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### Tell me about yourself

Sure, so, my name is Alexander, and I am 31 years old.

I am a PHP developer with over 6 years of experience. My professional experience includes support and development of web services.

In my most recent job, I was involved in a number of commerce projects where I was in charge of implementing web design solutions as well as maintaining the database. In my previous job, I was responsible for maintaining and updating our company website. I truly enjoyed what I was doing, which is what drew me to apply for this position.

I have some background in engineering science. I graduated from the Donbass State Engineering Academy and I have a Master's degree in Mechanical Engineering.

I started out as a back-end developer but soon started taking on database and server management tasks. I have a strong background in PHP as well as MySQL and MongoDB. I am proficient in Laravel, PHP, Go, and Python.

I am also skilled at using Git. I’m always working towards updating my skills and keeping up with the industry. This is why I’ve recently started taking JS courses. So far, I love the experience.

I’m a perfectionist. I pay attention to all the details and like to be sure that everything is just right. I’m a creative thinker. I like to explore alternative solutions to problems. I enjoy solving problems and troubleshooting issues in a timely manner. I work well under pressure. I am an excellent communicator.

My time management skills are excellent. I’m organized and efficient. This enables me to be as productive as possible on the job. When working on a project, I don’t want just to meet deadlines. I prefer to complete the task well ahead of schedule and as a result I always make my managers to be proud of me.

I am looking for a position, in which I can use my experience. I am more interested in a full-time position. My goal right now is to find a position at a company where I can grow and take on new challenges over time.

Although I love my current role, I feel I’m now ready for a more challenging assignment and this position really excites me. I believe that my experience with technology, specifically in the programming space, makes me the best match for this position. If you hire me, I will do my best to exceed your highest expectations. I want this job because the role matches what

I am looking for the next step in my career growth and also because I am very drawn to the mission and values that this company stands for.

You should hire me because I’m not only qualified for this job due to my experiences, but also because of the positive attitudes that I have towards the tasks given to me. You should hire me because I have the ability to develop my skills.

In five years, I’d like to be an industry expert in my field, able to train and mentor students and entry-level specialists alike.

My salary expectation is between $\*\*\* and $\*\*\*, which is the average salary for a candidate with my level of experience in this city.

### Tell me more about yourself

Well, I’ve always been interested in tech. But it all probably started when I studied at school, and at the age of 16 I first got my computer.

I always loved playing around with code and learning new things. But it wasn’t until that high school where I first had my first class about IT that really made me fall in love with the subject.

Throughout my study at school, I’ve noticed that I’ve always been good with numbers and handling data. Since then, I started learning more about IT and decided to major in IT.

As for my hobbies, they are bicycling and playing computer games.

### What are your biggest strengths and weaknesses?

I’ve always considered myself an organized and result-driven person. I make sure that the tools and approaches we choose are right for the project and will result in a product that satisfies the customer’s needs.

I’m all about delivering solutions promptly, and I don’t like to overcomplicate things. For instance, I try to keep my code clean and easy to read so that another person can take over my work if need be or if I have to go back and make some changes, I don’t get mixed up and confused. I think a big part of being organized is being able to look at the big picture and ask yourself what may come in the future.

I actually think my English could use some improvement. In the past, my fear of communicating in English has prevented me from taking an active part in meetings. I also used to lack the confidence to write to my colleagues or the client team, because, I think, there were a few instances when they thought I was a bit impolite over email.

However, it is something I am working on at the moment. I’ve been attending English classes for three months now, and I feel like I’m getting over my fear of talking in meetings. I am still working on writing good emails, and I think I’m making progress.

### Which skills would you say are critical for working with a team?

For me, three critical skills when working with a team are time management, communication, and conflict resolution.

Time management skills and communication can affect the speed and quality of work completed by the team, which is why I highly value these skills in the workplace.

Conflict resolution is also essential—it’s a behavioral soft skill that can enhance team members’ ability to get along with others and therefore also affects productivity.

### What is your task prioritization process?

I tend to use a to-do list to break down each project into easier tasks, then order all tasks by priority, and work my way through the list by completing the most urgent or critical tasks first.

### What is your approach to handling project delays?

To handle project delays, I hold frequent meetings until the project is completed and re-prioritize tasks as needed. If it becomes apparent that further delays might occur, I’d encourage communication, attempt to minimize delays by reassigning specific tasks, and ask for help from other teams or colleagues.

### How do you make sure you’re constantly improving your skills?

One of my goals is to learn about new technology. My approach involves studying and using self-learning behavioral approaches to keep up-to-date. I put my technological knowledge into practice by implementing new skills at work.

For example, I enhanced the code quality of my organization’s website with the knowledge I had gained through a self-study course in the best practices of refactoring.

