title: **Accommodations for coding interviews?**
num_comments: 19
num_up_votes: 28
upvote_ratio: 0.98

Post Text

What do you guys think about requesting accommodations (extra time) for coding interviews? I've been grinding Leetcode for months and I'm getting better at it. But I just simply can not think fast enough under pressure and it's preventing me from landing a job. 20-30 minutes for a medium-type problem is really hard for me. I sometimes needs 10 minutes just to understand the problem..

Comments

Commenter_2
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 7
Not all jobs use whiteboarding in interviews. We give a coding exercise after interviewing and then do a quick code review follow-up.

Commenter_3
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 20
Personally I would never tell an employer that I have ADHD, let alone ask a *potential* employer for accommodations. I feel like the risk of it backfiring is just too high. Even on the off chance you get an amazingly understanding interview panel, there's still a subconscious element that may come into play when they are judging you as a candidate. Of course, I have no data to back this up; I'm just speculating based on what I know about "humans"

Generic, probably unhelpful advice: if it's really the pressure you're struggling with, that's common among interviewees and I'm sure you can research the ways of dealing with that. If you're able to do these problems outside of an interview, you've got the hard part down.

Crazy advice: idk your situation, but I mostly just get nervous during interviews. Not about anything in particular, just sweaty, shaking, voicing-cracking nerves. Personally I found that doing something that scares me tends to put things in perspective for a while. For me it was playing at an open-mic in front of ~30 people. I felt the adrenaline rush for hours after and generally gave zero fucks about anything for a few weeks. So maybe try something that scares you way more than interviews?

> ###### Commenter_4
> ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 6
> I expect from all potential employers full accommodations. I don't request it, I demand it. I make clear from the outset my needs and expectations, and occasionally hint that I'm not above settling the matter of my legal rights as a disabled job applicant more formally.
>
> > ###### Commenter_3
> > ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 6
> > Yeah... I'm not sure about other countries, but in the US it's pretty difficult to prove discrimination during the hiring process. Short of the interviewers being stupid enough to actually say something to you or otherwise document the discrimination, you're pretty much SOL. Also, dropping "hints" about your litigiousness seems like a good way to not get hired
> >
> > > ###### Commenter_4
> > > ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 1
> > > I let the trash take itself out.

Commenter_5
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 7
I am the same way. It wouldn't hurt to ask. I think that's what I'll be doing as well.

Commenter_6
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 3
Unfortunately it can hurt to ask during the hiring process - there's a lot of stigma out there

Commenter_7
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 3
My advice won't be helpful for all situations, it depends on the exercise. But in my experience, if you can't finish in the allotted time or if you feel you could have done more or better, it's perfectly okay to tell the recruiter afterwards. Use a lot of euphemisms and half-truths, such as "I get really nervous during interviews and it I feel I would've done better under normal circumstances". Also, tell them what you would've added or done better had you had the time to do so.

Recruiters appreciate that, because it shows you're capable of self evaluation (very important quality) and that this interview is so important to you that you really put thought into the exercise. Plus, they see a lot of applicants and a fair amount of them are nervous, so you won't stand out in a negative way.

Commenter_8
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 0
You can't make competitive places safe spaces. Downvote me all you want, it's just life.

Commenter_9
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 2
Also the fact that "more time" just means more procrastination. What ADHDers need is less time with strict deadlines.

Unknown_User
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 1
[deleted]

Commenter_10
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 1
You're absolutely correct.

Commenter_11
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 1
It is an accommodation. How is it any different from asking for more time on exams in school? Odd how all that disappears as soon as you enter the job market. It's almost as if neurodivergent candidates are discriminated against.

I don't think your analogy fits, either. More time on coding interviews and working as a day to day software engineer aren't equivalent to having access to handicap-accessible tools working as a pitstop operator. You aren't required to solve algorithmic puzzles under time pressure as a day to day software engineer (in almost all cases). I've never seen a job posting that requires such.

