

Self-Introduction

HOME

What is your greatest weakness?

What do you know about the field in which you are trained in?

What do you know about our company?

What qualifications do you have that make you feel you should be hired over others?

What do you think are the ideal requirements for this job?

What do you think determines a person's progress in an organization?

What are your salary expectations?

Tell me about a time you had to resolve a conflict.

Tell us about your part-time jobs, volunteer work, or extra-curricular activities.

You are given multiple tasks with high priority. How do you prioritize?

Where do you see yourself five years from now?

Why do you want to work for us?

Why should we hire you?

How do your qualifications compare with the job requirements?

How do you respond to criticism?

Describe a time when you worked well under pressure.

Describe a time when you worked well with others.

Describe a time when you solved a difficult problem.

Describe something that you have done that shows your fit for this position.

Do you have any questions for us?

Self-Introduction

First of all, I'd like to thank you for giving me this opportunity. So, to begin with I'm a third-year Computer Science student at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. I'm a hardworking student, always trying my best to excel at things I love to do; And being a responsible person, be it in the context of school, work, or life, I always pay great attention to honesty, respect, and accountability. Because of my school life as a mathematician and the nature of the school and career path I've chosen myself as a Computer Scientist, I believe I have the relevant skills and experience to work as a software engineer. I've learned various programming languages, web application frameworks and libraries; I've worked on several software projects, therefore my background leads me to believe that I'm qualified for the Software Engineer Summer Intern position at your company, and I'm really looking forward to showing you my knowledge and skills.

BACK

What is your greatest weakness?

My greatest weakness is that I sometimes focus too much on the details of a task I'm given and therefore spend too much time trying to achieve a better result. It's kind of never-enough problem, so I keep pushing and pushing, never being satisfied with what I've achieved so far. I've been working hard to improve in this area by regularly checking myself and trying to stay focused on the bigger picture. So that way I can still achieve a quality result without getting stuck with the details that affect my productivity. A good example would be when prepare for the exams; before I used to study every single material covered in the exam trying not to miss any details, but now I focus on the subjects I'm weak at and don't spend as much time on what I believe to already know, that way I can effectively prepare for my exams.

BACK

Tell me about a time you had to resolve a conflict.

In the summer of 2018, I did a two-month internship as an IT intern at a hotel. From the nature of the job to the interview, I was given the impression that after two months I'd leave the organization with good training in the field. However, from the day I set my feet in there, I was ignored or given trivial administrative tasks, so I got frustrated and disappointed. After several days, I've had enough, so I got angry at my senior supervisor when he approached me with another one of his tasks. Seeing that I'm angry, he didn't press further and left. After the incident I gave it a thought and noticed that I was looking at things only from my perspective and hadn't even shown patience to listen to him. After that, I went to the supervisor and apologized for my conduct. He explained to me that because of the busy schedule he couldn't spare me time or resources for training, so I accepted and went back to work and at the end of the day I still had managed to learn useful knowledge about IT management in the hotel industry.

BACK

You are given multiple tasks with high priority. How do you prioritize?

Well, I could give you an example of how I do it in my school life, where we have lots of assignments, projects, and exams of high priority. Actually, prioritizing is a pretty straightforward process, once you figure out some key factors. First, I'd list the tasks on my calendar according to their due dates, so as to have a clear idea on how to effectively manage my time. Second, I would analyze the difficulty of the task at hand and calculate approximately how much time I am gonna need to finish it. Then, I could easily decide on how to proceed; prioritizing things becomes much easier. For instance, if I have an easy task due in 10 days and a hard one due in 15, I naturally would focus on the hard one more than the easy one.

BACK

Where do you see yourself five years from now?

As much as I enjoy making plans for my future, I can't be sure where I'll be in a month, let alone a year or 5 years at that matter. As for my plans, for now I'm thinking of landing this internship opportunity and graduating with good grades and much needed work experience.

BACK

What do you know about the field in which you are trained in?

