

QUESTION 1

HI, HOW'RE YOU? I'M JOHN
(LET ME SEE YOUR FIRST
IMPRESSION)

WHAT DOES THE INTERVIEWER WANT TO HEAR?

- YOU'RE SOCIAL (APPROPRIATELY)
- CONSIDERATE/FRIENDLY
- APPROPRIATELY APPRECIATIVE BUT NOT DESPERATE
- TOO LITTLE: "GOOD THANKS. I'M KEKE."
- TOO MUCH: THANKING THEM A MILLION TIMES/SEEMING DESPERATE

ANSWER: SWEET SPOT

- I'M GREAT! HOW'RE YOU?
- IT'S A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU, JOHN.
- THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR TAKING THE TIME TO SEE ME TODAY. I REALLY APPRECIATE IT.

QUESTION 2

SO, TELL ME ABOUT
YOURSELF?

WHAT DOES THE INTERVIEWER WANT TO HEAR?

- WHERE ARE YOU COMING FROM (PAST), WHERE YOU ARE NOW (PRESENT), AND WHERE YOU PLAN TO GO (FUTURE) AND WHAT YOUR VALUE IS.
- TOO LITTLE: "I'M A SOFTWARE ENGINEER."
- TOO MUCH: RECITING ENTIRE RESUME/LIFE

ANSWER: SWEET SPOT

- (My value + Past): I'm a Software Engineer/Automation Engineer with over # years of experience. I have a varied skillset and have extensive experience in TechSkillX, TechSkillY, and TechSkillZ. Additionally, I'm highly proficient in a variety of crucial soft skills.
- (Present+Future): I'm currently looking for the next chapter in my career where I can add to my existing skillset, build new professional networks and ultimately establish myself as an expert Software Engineer/Automation Tester at a proven company that's a leader in its industry like yours.

QUESTION 3

WHAT IS YOUR
GREATEST
STRENGTH?

WHAT DOES THE INTERVIEWER WANT TO HEAR?

- SOMETHING REALISTIC THAT WILL BENEFIT THEM WITHOUT MAKING YOU LOOK/SOUND ARROGANT
- TOO LITTLE: "I'M A PERFECTIONIST"
- TOO MUCH: "I'M THE BEST AT X, BETTER THAN ANYONE BECAUSE..."

ANSWER: SWEET SPOT

- MULTIPLE WAYS TO ANSWER; KEEP IT REAL AND GIVE EXAMPLE.
- SAMPLE: MY GREATEST STRENGTH IS MY ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY. I'M PARTICULARLY PROUD OF THIS SKILL BECAUSE I DIDN'T ALWAYS HAVE IT. IT TOOK MANY YEARS OF TRIAL AND ERROR TO LEARN IT AND EVENTUALLY TO EXCEL IN IT.
- FOR EXAMPLE, DURING ONE PARTICULAR STRESSFUL TIME IN MY PREVIOUS JOB, MULTIPLE MEMBERS OF OUR TEAM WERE ON EDGE AND A VERBAL ALTERCATION HAD ERUPTED. WE WERE IN DANGER OF FALLING BEHIND ON SCHEDULE SO I TOOK EACH OF MY TEAMMATES ASIDE PRIVATELY AND COMMUNICATED WITH THEM TO RESOLVE THE MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND ENCOURAGE EACH TO EMPATHIZE. WE WERE ABLE TO SUCCESSFULLY COME TOGETHER WITH IMPROVED MOOD AND COOPERATION TO FINISH THE PROJECT ON TIME AND EVEN ENDED UP GROWING CLOSER FROM THE CONFLICT. I LEARNED A VALUABLE LESSON THAT DAY: NOTHING IS PERSONAL, WITH PROPER EMPATHY AND PROACTIVE COMMUNICATION MOST PROBLEMS CAN BE PREVENTED AND ALMOST ANY CONFLICT CAN BE RESOLVED.

QUESTION 4

WHAT IS YOUR
GREATEST
WEAKNESS?

WHAT DOES THE INTERVIEWER WANT TO HEAR?

