

## **The Interview Script: Your Coherent & Compelling Story**

**(The interview begins. You are calm, confident, and warm.)**

**Panel:** "Thank you for joining us today. To start, could you take two minutes to introduce yourself briefly to the panel?"

**You (Your 2-Minute Self-Intro):**

"Good morning, and thank you for the opportunity to speak with you again. My name is Yeu Wen Mak.

For over 20 years, I've worked as an enterprise architect, and that experience has led me to a fundamental conclusion: the most elegant technical solution is useless if it fails to navigate the complex human system it serves. The most challenging problems are never purely technical; they exist at the seams—between business goals, departmental silos, and human behaviour.

So, my professional focus evolved. Instead of just architecting technology, I began architecting the *conversations around the technology*. As my resume shows, I became deeply involved in practices like Systems Dynamics and the Cognitive Edge framework. My role shifted from being the expert with the answer, to being a facilitator who could help diverse groups build a shared understanding.

This fascination with the socio-technical whole is what led me to create my portfolio piece, 'The Aethelgard Experiment.' It started as an exploration of AI, but it quickly taught me that the real innovation isn't the AI itself, but the messy, collaborative work required to align that technology with human values.

And that realization is precisely why I am so committed to joining this program. My driving desire is not to master a single technology, but to master the art and science of stewarding these complex systems. I believe the MACYB, with its diverse cohort and systems-level focus, is the only place to do that. Thank you."

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**Panel:** "Thank you. We would like to know about your hopes and fears about being involved in this Master's program."

**You (Chapter 2: Embracing the Challenge):**

"That's a great question. My greatest hope for the program is to be genuinely challenged by the diversity of the cohort. I hope the anthropologist in the room reads my Aethelgard piece and critiques my model of community, and that the policymaker points out a dozen blind spots in my vision for governance. My hope is to have my technologically-focused worldview stress-tested and expanded by their expertise, so we can build something more robust together.

Honestly, my biggest fear is the temptation to retreat to my comfort zone. For 20 years, my expertise has been my currency. The fear is that when faced with a complex, ambiguous problem, my old habit of trying to find the 'right technical answer' will resurface. But that's precisely why I'm choosing this program. I see it as a year-long exercise in building new muscles—the muscle of 'framing questions' rather than just solving problems. I'm actively choosing the discomfort of being a novice again, because I believe that's where the most important learning happens."

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**Panel:** "That leads to our next question. We would like to know about working out of your comfort zones. Can you tell us about your experiences with challenges or setbacks in your work?"

**You (Chapter 3: Resilience in Practice):**

"Absolutely. A significant challenge that took me out of my comfort zone was a major enterprise-wide integration project a few years ago.

**(Situation)** We had a clear technical plan, but about three months in, we hit a wall. Adoption was near zero, and two key departments were in open conflict, refusing to use the new system. My technical blueprint was perfect, but the project was failing.

**(Task)** My task was no longer to be the architect, but to figure out why the human system was rejecting the solution. This was deeply uncomfortable, as it wasn't a technical problem I could solve with code.

**(Action)** Drawing on my experience with Cognitive Edge, I stopped pushing the solution. Instead, I facilitated a series of workshops with both departments. I didn't present slides; I put up a blank wall and asked them to map their actual workflows and frustrations. I acted as a translator, helping the two groups see the system through each other's eyes. It became clear the problem wasn't the technology; it was a deep-seated process conflict that our new system had only made more visible.

**(Result)** The immediate result was that we paused the technical rollout and co-designed a new, simpler workflow with both teams. The real, lasting result for me was a profound lesson in resilience: when a project hits a setback, the answer is rarely to push harder. It's to pause, listen, and understand the deeper system dynamics. It taught me that resilience isn't about being unbreakable; it's about being adaptive."

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**Panel:** "That's a great example of group dynamics. Can you tell us more about your approach to teamwork and how you bring out the best in others?"

**You (Chapter 4: The "WE" Philosophy):**

"My philosophy on collaboration is that the most important thing you build isn't the product; it's the shared understanding. My goal is to create the conditions for that to emerge.

**(Situation)** For instance, on a project at Toll, we were a small internal team of architects working with a much larger team from an external vendor. There was an immediate cultural and technical language barrier.

**(Task)** Our task was to co-design a single, coherent architecture. The risk was that we would end up with a messy compromise that no one truly owned.

**(Action)** Instead of debating models, I focused on the team's operating system. I used a method from my 'multi-disciplinary problem solver' experience: we established a neutral, shared artifact—in this case, the OASIS Universal Business Language, as noted on my resume. This wasn't about imposing a standard, but about creating a Rosetta Stone that both teams could use to translate their ideas without losing meaning. I facilitated sessions where we didn't talk about our *solutions*; we talked about our *principles*, and mapped them to this shared language.

**(Result)** This process brought out the best in everyone. Our team's deep business knowledge was made visible, and the vendor's deep technical expertise could be applied to the right problems. **We** successfully delivered the project, but the real success was that we built one cohesive team. It proved to me that my most valuable role is often not to be the lead architect, but to be the steward of a process that ensures every expert's voice is heard and integrated."

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**Panel:** "Thank you. We are interested to know about your ability to think critically about the goals of the School of Cybernetics to build Applied Cybernetics as an important area of study."

**You (Chapter 5: The Future of the Field):**

"I believe the School's mission is one of the most critical in academia today, because our ability to build powerful technology has dangerously outpaced our ability to wisely integrate it into society. Applied Cybernetics is the discipline that closes that gap.

My critical reflection is this: the biggest challenge for the field is one of translation and scale. The principles are powerful, but how do we get them out of the university and into the boardroom and the cabinet room where decisions are being made?

This is where I see a huge opportunity. My 'Aethelgard Experiment' was my attempt to use **narrative as a cybernetic tool**—a way to simulate a complex system and make its principles tangible and compelling for a non-expert. I believe a critical area of practice for the School is to intentionally develop a whole toolkit of these 'translation objects'—narratives, visual models, interactive simulations—that can scale its influence and bring a cybernetic mindset to the people and systems that need it most. It's not just about creating practitioners; it's about creating the tools that allow those practitioners to be effective."

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**Panel:** "Finally, to help us understand you as a whole person, could you tell us about your personal interests and passions?"

**You (Chapter 6: The Whole Person):**

"Certainly. Outside of my professional life, I'm an avid hiker. For me, a forest is the most beautiful and humbling example of a complex adaptive system. It's self-regulating, it's full of feedback loops, and it's incredibly resilient to shocks.

It's taught me some profound lessons that I bring back to my work. You learn that the most visible parts of the system—the big trees—are entirely dependent on the invisible network of fungi beneath the soil, just like an organization's success depends on the unspoken culture and relationships. You learn that trying to manage it with a top-down, rigid plan is futile; you have to observe, understand its patterns, and make small, careful interventions.

It's a passion that constantly reminds me to be humble, to think in terms of systems, and to appreciate the complexity and resilience of the world around us. It's a source of both personal renewal and professional insight."