Well, although there is still a lot to learn about Software Engineering, I believe I know a bit about the technical and social aspects of this field. Software Engineering has become so much integrated into society that it is among the most demanded jobs out there. The Information Age made Software Engineering to be seen and needed in every aspect of our lives, some of which are not so critical, but some have life-critical consequences. So being aware of this, I understand the importance of this field and the responsibilities it brings to its employees. As for the technical part of the field, I've completed the relevant coursework, done some real projects, so I believe I'm experienced in that aspect as well.

BACK

What do you know about our company?

Well, Oursky is a small company which builds quality software products for individuals and businesses of all sizes ranging from startups to multinational corporations. It is home to good programmers who not only write codes, but also care about code aesthetics. I know that Oursky places great importance on User Experience and does its best to deliver user friendly products. And the fact that the company puts so much effort into bringing the best out of its employees by trying to make them feel at home like allowing pets at the office or entertainment corners is really praiseworthy.

BACK

Why do you want to work for us?

I believe Oursky is an exact match to what I'm looking for in terms of work environment, job requirements, or the very nature of the work being done at the company which is software development. And I am planning a career path in this direction. And the fact that the company puts so much effort into bringing the best out of its employees by trying to make them feel at home like allowing pets at the office or entertainment corners is really praiseworthy. Furthermore, I found the description of the company's leadership team really impressive. Their combined experience makes me believe I would benefit a lot from working with them. So, I'm really eager to join and be part of your company.

BACK

Why should we hire you?

Well, first of all I believe I closely match the job requirements listed on the job ad, be it the technical aspect of the job or social and people skills you look for in the candidate. For instance, I know that the most of the code written at the company is in Python and Go languages, and I believe myself to be proficient in Python and its libraries; as for Go as long as you understand the principles behind programming languages it is easy to pick up new languages, so it should be no big problem if any. Moreover, I'm a good team player, always cautious of my role and responsibilities within the team, and I'm committed to try to achieve what is expected of me. And the last thing I'd wanted to mention is that I was part of the National Mathematics Team of my home country for the last 4 years of my high school, and during that period I've built a strong problem solving skills tackling a wide range of problems from algebra, number theory, combinatorics, and others.

BACK

What qualifications do you have that make you feel you should be hired over others?

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from algebra, number theory, combinatorics, and others. So, adding all up, I believe I will be a beneficial addition to your company.

BACK

What do you think are the ideal requirements for this job?

Well, first of all the candidate should love and enjoy the programming or even if he doesn't in the beginning he should be open-minded and have the commitment to change, otherwise it would be a waste of time and would make no sense. Second, the candidate should have a brief idea about the software development which does not consist of only programming, there are several phases to the development ranging from requirements analysis and design specifications to module and system testing and maintenance of the software. Then, the candidate should be a good team player with good communication and collaboration skills cause no real-world software projects are done individually. Candidate should possess the qualities of being responsible and reliable, so as to follow the company and job policies.

BACK

What do you think determines a person's progress in an organization?

I think responsibility and commitment are key factors in determining a person's progress in an organization. Also the performance and productivity of the employee determine his position within his team as well as the company.

BACK

How do your qualifications compare with the job requirements?

Well, first of all I believe I closely match the job requirements listed on the job ad, be it the technical aspect of the job or social and people skills you look for in the candidate. For instance, I know that the most of the code written at the company is in Python and Go languages, and I believe myself to be proficient in Python and its libraries; as for Go as long as you understand the principles behind programming languages it is easy to pick up new languages, so it should be no big problem if any. I'm a good team player, always cautious of my role and responsibilities within the team, and I'm committed to try to achieve what is expected of me or even more. And last thing I'd wanted to mention is that I was part of the National Mathematics Team of my home country for the last 4 years of my high school, and during that period I've built a strong problem solving skills tackling a wide range of problems from algebra, number theory, combinatorics, and others.

BACK

Describe a time when you worked well under pressure.

