TEAMWORK AND "BEHAVIOR" QUESTIONS: HOW TO PREPARE IN ADVANCE

CS9 -
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"TOP 10 MISTAKES IN INTERVIEW PREP"

#1 Practicing on a computer

#2 Not rehearsing behavioral questions

#3 Not doing a mock interview

#4 Trying to memorize solutions

#5 Not solving problems out loud

#6 Rushing

#7 Sloppy coding (bad style), #8 Not testing, #9 Fixing mistakes carelessly

#10 Giving up

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"WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST WEAKNESS?"

It is very easy to say something profoundly unimpressive, even embarrassing, in response to questions like this *if you haven't prepared!*

Other examples:

- "Tell me about a time you missed a deadline."
- "Tell me about a time you experienced a conflict with a teammate."

TEAMWORK/ "BEHAVIOR" QUESTION MOCK INTERVIEWS

You need to prepare **in advance** for these questions!

(1) BRAINSTORM, (2) CATALOG, AND (3) ORGANIZE, YOUR ANECDOTES

Common Questions	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	…
Most challenging				
What you learned from experience				
Most interesting				
Hardest bug				
Enjoyed most				
Conflicts with Teammates				

—Gayle McDowell, *Cracking the coding interview*

ADVICE FOR UNDERCLASS STUDENTS

These questions are especially challenging for students who haven't taken major team project courses or internships from which to draw relevant anecdotes

Solution 1: take one or more of these ASAP:
- 108, 140, 143, 210, most of the AI classes, …

Solution 2: Extra care will be required to map your other activities (sports, clubs, etc) onto these questions in a relevant way (but can be done!)

MORE TIPS
(FROM CRACKING THE CODING INTERVIEW)

Structure your responses, especially those that involve a negative aspect ("what is a conflict you've had on a team?") as "SAR":

SAR

SITUATION, ACTION, RESULT

MORE TIPS
(FROM CRACKING THE PM INTERVIEW)

STRUCTURE your response

"DRIVE, NOT RIDE" watch your interviewer's body language for signs you're not giving enough detail or giving too much detail

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BE SPECIFIC, NOT ARROGANT

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LIMIT DETAILS

(you can also invite their feedback on your level of detail, or explicitly leave the door open to that, e.g., "My project involved building web pages that automatically refresh daily, I can go into that in more detail if you want, but one issue that came up on that team was…")