

Amazon Leadership Principles

On January 7, 2019, Amazon became the most valuable company in the world in terms of market cap. Later on in the year, the company also reached a value of over 1 trillion U.S. dollars (let that sink in for a minute!)

Thought of as a potential dot com bust back in 2000, Amazon has battled through and triumphed over two market collapses. The company's quirky and famous founder, Jeff Bezos, believes a strong core company culture is essential to success. Thus, he and his team created the Amazon 14 Leadership Principles. The Amazon leadership principles influence everything from team dynamics to [interview questions](#). Today we share examples of how Amazon Leadership Principles affect the corporate culture of this internet titan.

1. [Customer Obsession](#)
2. [Ownership](#)
3. [Invent and Simplify](#)
4. [Are Right, A Lot](#)
5. [Learn and Be Curious](#)
6. [Hire and Develop the Best](#)
7. [Insist on the Highest Standards](#)
8. [Think Big](#)
9. [Bias for Action](#)
10. [Frugality](#)
11. [Earn Trust](#)
12. [Dive Deep](#)
13. [Have Backbone; Disagree and Commit](#)
14. [Deliver Results](#)

What Are the Amazon Leadership Principles?

The Amazon Leadership Principles are 14 fundamental values that govern the company and its employees. The company insists that Amazon Leadership Principles are implemented

daily on the job, and even in interview questions. Amazon also believes in hiring people who align with these principles and tests for these qualities during interviews.

Don't worry, not all 14 Amazon Leadership Principles are tested for in every interview. Instead, Amazon tests candidates on the principles that are most relevant to the role. See below for the 14 Amazon Leadership Principles in addition to example interview questions to expect.

1. **Customer Obsession**

Leaders start with the customer and work backwards. They work vigorously to earn and keep customer trust. Although leaders pay attention to competitors, they obsess over customers.

Amazon Leadership Principles Interview Questions Examples:

- When you're working with a large number of customers, it's tricky to deliver excellent service to them all. How do you go about prioritizing your customers' needs?
- Give me an example of a time when you did not meet a client's expectation. What happened, and how did you attempt to rectify the situation?
- Who was your most difficult customer?
- Tell the story of the last time you had to apologize to someone.
- Can you tell me about a time you obsessed over giving very high quality service to a customer?

2. **Ownership**

Leaders are owners. They think long term and don't sacrifice long-term value for short-term results. They act on behalf of the entire company, beyond just their own team. They never say "that's not my job".

Amazon Leadership Principles Interview Questions Examples:

- Tell me about a time when you had to make a difficult short term decision to make long term gains.
- Tell me about a time when you had to work on a project with unclear responsibilities.
- Tell me about a time when you had to leave a task unfinished.

- Tell me about a time when you took on a task that went beyond your normal responsibilities.
- Tell me about a time when you took it upon yourself to work on a challenging initiative.

3. **Invent and Simplify**

Leaders expect and require innovation and invention from their teams and always find ways to simplify. They are externally aware, look for new ideas from everywhere, and are not limited by “not invented here”. As we do new things, we accept that we may be misunderstood for long periods of time.

Amazon Leadership Principles Interview Questions Examples:

- Tell me about a time when you failed to simplify a process and what you would have done differently.
- Tell me about a time when you innovated on something and it went wrong.
- Tell me about a time when you changed a process at work through either an innovative new way or simplification.
- Tell me about a time when you invented something.
- Tell me about a time when you gave a simple solution to a complex problem.

4. **Are Right, A Lot**

Leaders are right a lot. They have strong judgment and good instincts. They seek diverse perspectives and work to disconfirm their beliefs.

Amazon Leadership Principles Interview Questions Examples:

- Tell me about a time when you had to work with incomplete data or information.
- Tell me about a time when you were wrong.
- Tell me about a time when you had to use your judgment to solve a problem.
- Tell me about a time when you incorporated a diverse set of perspectives into solving a problem.
- Tell me about a time when you had your beliefs challenged and how you responded.