- AGAIN, THEY WANT SOMETHING REALISTIC AND TO SEE THAT YOU ARE SELF-AWARE AND HONEST WITH YOURSELF WITH THE INTENTION TO IMPROVE (AND THAT YOU HAVE TAKEN CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPROVE)
- BONUS: DON'T PICK A STRENGTH THAT'S DRESSED UP AS A "WEAKNESS"
- TOO LITTLE: "I'M A PERFECTIONIST."
- TOO MUCH: "I HAVE A PHOBIA OF CLOWNS/SNAKES"

ANSWER: SWEET SPOT

- PICK A REALISTIC WEAKNESS, SHOW THAT YOU HAVE TAKEN STEPS TO IMPROVE AND SAY THAT YOU HAVE PROGRESSED GREATLY EVEN IF THE WEAKNESS IS NOT COMPLETELY GONE
- MY GREATEST WEAKNESS IS MY FEAR OF FAILURE. I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS A FEAR MANY PEOPLE HAVE, SO IN THE BEGINNING OF MY CAREER I DIDN'T TAKE THE PROPER STEPS TO TRULY ADDRESS IT. BUT THANKFULLY EARLY ENOUGH, I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO REALLY UNDERSTAND HOW DETRIMENTAL IT COULD BE. I USED TO BE SO AFRAID OF FAILURE THAT I WOULD AVOID TRYING NEW THINGS, TAKING ON NEW PROJECTS AND REALLY CHALLENGING MYSELF. IN DOING SO, I BECAME STAGNANT AND LOST OUT ON MANY OPPORTUNITIES. WHEN I FINALLY REALIZED HOW DAMAGING IT WAS TO ME BOTH PROFESSIONALLY AND PERSONALLY, I BEGAN TO TAKE CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPROVE. I WOULD PROACTIVELY VOLUNTEER FOR NEW OR DIFFICULT PROJECTS, TAKE ON MORE CHALLENGING RESPONSIBILITIES, ETC. MY COURAGE DIDN'T ALWAYS WIN OUT, BUT IT DID OFTEN ENOUGH THAT MY FEAR HAS SINCE BEEN GREATLY ALLEVIATED. IS IT COMPLETELY GONE? OF COURSE NOT, BUT I'M IN A MUCH BETTER PLACE NOW THAN TEN YEARS AGO, AND ONE YEAR AGO. AND I'M CONTINUALLY STRIVING TO IMPROVE WITH THE DEEP CONVICTION THAT THE ONLY TRUE FAILURE IS TO AVOID TRYING AT ALL.

QUESTION 5

DESCRIBE A DIFFICULT WORK
SITUATION/CHALLENGE AND
WHAT YOU DID TO OVERCOME
IT.

WHAT DOES THE INTERVIEWER WANT TO HEAR?

- THAT YOU CAN ACCURATELY ASSESS PROBLEMS AND PROACTIVELY TAKE INITIATIVE TO RESOLVE THEM. GIVE EXAMPLE.
- TOO LITTLE: "WE ALMOST DIDN'T MEET DEADLINE BUT I WORKED EXTRA HARD."
- TOO MUCH: GOING INTO EVERY DETAIL

ANSWER: SWEET SPOT

- MAKE IT REALISTIC AND FOCUS ON MAJOR POINTS AND BIG TAKEAWAYS/LESSONS LEARNED.
- SAMPLE: HAVE A SOFT SKILL DISPLAYING SAMPLE (LIKE ALTERCATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION ABOVE) AND A HARD SKILL SAMPLE
- SAMPLE: IN ONE OF MY EARLIER POSITIONS, MY TEAM CONSISTED OF PEOPLE WITH VARIOUS ETHNIC AND NATIONAL BACKGROUNDS. THIS MADE COMMUNICATION SOMEWHAT OF A CHALLENGE AT TIMES, ESPECIALLY WHEN THINGS BECAME FAST-PACED, SOMETIMES RESULTING IN ISSUES. I DECIDED TO HOLD A MEETING TO ADDRESS THIS PROBLEM SO THAT MOVING FORWARD, WE WOULD FOCUS ESPECIALLY ON CLEAR COMMUNICATION BEFORE APPLYING PRACTICE SO THAT WE WERE ALWAYS ON THE SAME PAGE AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND RESULTING ERRORS WERE GREATLY REDUCED. AGAIN, I LEARNED THE VALUE OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND HOW IMPORTANT IT IS IN THE WORKPLACE ESPECIALLY IN A DIVERSE ENVIRONMENT.