### How would you describe your communication skills?

I believe that listening is a critical part of communication and I’d say that I’m a discerning listener. I’d go as far

as to say that listening should be a priority during communication. Once you have all the necessary information, you can then break it down into smaller parts to explain it to other team members.

### How do you respond to negative feedback or bad reviews? What is your process?

For me, empathy is an essential behavioral soft skill that can help when responding to negative feedback or reviews. I always express my sympathy when a service or product doesn’t meet a customer’s expectations, ask questions to clarify the reasons for this, and try to better understand their feedback and get to the core of the problem.

### Has there been a time that you gave negative feedback to an employee?

When giving negative feedback, I balance it with positive feedback, and I also use tact and respect. I relay both sides of my feedback to encourage them and point out ways that they could improve.

### How do you motivate other team members?

I use three fundamental approaches to motivate team members and help them achieve goals.

First, I clearly establish what the goal is and recognize the eventual difficulties in achieving it. Then, I advise on the goal and the specific approach that could be used. For example, if a co-worker needed to understand how to fix bugs in their code, I would advise them on the specific debugging tool to use in their case. Finally, I would check with them frequently to see how they are progressing with the goal.

### What is your approach to providing accurate estimates for the time you need to complete a task?

As a programmer, I often time myself when writing programs for different clients. This way, I have a good idea of how long certain projects will take. However, if it’s a big project, I break it down into further smaller tasks, then estimate the time I need for each task.

### Which steps do you take to plan your tasks?

As I’m always aiming to be meticulous and precise, I plan tasks thoroughly. A part of my approach to planning involves looking at the bigger picture and the end goal, dividing the project into several sections, and setting deadlines to achieve each goal.

### What is your approach when starting a new task?

When starting to work on a new task, I like to be prepared. I use verbal communication and active listening skills to clarify what needs to be done. I then use problem-solving skills to divide the task into easier sub-tasks. And finally, I make a plan to tackle each sub-task methodically. I welcome feedback to improve and implement any changes that are needed.

### You receive unclear instructions for a task. What steps do you take to handle it?

Before I proceed with a task, I always make sure I understand the instructions and do the necessary research to figure out what I need to do to complete it. If I still don’t understand everything, I approach the team lead or project manager and ask questions to clarify the requirements. I always ask what the result should be and, if unclear, ask for an example.

### Tell me about a time when you failed a task. How did you learn from this experience?

In my first month as a PHP developer, I wanted to impress a client and overpromised a project timeline. Unfortunately, the team didn't have the resources to deliver by the deadline I'd promised, and we ended up losing the client. I reached out to the client and took full responsibility for the loss, and they gave us another chance. Because of this experience, I learned the value of setting realistic expectations and never guaranteeing more than I could deliver.

In my previous software engineering role, I was unable to fix a bug in my code. As a result, I was not on time for the release, so I was unable to meet the deadline. I have since learned several bug-fixing techniques to improve my efficiency and output. Additionally, I always aim to develop knowledge of areas in which I’m not as confident.

### Which skills do you believe are essential for leadership?

I think soft skills are critical for leadership positions. Empathy and understanding non-verbal cues are key to

assisting a team. I also challenge myself to be a good role model and use active listening during team collaboration.

For instance, during discussions about problems we’re facing, I set an example and encourage others to listen to other team members.

### Is meeting deadlines or producing quality work more important to you?

As a software engineer, I know that quality is essential. Though I always try to meet deadlines, rigorous testing is critical and I consider this the priority. I knew the deadline was approaching in a previous project, but testing had revealed a few errors. I prioritized fixing the errors because quality was more important for the team.

### Tell me about a time you had to acquire new skills within a short period. How did you achieve this?

When I was about to begin a new role as a middle software engineer, I had to refresh my knowledge of a programming language that I hadn’t used in a while. I quickly took a look at a few open-source projects I had produced. I refreshed my memory and played around with the code and practiced my skills . When I began the role, I felt more confident.

### What is your biggest challenge when starting a new role?

For me, adapting to the company culture is the biggest challenge. But I’m open-minded, I embrace change, and I’m adaptable. I always learn as much as possible about the company before starting and try to embrace the core values and principles of the business.

### What Are Your Career Goals

I know that it’s become more and more helpful to know Python in the context of data science, so I plan on learning it this year. It will come in handy when solving portfolio optimization problems. As far as long-term goals, I would like to become a fullstack-developer.

### Why did you leave your last job? / Why are you leaving your current position / Why do you want to work here?

While I’m grateful to my previous employer for giving me the opportunity to learn and grow in my career, I feel like, at this point, I’m not fully satisfied with the work I’m doing. I would love to do something more meaningful and useful and get more involved into working on a diverse range of projects where I can collaborate with passionate people and learn new approaches and technologies. I would love to work at a cutting-edge company that tries to make a positive impact in the world.