5. **Learn and Be Curious**

Leaders are never done learning and always seek to improve themselves. They are curious about new possibilities and act to explore them.

Amazon Leadership Principles Interview Questions Examples:

- Tell me about a time when you solved a problem through just superior knowledge or observation.
- Tell me about a time when you influenced a change by only asking questions.
- Tell me about an experience you went through that changed your way of thinking.
- Tell me about a time when your curiosity helped you make a smarter decision.
- Tell me about the most important lesson you learned in the past year.

6. Hire and Develop the Best

Leaders raise the performance bar with every hire and promotion. They recognize exceptional talent, and willingly move them throughout the organization. Leaders develop leaders and take seriously their role in coaching others. We work on behalf of our people to invent mechanisms for development like Career Choice.

Amazon Leadership Principles Interview Questions Examples:

- Tell me about a time when you made a wrong hire. When did you figure it out and what did you do?
- Tell me about a time when you mentored someone.
- Tell me about the best hire your ever made.
- What qualities do you look for most when hiring others?
- Who is the most important person in your life and why?

7. Insist on the Highest Standards

Leaders have relentlessly high standards – many people may think these standards are unreasonably high. Leaders are continually raising the bar and drive their teams to deliver high quality products, services and processes. Leaders ensure that defects do not get sent down the line and that problems are fixed so they stay fixed.

Amazon Leadership Principles Interview Questions Examples:

- Tell me about a time when a team member didn't meet your expectations on a project.
- Tell me about a time when you couldn't meet your own expectations on a project.
- Tell me about a time when you raised the bar.
- Tell me about a time when you motivated a team to go above and beyond.
- Tell me about a time when you were dissatisfied with the quality of something at work and went out of your way to improve it.

8. **Think Big**

Thinking small is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Leaders create and communicate a bold direction that inspires results. They think differently and look around corners for ways to serve customers.

Amazon Leadership Principles Interview Questions Examples:

- Tell me about a time when you went way beyond the scope of the project and delivered.
- Tell me about your proudest professional achievement.
- Tell me about a time when you were disappointed because you didn't think big enough.
- Tell me about a time when your vision resulted in a big impact.
- Tell me about a time when you had to make a bold and difficult decision.

9. **Bias for Action**

Speed matters in business. Many decisions and actions are reversible and do not need extensive study. We value calculated risk taking.

Amazon Leadership Principles Interview Questions Examples:

- Tell me about a time when you took a calculated risk.
- Tell me about a time you needed to get information from someone who wasn't very responsive. What did you do?
- Describe a time when you saw some problem and took the initiative to correct it rather than waiting for someone else to do it.
- Tell me about a time when you had to make a decision with little data or information.

- Tell me about a time when you made a decision too quickly and what you would have done differently.

10. **Frugality**

Accomplish [more with less](#). Constraints breed resourcefulness, self-sufficiency and invention. There are no extra points for growing headcount, budget size or fixed expense.

Amazon Leadership Principles Interview Questions Examples:

- Tell me about a time when you had to work with limited time or resources.
- Tell me about a time you had to rely on yourself to finish a task.
- Tell me about a time where you turned down more resources to complete an assignment.
- Tell me about a time when you beat out the competition with less resources.
- Tell me about a time when you had to be frugal.

11. **Earn Trust**

Leaders listen attentively, speak candidly, and treat others respectfully. They are vocally self-critical, even when doing so is awkward or embarrassing. Leaders do not believe their or their team's body odor smells of perfume. They benchmark themselves and their teams against the best.

Amazon Leadership Principles Interview Questions Examples:

- Tell me about a time when you had to tell someone a harsh truth.
- What would you do if you found out that your closest friend at work was stealing?
- What is the quality you value least about yourself?
- What do you do to gain the trust of your teammates?
- Tell me about a time you had to speak up in a difficult environment.