QUESTION 6

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST
ACCOMPLISHMENT (OR
DESCRIBE ONE
ACCOMPLISHMENT

WHAT DOES THE INTERVIEWER WANT TO HEAR?

- EXAMPLE WHERE YOU SHOWCASE AN IMPORTANT SKILL
- TOO LITTLE: I ALWAYS COMPLETED MY PROJECTS ON TIME.
- TOO MUCH: I SINGLEHANDEDLY CREATED CODE THAT WOULD SAVE THE COMPANY MILLIONS BY...

ANSWER: SWEET SPOT

- MULTIPLE POSSIBILITIES; USE DIFFERENT EXAMPLES THAN ONES USED BEFORE
- AGAIN, TRY TO HAVE EXAMPLE SHOWCASING IMPORTANT SOFT SKILL (I.E. COMMUNICATION SAMPLE, OR STRONG WORK ETHIC, POSITIVE, ETC)
- AND THEN AN EXAMPLE SHOWCASING HARD SKILL (CREATING A FRAMEWORK THAT SAVED TIME, MONEY, OR GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND DUTIES, ETC)

QUESTION 7

WHY DO YOU WANT TO WORK
FOR US?

WHAT DOES THE INTERVIEWER WANT TO HEAR?

- YOU DID YOUR (RELEVANT) RESEARCH AND THAT YOU HAVE THOUGHTFULLY CONSIDERED WHETHER COMPANY IS GOOD FIT
- TOO LITTLE: I'M LOOKING FOR A JOB BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE ONE NOW.
- TOO MUCH: I NEED TO SUPPORT MY FAMILY AND I NEED A JOB TO DO THAT. I HAVE 7 KIDS, AND THEY ARE....

ANSWER: SWEET SPOT

- WELL, ACCORDING TO MY RESEARCH YOUR COMPANY IS A LEADER IN ITS INDUSTRY WITH A PROVEN TRACK RECORD OF SUCCESS, STABILITY, AND LONGEVITY. FURTHERMORE, INDUSTRY EXPERTS AS WELL AS EMPLOYEES HAVE HAD GREAT THINGS TO SAY ABOUT YOUR CULTURE AND WORK-ENVIRONMENT.
- I WAS ALSO IMPRESSED WITH YOUR COMPANY VALUES. IT'S IMPORTANT TO ME THAT I WORK IN A COMPANY WITH VALUES I CAN STAND BEHIND, WHILE WORKING WITH GOOD PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP ME CONTINUE TO IMPROVE AS AN EMPLOYEE.

QUESTION 8

WHY SHOULD WE HIRE YOU?

WHAT DOES THE INTERVIEWER WANT TO HEAR?

- YOUR CONCISE, RELEVANT 60-SECOND ELEVATOR PITCH TO SELL YOURSELF, GEARED TOWARD HOW YOU CAN FILL THEIR NEED
- TOO LITTLE: I WORK HARD AND HAVE THE TECHNICAL SKILLS.
- TOO MUCH: I'M BETTER THAN ALL YOUR OTHER CANDIDATES BECAUSE I WORK THE HARDEST, HAVE ALL THE SKILLS...

