

ONSITE PREP DOC

Amazon Leadership Principles

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<https://inside.hr.amazon.dev/us/en/employment/hiring-and-recruiting/amazon-interview-question-bank.html>

The candidate should give the answer in the below **STAR** format. You can go over and describe it using the below template.



Amazon Confidential
STAR WORKSHEET

Amazon Interview Question Bank

Your Behavioral Question: _____ Leadership Principle: _____

- Choose behavioral question that provoke specific examples or stories for your assigned Leadership Principle(s).
- Process the example using STAR. Stories have beginnings (Situation/Task), middle (Actions) and ends (Results).
- Once you have established the story, PROBE to dive deeper on your assigned competency (Leadership Principle), get clarity or pursue a concern.
- If appropriate, CHALLENGE the candidate's statements, decisions or thought process.

 S	SITUATION/TASK - Describe the situation/task you faced and the context of the story Answers the questions: where did this occur, when did it happen, why is it important? Probing Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why is this important? What was the goal? What was the initial scope of the project? What were the challenges? What were the risks and potential consequences if nothing happened? Challenge Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why did you choose this story to illustrate a xyz accomplishment? What other stories can you think of that demonstrate...xyz? Could you come up with an example that is more recent? 	Notes
 T		
 A	ACTION - What actions did you take? Answers the questions: what did you personally own, how did you do it, who else was involved? Probing Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deep probe functional expertise and/or assigned core competency. Were you the key driver or project owner? What was your biggest contribution? What unique value did you bring? What were the most significant obstacles you faced? How did you overcome them? Challenge Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you do specifically versus the team? How did you set priorities...deal with xyz problem... or get manager buy-in? What decisions did you challenge? Why? How did you influence the right outcome? 	
 R	RESULTS - How did you measure success for this project? What results did you achieve? \$ Cost savings, revenue generation # Quantify to understand volume, size, scale % Percentage change, year over year improvements ⌚ Time to market, implementation time, time savings 👤 Impact on the customer, the team 📈 Quality improvements Probing Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why did you choose to focus on these results? What other results were important? You mentioned revenue, what percentage change is that year over year? What trade-offs did you have to make to achieve this? (quality, cost, time) I'm concerned about...(the time it took, the volume, the customer impact), tell me more... Challenge Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What were the lessons learned? What would you have done differently? How would you implement this at Amazon? How did these results compare to your actual goals? (refer back to goal stated in Situation) 	

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Ask the candidate if they need explanation on any of the LPs and then go over the definition and indicators (concern & strength) for that LP. You can also give an example from the below sample behavioral questions and follow-up questions.

CUSTOMER OBSESSION

<u>Definition and Indicators</u>				
Customer Obsession				
<i>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.</i>				
Concern	Mild Concern	Mixed	Mild Strength	Strength
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes decisions or takes actions without adequately considering the customer impact Fails to collect or respond to customer input appropriately Fails to meet customer commitments Loses and doesn't regain customers' trust Develops a project approach based on industry trends rather than customer needs Unable to identify primary customers 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes actions guided by customer input Works backwards from the optimal customer experience Tries to surprise and delight the customer Applies time and energy to make the customer experience more efficient or enjoyable Identifies new ways of gathering feedback from customers Listens to feedback from customers and uses it to make improvements Pushes back when necessary to ensure that decisions consider what is best for customer in the long-term Earns customers trust by delivering promised services and products which meet or exceed expectations Stops activities that no longer enhance the customer experience 	

Customer Obsession - Suggested Behavioral Interview Questions

Please choose 2-3 questions below for your interview.

- Describe a difficult interaction you had with a customer.** How did you deal with it? What was the outcome? How would you handle it differently?
- Tell me about a time when you went above and beyond for a customer.** Why did you do it? How did the customer respond? What was the outcome?
- Give me an example of when you were able to anticipate a customer need with a solution/product they didn't know they needed/wanted yet.** How did you know they needed this? How did they respond?
- Give me an example of a time when you asked for customer feedback.** How did you use that feedback to drive innovation or improvement? How did the customer respond?
- Tell me about a time when you evaluated the customer experience of your product or service.** What did you do? What was the result?
- Tell me about a time when a customer came to you for something that wouldn't actually address their need.** How did you approach the situation? What was the result?
- Sometimes customers make unreasonable requests. Tell me about a time when you've had to push back or say no to a customer request.** What did you say or do in response to that request?
- Tell me about a time when you had to balance the needs of the customer with the needs of the business.** What did you do? What was the result?
- Give me an example of a change you implemented in your current team or organization to meet the needs of your customers.** What has been the result?
(Manager)

