**Interview preparation**

**List your strengths**

1. Work efficiency/organisation

* Prioritise tasks
* Setting weekly goals, shortened down to daily goals
* Planning ahead
* *Example:* Personal and work goals set weekly, when I achieve these goals I get intrinsically rewarded. These goals are prioritised and I utilise any free time with more goals to keep productivity high

1. Ambitious/eager to learn

* Very productive with my time
* Hungry to learn new programming techniques
* Utilise the majority of my spare time to do this
* *Example:* I work 8-5 every day, and I code from 5-11 with the exception of food.

1. Work well in a team and on own

* Can step up and take the lead when need be
* Share ideas
* Team player working towards one goal
* Contribute to meetings and training
* *Example:* completed nutritional workshop, and presented to team and cadets, and also gave to other colleagues to use.
* *Example:* currently in medical setting I work closely with other health professionals who are all on the same page – to regain patients health

**List your weaknesses**

1. Shy away from confrontation

* Struggle to speak up to people who I am not familiar with when there’s something I don’t agree with, in term of how they have done something.
* *Example:* I work with cadets who have a standard they have to achieve, I have to confront these cadets when these standards are not met.

1. Expecting too much from myself & getting disheartened when I can’t do it

* *Example:* the task you set me, I didn’t quite achieve the full functionality which was needed. It takes me a while to come to the realisation that I am still early on in my career

**Why should I hire you?**

* I meet the criteria you have advertised for. I am a team player, a problem solver, I am also independent. Above all this I am a knowledge seeker, even when I am not at work I will still dedicate some of my free time to honing my skillset

**Where do you see yourself 5 years from now?**

* As a senior developer. If this company has a career path that will lead me to that goal, then that could well be here.

**Why do you want to work here?**

* I have wanted to work as a web developer for a while now, but what is particularly great about this position is that you specialise in e-commerce, which is where all the nitty gritty programming comes in to play, and that is what I enjoy the most, the programming logic side of things.

**What can you tell me about yourself?**

* My name is Ali, I currently work as an exercise instructor in the RAF and I have found a new love for web development. That is the direction I want my life and work prospects to go and I think that this position is well suited to meet this goal.

**What major challenges/problems have you faced and how did you overcome them?**

* When I first started programming I didn’t realise how big it was and how much there was to learn. I found myself learning loads of new things and when going back to previously-learned topics I wasn’t retaining as much information as I would have hoped. I overcame this by creating myself documents with the information on and each with a quiz at the end which I would go back to answer regularly. This is done as part of my personal weekly goals – I will pick a topic to revisit and go through all the booklets I have created and answer all the quizzes. Eventually I found myself remembering a lot more!

**How do you handle stress & pressure?**

* Having an element of pressure, such as a having a few tasks to achieve in a certain timeframe can be good for me, I work best like that. I can prioritise tasks well and break tasks down in to smaller chunks in order to have a sense of moving forward with a particular task, especially if the task is big. I was picked at clearanswer to go to the HQ in Warrington for a month to learn about new products with the aim to come back and start a new department and train up other employees, this was achieved very well. Achieved via – making notes, speaking to people, collecting resources and creating training content with these resources.
* I also make time for myself to unwind, as having a balance is also important. I find time for socialising and spending time with Lauren.

**How do you evaluate success?**

* Achieving goals, whether these were set by myself or by my supervisors. I determine success as getting a job done properly. That is the end goal, along the way I may set short term goals which provide me with short-lived satisfaction, but at the end of the day success is dependent on the end product, and if this is done to a great standard, well then I/we have succeeded. I welcome opportunities to improve

**Why are you leaving your last job/sector?**

* I have reached the pinnacle of how far I can go as an exercise instructor, there are no more milestones to hit. And in regards to leaving the sector, I have decided that exercise instructing is not the direction I want to go in my career.
* I continually want to progress, developing is forever and changing, there is no limit.

**What draws you to this industry?**

* Enjoyment/satisfaction of creating something that a lot people will use and enjoy
* The constant challenges to create/fix something

**What would you do if you had a problem?**

* Currently I search the web/resources such as stackoverflow, if I am unable to solve a certain task I will inform my line manager or point of contact, i.e. senior developer. Obviously I use my knowledge-bank first.

**What has been your greatest achievement?**

* One of my greatest career achievements was being chosen to look after the cadets at my current workplace, for a contractor this is huge to me because I am only meant to cover. However, I have been there 2 years now after starting off on a 6 month contractor.
* Being picked to go to Warrington out of a floor of 100+ people.

**How would a friend or colleague describe you?**

* Friendly, hard-working, approachable, committed

**About Spark**

* Build E-commerce sites for small to medium businesses. Process = initial consultation, branding & designing, development
* Case study – Tony’s textiles – increased saes by 63% whilst decreasing advertisement costs. You identified some problem areas and were able to improve these which led to the increase in sales. Areas focused on: visual facelift (UX/UI), springboard (CMS), pay per click, regular newsletters with frequent offers/discounts, SEO to improve google ranking, social media marketing.

**Questions to ask**

1. Why are you hiring?
2. Can you tell me more about the day to day responsibilities of this job?
3. What would you expect of me in say, the first 6 months?
4. What are some of the big challenges you are facing right now?
5. What is the typical career path for someone in this role?
6. What are the next steps in the application process?