ANSWER: SWEET SPOT

- WHAT SETS ME APART IS MY PERSONALITY. I HAVE A GREAT, POSITIVE ATTITUDE AND A CAN-DO PERSONALITY. AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A PROBLEM THAT CAN'T BE SOLVED. "THAT'S NOT MY JOB" ARE WORDS I'VE NEVER SPOKEN.
- I AM ULTIMATELY MOTIVATED BY MY DESIRE TO DO THE BEST JOB I CAN, NO MATTER THE CIRCUMSTANCES. TO ME, IT IS INHERENTLY FULFILLING TO WORK EFFICIENTLY WITH MY TEAMMATES AND ALWAYS HAVE A GREAT ATTITUDE AND DELIVER CONSISTENT, RELIABLE, AND QUALITY RESULTS WHILE REMAINING RESILIENT IN THE FACE OF OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES.
- AS SUCH, IT IS MY ABSOLUTE CONVICTION THAT WITH PROPER COMMUNICATION, WORK ETHIC, CAMARADERIE, AND RESILIENCE, ANY PROBLEM CAN AND WILL BE SOLVED.
- FINALLY, I AM ALWAYS CONTINUALLY LEARNING, GARNERING FEEDBACK AND CONSTANTLY STRIVING TO IMPROVE MYSELF IN EVERY FACET OF MY LIFE.
- IN SHORT, IT'S MY PERSONALITY THAT SETS ME APART AND FUELS MY VALUE.

QUESTION 9

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF
IN 5/10 YEARS?

WHAT DOES THE INTERVIEWER WANT TO HEAR?

- **THAT YOU WON'T QUIT IN 6 MONTHS AND ARE LOOKING TO STABILIZE BUT NOT OVERLY AMBITIOUS AND PLANNING TO BE CEO; THAT YOU HAVE GOALS**
- **TOO LITTLE: IN THE SAME POSITION.**
- **TOO MUCH: BECOME YOUR BOSS, START MY OWN BUSINESS**

ANSWER: SWEET SPOT

- IN FIVE YEARS, I SEE MYSELF AS WELL ESTABLISHED IN A PROVEN COMPANY AS A SOFTWARE ENGINEER, AND VERY STABLE AND SECURE IN MY CAREER.
- I'D LIKE TO ALSO ADD TO AND EXPAND MY EXISTING SKILLSET BY LEARNING NEW PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES AND AUTOMATION TESTING TOOLS AS WELL AS IMPROVING MY SOFT SKILLS. IT IS IMPORTANT TO ME THAT I KEEP MY SKILLS UP-TO-DATE AND RELEVANT WITH UPCOMING TECHNOLOGY SO THAT I REMAIN INVALUABLE TO MY COMPANY.
- IDEALLY, I'D LIKE TO BECOME TECH LEAD (OPTIONAL AND DEPENDS).

QUESTION 10

DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS
FOR US?

WHAT DOES THE INTERVIEWER WANT TO HEAR?

- DID YOU REALLY THOUGHTFULLY CONSIDER US OR WAS THIS A MASS BLIND APPLICATION?
- TOO LITTLE: NO OR CLICHE VAGUE SHORT QUESTIONS (WHAT'S YOUR COMPANY CULTURE LIKE?)
- TOO MUCH: WHEN AND HOW MUCH WILL I GET PAID? WHEN WILL I GET A RAISE?

ANSWER: SWEET SPOT

- (WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO EMPLOYEE): I'VE REALIZED LONG AGO THAT AS EMPLOYEES, WE SPEND MORE TIME AT WITH PEOPLE AT WORK THAN WE DO IN OUR OWN PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AT TIMES. AS SUCH, IT'S IMPORTANT THAT I SURROUND MYSELF WITH GOOD COLLEAGUES THAT CAN GIVE ME CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK SO I CAN GROW BUT ALSO SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE ME SO THAT WE CAN SUCCEED AS A TEAM TOGETHER. TO THAT EFFECT, WHAT KIND OF CULTURE OR ENVIRONMENT DO YOU FOSTER HERE? ARE THERE OPPORTUNITIES OR ACTIVITIES FOR CO-WORKERS TO BOND AND GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER?
- (WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO EMPLOYER): WHAT'S ONE OF THE MOST CHALLENGING PROBLEMS YOUR COMPANY FACES THAT HAS YET TO BE RESOLVED? AND WHAT IS A CHALLENGING PROBLEM SPECIFIC TO THIS POSITION THAT HAS COME UP FREQUENTLY?
- (IF IT'S NOT A CONTRACT POSITION, AND A PERMANENT ONE THAT BECAME VACANT): HOW DID THIS POSITION BECOME AVAILABLE, DID THE PREVIOUS EMPLOYEE LEAVE?