So Your Interviews Are Soon

HOW TO NOT PANIC, SAVE THE WORLD, AND BE A BADASS DOING IT

Do not share questions with your classmates.

Don't even share the data structure or algorithm involved.

It violates the Code of Conduct and is a jerk move.

Please also don't share these questions with other classes.

Feel free to share whether or not you passed, or helpful non-question-specific pointers. (e.g. "my interviewer told me to think of them as a TA, and that really helped for the practice I've done since then!")

Getting Ready

so, like, what are we doing next week?

GETTING READY

I'll Slack you with your time slot and interviewer.

- Possible time slots are any day next week or the following week, before or after lecture.

- 1 hour time slot: 35-40 minutes for the interview portion.

  - do not argue with your interviewer about how you should get more time

  - also, do not argue with your interviewer about anything

- Most likely: your interviewer is an instructor you've never had.

GETTING READY

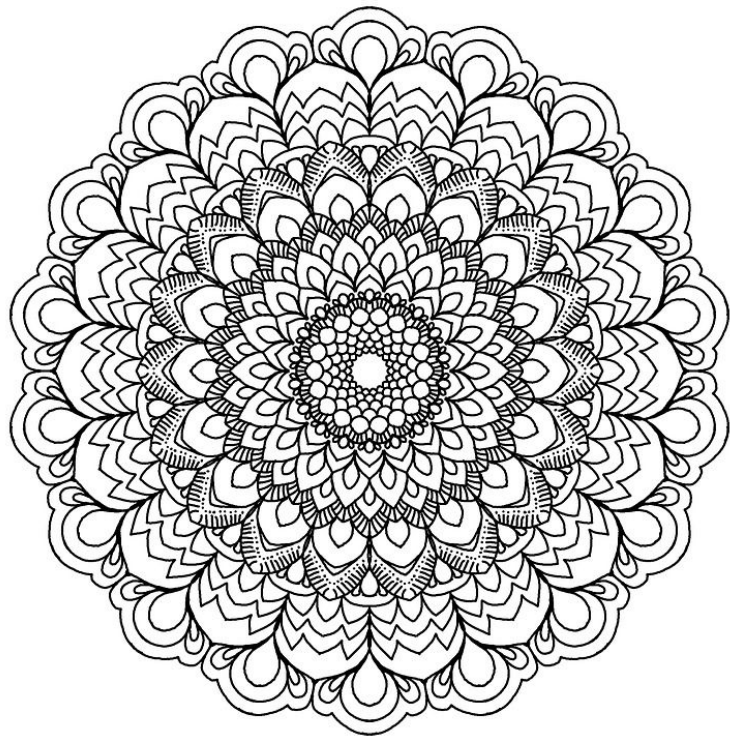Reach out to your interviewer on Slack or in person.

- Introduce yourself! They probably don't know you!
  - Hi, I'm Michelle and I'm scheduled to interview with you etc etc
- Confirm the day/time.
- Agree on a meeting location.
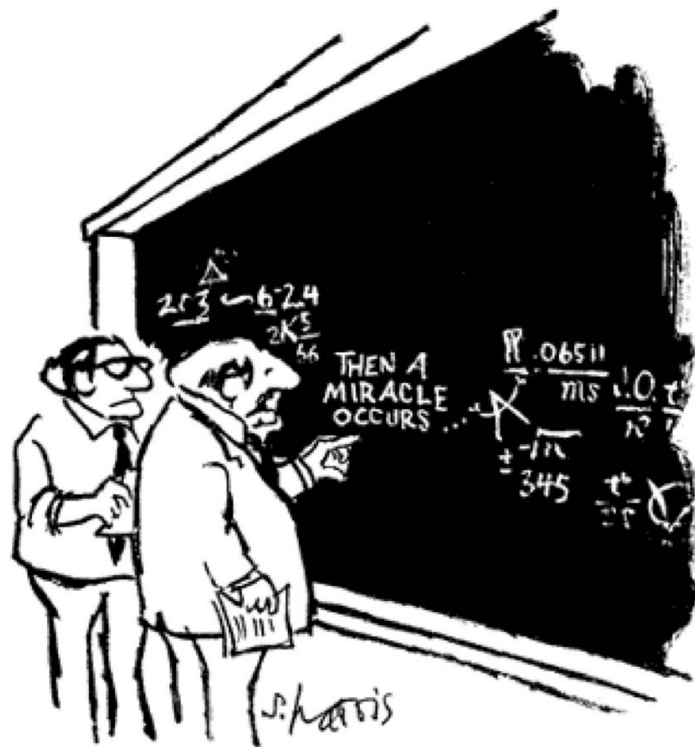

Hello sir, nice to meet you

GETTING READY

THE FIFTEEN MINUTES BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

- Go to the bathroom

- Get some tea/coffee/water

- Find a marker that works

- Listen to a happy song

- Do something where you are

  successful

    - Color

    - Knit

    - Do an *easy* sudoku

"I think you should be more explicit here in step two."

After the Interview

what next?

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Your interviewer will let you know how it went, pass/fail.

- Your interviewer will give you feedback, the good and the bad.

    - You can take notes, because you're going to forget it otherwise.

- Thank them! Be kind to them!

    - do not argue over points! it has never worked!

- Celebrate/commiserate with your classmates (but don't share the question that was asked, or the data structures/algorithms involved)

- Celebrate/commiserate with me or the TAs, and ask us any specifics about the question that was asked.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- I will look at the full rubric from your interview, to know how it went & so we can address patterns after everyone has gone.
- We'll have a second round of interviews at the end of week 9.
  - And a third round during final project week if you need it
    - ■ And a fourth round if you keep showing improvement
      - ● but at that stage, I do all of your interviews, and I protect my time

WHAT INTERVIEWERS WANT

- Be friendly and polite and respectful! Show up on time!

- Be clear. Make sure the interviewer understands your ideas/goals.

- Assume they're an intelligent peer. Listen to their suggestions, and propose your own ideas.

- If you've seen a problem before, say so!
  - or if it seems like a modified version of a problem/algorithm you know!
  - if I ask you about a file system, good to mention the word tree, etc.

- Note: These are the same things your classmates want when you're collaborating on a problem. You do not need to be a different version of yourself for interviews! If these are issues for you, they're probably issues you should work on in general.

WHAT INTERVIEWERS WANT

- You know what's on the rubric. Do those things.

  - writing Java code instead of pseudocode: worth 3 points

  - doing a walkthrough of your pseudocode, discussing runtime, and discussing test cases: worth 6 points

  - if you have 3 minutes left, you can probably do the second one better

- But, don't do those things at the expense of solving the problem.

  - In the beginning of the interview, understand the problem.

  - Coming up with a solution is often verbal before it's written.

  - Many passing interviews have just a problem domain & visual on the whiteboard for the first 10-15 minutes.

WHAT INTERVIEWERS WANT

- Different interviewers will want *very* different things.

    - "I only care about [real code/pseudocode/diagrams]"

    - "I am an expert in [the language/the framework/cs fundamentals/nothing]"

    - "I'm a [designer/PM/researcher/QA person], you need to communicate with

      me in ways that I understand"

- **The process we give you is still a good idea**, but obviously they're not using

  our rubric.

- You'll probably get to ask questions about the company/their work at the end of

  the interview.

Questions?

so, like... what are we doing next week?