12. **Dive Deep**

Leaders operate at all levels, stay connected to the details, audit frequently, and are skeptical when metrics and anecdote differ. No task is beneath them.

Amazon Leadership Principles Interview Questions Examples:

- Tell me about something that you learnt recently in your role.
- Give me two examples of when you did more than what was required in any job experience.
- Tell me about the most complex problem you've ever worked on.
- Tell me about a time when understanding the details of a situation helped you arrive to a solution.
- Tell me about a time you utilized in depth data to come across a solution.

13. Have Backbone; Disagree and Commit

Leaders are obligated to respectfully challenge decisions when they disagree, even when doing so is uncomfortable or exhausting. Leaders have conviction and are tenacious. They do not compromise for the sake of social cohesion. Once a decision is determined, they commit wholly.

Amazon Leadership Principles Interview Questions Examples:

- Tell me about a time when you had to step up and disagree with a team member's approach.
- If your direct manager was instructing you to do something you disagreed with, how would you handle it?
- Tell me about a time when you did not accept the status quo.
- Tell me about an unpopular decision of yours.
- What do you believe that no one else does?

14. Deliver Results

Leaders focus on the key inputs for their business and deliver them with the right quality and in a timely fashion. Despite setbacks, they rise to the occasion and never settle.

Amazon Leadership Principles Interview Questions Examples:

- Give me an example of a time when you were 75% of the way through a project, and you had to pivot strategy—how were you able to make that into a success story?

- By providing an example, tell me when you have had to handle a variety of assignments. Describe the results.
- What is the most difficult situation you have ever faced in your life? How did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time you had too much on your plate to deal with and how you handled getting everything done.
- Tell me about a time when everyone else on your team gave up on something but you pushed the team towards delivering a result.

Concluding Thoughts

The Amazon Leadership Principles are a way for the company to find the candidates that best fit within the company culture. And let’s face it, they’re a great way to self-reflect on your own leadership skills even if you aren’t planning on applying for a role at Amazon. If you are preparing for an interview with the company, we suggest preparing a handful of your [best stories](#) that are broad enough to fit a wide range of potential questions and scenarios. Of course, above all, be genuine in your responses. Amazon continues to test for these leadership principles on the job as well, so you’ll want to make sure you truly are a good fit for the company.

Related Content:

- [Amazon Memo: What Lessons Does It Hold?](#)
- [Top 6 Leadership Skills for Managers](#)
- [Job Hub: Culture and Jobs at Google](#)
- [Leadership Styles](#)



Amazon Interview? Get Expert Coaching

See Details


Learn More


CASE INTERVIEW	CONSULTING FIRMS
CONSULTING SALARY	CONSULTING RESUME
COVER LETTERS	CONSULTING RECRUITING
CONSULTING SKILLS	CORPORATE TRAINING


Filed Under: [Consulting skills](#)


What do you think?

43 Responses

 Upvote

 Funny

 Love

 Surprised

Management Consulted - Consulting resumes, interviews, and jobs Comment Policy

The goal of our community is to be a resource for each other. Please keep comments respectful and civil.



[Comments](#) [Community](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Login](#)

[Recommend](#) [Tweet](#) [Share](#) [Sort by Best](#)

Start the discussion...

LOG IN WITH

OR SIGN UP WITH DISQUS

Name

Be the first to comment.

Featured Articles

- Case Interview: Complete Prep Guide
- Consulting Resume: Complete Guide
- Consulting Salaries: Complete Guide
- Top 25 Consulting Firms
- Complete Article Guide
- Recent Articles
- About MC

For Individuals:

- Getting the interview
- Acing the interview
- Crushing the job

For Groups:

- On-Campus
- Corporate Training

Free Resources

- Case Prep Course
- Case of the Month
- Math Drills
- Full Case: Walkthrough Video
- Case Structure: Walkthrough Video
- Consulting Firm Directory
- Case Interview Train the Trainer