Well, in my first year at the university I had a project involving a car robot. I had the robot ready by the demo day of the project, it was working smoothly during the test runs, but during the demo it broke down after a couple of laps. I got surprised and anxious because I had only 5 minutes for the demo and there was not enough time left to fix it. The project weight on the course grade was pretty high, so I was on the track of failing the course or at least I thought so. It was a big relief when the instructor said that there would be a second round of demos for those who have done badly in the first. But still there was a short time left to the start of the second round. Despite the pressure, I managed to fix the robot, it was a technical problem, not related to the coding. I did pretty well in the second round and passed the course with a good grade.

BACK

Describe a time when you worked well with others.

Well, in my first year at the university I had a group project involving a car robot. Me and my groupmate, we had the robot prepared by the demo day of the project, it was working smoothly during the test runs, but during the demo it broke down after a couple of laps. We got surprised and anxious because we had to demo it within 5 minutes and there was not enough time left to fix it. The project weight on the course grade was pretty high, so we were on the track of failing the course or at least we thought that way. It was a big relief when the instructor said that there would be a second round of demos for those who have done badly in the first. But still there was a short time left to the start of the second round. Despite the pressure, we managed to fix the robot, I fixed the technical problem, and my groupmate double checked the robot code. We did pretty well in the second round and passed the course with a good grade.

BACK

Describe a time when you solved a difficult problem.

Well, in my first year at the university I had a project involving a car robot. I had the robot ready by the demo day of the project, it was working smoothly during the test runs, but during the demo it broke down after a couple of laps. I got surprised and anxious because I had only 5 minutes for the demo and there was not enough time left to fix it. The project weight on the course grade was pretty high, so I was on the track of failing the course or at least I thought so. It was a big relief when the instructor said that there would be a second round of demos for those who have done badly in the first. But still there was a short time left to the start of the second round. Despite the pressure, I managed to fix the robot, there was a technical problem and a bug in the robot code. I did pretty well in the second round and passed the course with a good grade.

BACK

How do you respond to criticism?

I think I'm neutral to being criticized. Although it may feel harsh, I understand that it's part of human development; it's important to be open to outside feedback mechanisms to see whether you are on the right track or not. But it needs to be done in an appropriate manner within the atmosphere of respect and goodwill. Otherwise, it won't be constructive and will result only in anger and hatred, so I'm against this kind of criticism and I won't stay silent against such attacks; I will try to defend my or others' rights' whenever I can.

BACK

Describe something that you have done that shows your fit for this position.

Well, I can think of my project for one of my courses at the university for which I and two of my peers had to build a web application using real-time data. We developed an app that presents some useful data and statistics about coronavirus cases in hong kong. I implemented the back-end of the app with Node.js using Express framework and MongoDB for database. I utilized readily available APIs provided by the government data center to get the real data about covid cases.

BACK

Tell us about your part-time jobs, volunteer work, or extra-curricular activities.

Well, during the last year at my high school, I worked as a part-time math tutor being part of the National Mathematics Olympiad Team of my country. I trained together with a group of 20 students for national and international math competitions. There each of us had a role within the team and I was mainly responsible for teaching advanced topics from the algebra branch of mathematics, but occasionally I had to work with combinatorics, number theory and other branches as well. Last summer, I did summer research at the institute of theoretical computer science and communications. I worked on a recent paper on bipartite perfect matching problem in bipartite graphs under supervision of Dr. Gautam Prakriya. We tried to improve the algorithm given in the paper. We also explored pseudo deterministic efficient algorithms for a general problem, that is linear matroid intersection.

BACK

What are your salary expectations?

Well, since I don't have prior work experience in this field, I'm not really sure about the numbers I'd be wanting. But to have self sufficiency, I can say that 10K per month is a reasonable request given that the minimum wage set on the job ad is 8K.

BACK

Do you have any questions for us?

Is there anything that you would like to ask us?

What kinds of tasks or projects should I expect within the internship period?

Is there anything that you would like to know about the position?

What skills are especially important for someone in this position?