ML Dream Job Checklist

Step 1: Don't Just Start Applying

You need to make sure you have the technical skills down cold. If not, you're wasting time on an application when you should have been studying.

Step 2: Data Scientist or ML Engineer?

Decide if you want to be a **data scientist**, or a **machine learning (ML) engineer**. If you're new to the field, I'd strongly recommend applying to data science. Here's why:

- The technical questions are easier to understand.
- You can likely relate more of your past experiences to a data science role.
- In many companies, being a data scientist is a prerequisite for being an ML engineer.

Step 3: Individual Study → Group Study → Repeat

- **80% of your time should be spent doing Individual Study Sessions (ISS)**: This is where you get a first look and first try at new technical concepts. You should do a 70/30 split between the following two ISS study methods.
  - Problem sets (70%): example data science problems that cover a topic you wish to learn.
  - Information gathering (30%): looking at textbooks, YouTube videos, and blogs for an introduction to the information
- **20% of your time should be spent doing Group Study Sessions (GSS)**: This is when you practice the topics you learned from individual study amongst your peers. Do a 60/40 split between the two GSS study methods.
  - Oral recitation (60%): You talk about an algorithm/concept with a peer. Tech companies sometimes require you to verbally explain data science concepts.
  - Group problem set (40%): A data science problem is presented, and every single person talks to each other about a proposed solution

Step 4: Start Applying! But Only If You Pass The Two Tests Below...

- On a random sample of **20 model coding problems**, you can successfully code at least 17 of them while only getting online help for when you are looking up syntax from the package documentation.
- On a random sample of **50 non-coding ML questions**, you are at least getting 35 of them correct without any help at all.

It's all about the reps. Landing the job will be hard. But if you stick to the method, you got this...

Stick to the method! I applied to >140 ML jobs and I wish I figured this out earlier...