### Tell me about the biggest challenge you’ve ever had

It’s hard to point it out off the top of my head. Well, there was this one time, when we had to work with a client who did not provide clear requirements which caused a lot of confusion. Once he asked to add a certain feature three weeks before the deadline, and we had very little time for testing it.

I had to run all the needed tests and make sure the product was ready to be released.

Because the process was very time-consuming, and we were on a very tight deadline, I decided to eliminate the most critical bugs and issues first. We held a meeting with the team to determine which issues we should prioritize and got to work. In the end, we managed to deliver a functioning product and the client was happy with it.

### What would you do if a manager asked you to perform a task you've never done before?

In my last role as a software engineer, my manager asked me to build and launch a new Go app, which was something I'd never done before. I explained to my manager that I had no experience leading that type of project but volunteered to do all the work if someone more experienced could offer guidance. I met with several coworkers who had experience running Go apps, studied best practices, and successfully launched the app. Thanks to that hands-on learning experience, I became the team expert on Go.

### What would you do if you made a mistake no one noticed?

I've always found it's better to take responsibility for your mistakes than to learn from your errors. When I worked as a junior PHP developer, a client asked for a fast fix in the project and I accidentally made a bug. While there's a chance they may never have known, I knew my error could affect their experience. I promptly told my manager, remade the task and apologized to the client for the wait. The client felt satisfied, and my manager thanked me for doing the right thing. From that point forward, I paid special attention to fast fixes.

### Tell me about a time you set a personal goal for yourself. How did you ensure you would meet your objectives and what steps did you take?

I think the most recent, and important, personal goal that comes to mind is that I managed to teach myself

web development from scratch. You see, I wasn’t very satisfied as an engineer at Heavy Machinery's Plant. My coworkers were nice, and the pay was decent too, but I just didn’t see myself growing there.

So, I decided that I wanted a career change in a field I’ve always been interested in - web development. Now,

because I was working full-time, I had to be very efficient with my time-management skills.

I did some research, and all that was left to do was just follow my routine and stay committed. I set up a

personal calendar and made sure to study HTML, CSS, and JavaScript for at least 2 hours every day. I gathered a list of beginner-friendly books to start with, and once I was done with those, I paid for some advanced online courses to improve my HTML and PHP skills. When I felt comfortable, I started working on some personal projects for my portfolio and did some freelance work part-time while I was still working at Plant.

In the end, I’m glad I stuck to my plan and continued with my set curriculum. If I did not have my calendar

planned out with specific objectives, I surely would have been overwhelmed. Sure, at times, it felt like I was basically working 2 jobs and that a lot of the material wasn’t making sense. But I just kept moving forward, and then, I got my first real break as a junior web dev at Company CorpY.

### Tell me about your first job in the industry. What did you do to learn the ropes?

Well, my first job in the field was as a junior PHP programmer. While I did have extensive knowledge of the

field, I didn’t have too much experience doing it.

This made it very hard for me to get started with the job. While I was working almost all the time, I wasn’t

getting too much done.

So, what I did was, taking a lot of my personal time to really work and learn the ins and outs of programming.

I also made sure to talk to my team members and get their input on daily tasks.

A few months into the job, I managed to learn the ropes and ended up being a lot more productive.

### Why Do You Want to Work Here?

I've seen your portfolio, and it's really inspired me to apply! I love working with a team to achieve a common goal, and I know my background in production has prepared me for this role. I look forward to becoming a valued contributor to this phenomenal team.

I've seen your company consistently listed as one of the top places to work. I've read employee testimonials and heard how you encourage employee growth through education, training, and vast resources. I would love to join your innovative team, continue to create great work, and grow within the company by further improving my skills.

I specifically want to work here because I read your company’s mission and vision. After finding out more information about your company from social media, I can clearly see how my goals align with that of the company. There's nothing I love more than when I am working with other engaged individuals toward a common goal, and that's what excited me about working here.

Before the recruiter called me about this opportunity, I must admit that I didn't know much about your company. I've been doing some research in preparation for this discussion, and I need to say that I'm impressed by your work and your vision for the future. As an experienced programmer with an emphasis on technology, I know I can bring a lot of value to the team.

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### So, DON’T say you want to work a particular job for the following reasons:

- You like the hefty salary

- You’re in it for the benefits and perks

- You couldn’t land a job at another company so you’re settling

- You want to work remotely, no matter the job

- You’re desperate to get hired anywhere

### Do you have any questions for me? (Questions to the employer)

- Why do you like working here?

- Where do you see this company in 5 years?

- What kinds of qualities are you looking for in people?

- What is your culture like?

- How do you evaluate performance?

- How many employees work for the organization?

- Please, tell me a little bit more about the people with whom I’ll be working most closely.

- Will I work independently or in a team?

- Where will I be working?

- How advanced is the hardware and software I will be expected to use?

- How did this job become available?

- Before you’re able to reach a hiring decision, how many more interviews should I expect to go through and with whom?