future, I'm really interested in becoming a data architect.

Before I attended Codeworks I was working as a technical specialist at the YMCA in their Child Development Accounting Department. That was a great experience, I was working remote with a team of seven, but eventually the controller of the Y decided that she wanted me to go after outstanding payments to the Y's childcare program, so we worked together in order to create a sustainable collections procedure that could be easily followed and implemented into the team's weekly schedule. While in that role I was able to recover over \$7,000 for the Y and wrote the collections procedure manual.

I'm really well suited to working in a team environment, and Codeworks showed me that I can learn quickly and thoroughly. I've managed to make my way into a field that I really find challenging and enjoyable, and it's one of those things that I never thought I would be studying when I was getting my degree in rhetoric and technical writing. But I'm glad that I was able to find something that I enjoy as much as coding to pursue for a career.

(And then I'd throw in a little bit about the company specifically, why I think I'd be a good fit with what they do, something about the mission statement and why I like it, things like that. That should take like 15ish seconds maybe? 30 if I remember to talk at a speed a normal human can understand.)

5 Questions from Common Interview Questions:

Give me an example of a time you faced a conflict while working on a team. How did you handle that?

S - During my time at codeworks we broke out into groups of four to work on a capstone project. We had a week and a half to get the application done, and the majority of the work was done without instructor supervision.

T - My team was working on a dungeons and dragons application that would give you a playable level one character after answering a series of 13 questions. One of our team members was very enthusiastic about the project, and so he took a lot of the work upon himself. This was frustrating for me and the other members of the group, as we felt that we weren't getting to do our share of the work, or if we wanted to do something it had already been done.

A - We were lucky enough to sit down for a sprint retrospective with our instructors, and I was able to voice my concerns that the other three members of the team weren't as involved as we should be. Our excited teammate was able to own up to the fact that he was doing a lot of the work, and apologized.

R- We were able to come up with a system where he was able to do a lot of the planning, big picture stuff, and the rest of us took a little more initiative on smaller tasks that needed to be done. In the end we wound up with a really great app (The Tavern, listed on my resume) and everyone felt like they got their fair share of hands-on experience.

Describe a time when you had to interact with a difficult client. What was the situation, and how did you handle it?

S - During my time at the YMCA's Child Development Accounting department, I dealt with a lot of difficult parents due to the nature of the work (which was essentially collecting debts that were owed to the Y).

T - I remember one mixed family that was having issues with their billing, the mother had a daughter from a previous marriage and was splitting her childcare with the father 50/50. She also had a son with her current husband, and the current husband was paying for their son's childcare. She called me because her current husband's card had been used for payment for both children, and this was an issue from a legal standpoint with her daughter's father.

A - I was doing the reconciliation but also floating to where I was needed in the department, so I worked with the tech that set the billing methods on her account up. We needed documents to reference stating everything she had told me about what child is paid for by whom in writing and agreed to by all three adults in the situation. We weren't able to find any, so we set about drafting up a copy of that agreement, getting signatures from the three adults, filing those where they needed to go, and making notes on the accounts. We also had to set up two different accounts so that there was no way the wrong card could be charged to the account it wasn't supposed to be set to. It took a lot of back and forth with the parents, with our supervisors, and with each other.

R- In the end, we took care of everything. Both children were registered where they needed to go, with the correct payment methods set up for each child, and documentation in place for what was done when, and what would need to be done in the future if something were to change with the payment methods or registrations.

Describe a time when your team or company was undergoing some change. How did that impact you, and how did you adapt?

S - As the reconciliation specialist at the Y's CD accounting branch, I was put into the unique position of doing a job that had never been done before, much less documented with procedures in place.

T - I worked closely with the Y's controller to assess what the department needed, and we started to flesh out a system from there. They would eventually need a manual to document what the collections procedures were as well.

A - So I got to be the guinea pig for the procedures she and I thought out, and we would essentially have daily sprints and retrospectives where we would touch base on what needed to be done, what was working, and what we could do better.

R- We successfully put together a system that wound up collecting over \$7,000 back in outstanding debts. I wrote the manual up, which I can also tell you about...(see below)

Tell me about a time when you had to rely on written communication to get your ideas across to your team.

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T - I worked closely with the Y's controller to assess what the department needed, and we started to flesh out a system from there. She asked me if I would be able to put out a manual for the team for when they would need to function without me there to answer questions.

A - Well luckily for her I have a degree in rhetoric and technical communications, so that was actually kind of fun for me to get to put together. I focused on making it clear and easy to navigate (headers, subheaders, bullet points when applicable, color coding, and of course free of grammar and spelling errors.) I took the big tasks of my position, and thought about what someone who was starting from absolutely zero would need, and addressed those needs.

R- In the end, I was able to get her the collections procedure manual, a sort of "panic" manual for phone conversations, as well as a weekly schedule of what needed to be taken care of when, with references to what page on the procedure manual the information for the daily tasks would be found on. To my knowledge the system we made is in place and my manual is what they refer to with any questions.

Sometimes it's just not possible to get everything on your to-do list done. Tell me about a time your responsibilities got a little overwhelming. What did you do?

S - At the Y, before they moved me into the collections specialist role I was working on support tickets with the other techs.

T - During the pandemic, we were switching registrations in order to keep up with what the school district was doing for before/after and every other day attendance. I was given one of the larger schools randomly, and was still fairly new at the job. These switches in registration needed to be done by the end of the day. There were also a lot of parents contacting me about billing issues, and my plate was filling up quickly.

A - We used Microsoft Teams to communicate, and I just put out a message asking if anyone had time to help me with some of the registrations as I had work piling up. Within minutes, a few members of the team that had gotten through their tickets quickly had messaged me asking how they could help, which was awesome.

R- We got all of the kids registered in time, and I was able to field calls and return emails when parents needed to get in contact with me right away. That's one of the many nice things about working with a team, you're able to rely on others to help you out when you need it, as you'll do the same for them.

Preparation for an Interview:

To prepare for an interview, you should:

- do a try run of how long it will take you to get to the place you're interviewing at
- research the company beforehand and look for a mission statement/ about us

- bring a notebook and a pen
- bring a hard copy of your resume for the interviewer

In order to be a stand out candidate in an interview:

- Arrive early, but no earlier than 15 minutes
- Treat everyone you interact with at the company with respect and kindness
- Leave your phone in your car
- Have a couple of interesting and insightful questions for the interviewer prepared
- don't do something weird, like say you don't wear pants often or get in the interviewer's personal space
- Don't be afraid to make small talk, the interviewer is a person too
- Leave a hand written thank you card for the interviewer if it's easy to get back into the building

Whiteboard Summary:

I got together with some of my friends who currently work as computer programmers and we did "fizzbuzz" and "matching perens challenges. I think these were ok, My friend Alyssa is a senior dev and conducts interviews frequently, so she was really there for guidance when I needed it. I tend to ramble and get insecure when I'm nervous, so I think that the trick there is to really focus on the process, and not the answer. (Ok admittedly Alyssa told me that whiteboard interviews are more about evaluating how a candidate solves problems and how they work with others, so that was really helpful.) If I were to do it again (and I will), I would focus more on making sure my process is communicated well, and not asking "right?" or "does that look right?" after like every sentence. And spend a lot more time on the pseudo code.

5 Questions to Ask an Employer:

1. What does a successful first 90 days look like in this position?
2. At this company, are there any examples of a career path beginning with this position?
3. Do you provide education advancement opportunities?
4. What makes your company culture better than the rest?
5. What's your favorite part about working here?