Unknown_User
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 0
[deleted]

Commenter_11
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 1
> Because you're being paid to do something.

We don't get compensated for interviews. If we get the job, we do the work. I don't understand your point here.

> School systems are interested and invested in education, not making profit. Therefore they have an incentive to allow neurodivergent folks more accommodations to achieve that goal.

Public and private higher education in the US are not "interested and invested in education" and is exactly treated as a business. In general, most people don't go to school to "learn" (which most of us have to do on our own), you go to school to pay for and hopefully gain a certificate that may or may not qualify you for a job. Requiring accommodation in pursuit of a certificate that qualifies you for a job shouldn't be any different from requiring accommodation at the job. In the job interview, you're effectively jumping through similar hoops as in a school exam trying to prove yourself. I think it's perfectly reasonable to expect some accommodation, but neurodivergent applicants don't ask because they don't want to be stigmatized.

> They are incentivized to hire whoever can do the job most effectively and efficiently.

This might be true if the measures of effectiveness and efficiency in interview performance actually functioned as assumed. For the most part, technical coding interviews are rote memorization tests of "did you prepare specifically for this or not?" and aren't known not to be a good indicator for career success. Here's a study that discusses how they're better at assessing performance anxiety, not skill: [https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/07/200714101228.htm#:\~:text=A%20new%20study%20finds%20that,or%20favor%20specific%20job%20candidates](https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/07/200714101228.htm#:~:text=A%20new%20study%20finds%20that,or%20favor%20specific%20job%20candidates)

> If they have two candidates who are equal in every regard, but one has ADHD and needs extra time to complete things and the other does not, of course they're going to hire the person who is neurotypical.

Saying neurodivergent folks need "extra time to complete things" completely disregards context. We are talking about interview context, where you're being judged on solving a random algorithmic puzzle and are under an artificial time constraint *cough cough* like exams at school. We shouldn't be punished just because our brains function differently.

Also, ADHD workers tend to have a lot of positive qualities, and your statements sound dismissive of the benefits of ADHDers in the workplace. You do know there are neurodiversity hiring campaigns, specifically to target neurodivergent workers because they are being recognized for their special talents and abilities that neurotypical people may not possess? Seems pretty reductive to just put neurodivergents in a box of "less than" just because we require different working environments or small accommodations like extra time during an anxiety inducing interview.

> The hope is that interview performance reflects job performance. Sure, you're rarely given problems to solve in an hour. But the idea is that the issue extrapolates. There's definitely some flaws in that logic, but I actually think it holds true in this case. If someone with ADHD has issues completing a task that should only take an hour, it's very

likely that all tasks are going to take them longer to complete.

This extrapolation you are assuming is not only false, it's a pretty harmful stereotype, and I mentioned above that context matters. I know plenty of ADHDers that go above and beyond in the workplace, taking on way more than they can handle (me included), and outperforming their neurotypical counterparts. Its comments like these that make neurodivergent workers never want to divulge their condition, so they instead take on all the stress and anxiety themselves.

A question for you: would you say it is productive to work with someones weaknesses in order to highlight their strengths, or instead force every square peg into a round hole?

Commenter_4
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 0
I might do that, if I did coding interviews.

I don't do coding interviews.

> ###### Commenter_12
> ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 1
> How do you not do them?

> > ###### Commenter_4
> > ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: -2
> > I... don't? I have a policy that I don't write code for free. No one makes miners dig out coal or lumberjacks fell trees before they get hired so why should software engineers be any different?

Commenter_13
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 1
FAANG companies will accomodate you without judgement and actually even with lenience!

Commenter_13
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 1
Be careful. Don't fall into the trap of fearing to tell a company. This borders on IMPOSTER SYNDROME. Be confident. Be proud of the fact that you want to bring your A game to the company. You just need some accomodations.

Commenter_9
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 0
You should be requesting less time for coding interviews. Let that anxiety work for you, not against you.