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OWNERSHIP

Definition and Indicators				
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 team. They never say "that's not my job."				
Concern	Mild Concern	Mixed	Mild Strength	Strength
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes decisions for short-term team success rather than long-term value Describes setbacks or problems without talking about how to address them Relies on others to remove roadblocks Avoids tough decisions Avoids addressing problems that are in others' work areas Blames others for setbacks Assigns work to others because the work is undesirable Walks away if there are too many difficulties Creates solutions that negatively impact other teams 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively makes improvements outside of one's area of responsibility Makes decisions that consider risks and future outcomes Makes decisions that are scalable and contribute to long-term success Takes the lead in solving problems Takes accountability for dependencies and their work Takes ownership for mistakes Accepts responsibility Inspires others to take ownership Sees things through to completion 	

Ownership - Suggested Behavioral Interview Questions

Please choose 2-3 questions below for your interview.

1. **Tell me about a time when you took on something significant outside your area of responsibility.** Why was it important? What was the outcome?
2. **Describe a time when you didn't think you were going to meet a commitment you promised.** How did you identify the risk and communicate it to stakeholders? Is there anything you would do differently?
3. **Give me an example of an initiative you undertook because you saw that it could benefit the whole company or your customers, but wasn't within any group's individual responsibility so nothing was being done.**
4. **Tell me about a time when you made a hard decision to sacrifice short term gain for something that would create long term value for the business.** What was the outcome? Knowing what you know now, would you have done anything differently?
5. **Describe a time when you had to transition a project you owned to a new owner.** What steps did you take to make sure the transition went smoothly? Tell me about a time that you chose to get involved in a project that you had already transitioned to somebody else. What was the situation? Why was it important to get involved?
6. **Tell me about a time when you saw a peer struggling and decided to step in and help.** What was the situation? Why did you decide to step in? What actions did you take?

Go over the evaluation criteria for the Amazon Writing Exercise. Talk about the evaluation criterias and what meets expectations.

<https://w.amazon.com/rest/wikis/xwiki/s3files/file/Amazon%20Writing%20Exercise%20Rating%20Criteria.pdf>

https://w.amazon.com/bin/view/Amazon_Writing_Exercise

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Amazon Writing Exercise Evaluation Guidelines

Instructions: Each candidate's written response should be evaluated as one part of the overall interview process. While the content is important, the purpose of the exercise is to evaluate the candidate's writing skills. We should not be evaluating whether the candidate writes like we do at Amazon because that is a learned skill. We should focus on the candidate's clarity of thought and expression through his/her writing and the content quality of the answer. Based on the guidelines below, the interview team should determine if the written response meets expectations or does not meet expectations in three primary areas: Idea/Proposal/Recommendation, Organization/Structure and Mechanics/Spelling/Grammar. The latter category is less important than the other two and should be rated leniently for candidates for whom English is a second language. The overall assessment of the response should be entered into MRT/CIMS by the recruiter or the recruiting coordinator.

Evaluation Criteria		Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Clarity of Thought			
	Is there a clear position/recommendation/point of view?	There is a clear, meaningful purpose, argument or position. It is clear what the writer is communicating.	The writer does not make a clear argument, take a position or make a recommendation. It is unclear what the writer wants to communicate.
	Is it understandable? Do the arguments make sense?	Any reader can understand the writer's position without additional background information.	The writer does not provide context, so the reader cannot understand the argument. The writing is confusing, hard to follow and does not make sense.
	Is there a clear "voice"?	The voice is consistent throughout the document.	The writer changes voice when the voice should be consistent.
	Has the interview question been answered?	The writer answers the question s/he was given.	The writer does not answer the question.
	Is the writing appropriate for the audience?	The writing includes words and phrases that are appropriate for the assignment.	The writing includes words and phrases that are too casual, too formal, too technical, inappropriate, offensive, etc.
Organization /Structure			
	Are the points clear? Do you understand what the writer is writing about?	Every point is clear and the writing is structured in a way that is logical and easy to follow.	The points do not support the argument and the information does not flow logically from point to point.
	Does the writing include an introduction, body and conclusion (where applicable)?	There is a clean opening/set-up, a body that includes details and examples that support the points. The conclusion summarizes the argument.	The writing is not structured properly and may not have a defined opening or conclusion. The information in the body does not support the overall point/argument.
	Are relevant examples used to support the points?	Relevant details and examples are used to support the argument.	The writing includes little or no detail or few examples. The argument is not supported by any evidence or critical information.
	Is the information arranged well? Does it flow?	The writing progresses in a logical manner and is organized in the best possible way. One paragraph leads to another and the order flows smoothly.	Paragraphs seem out of order. The flow is not logical and makes it difficult for the reader to follow.
	Is the main point of each paragraph clear?	Each main point (and supporting points) is clear. The reader understands how that point fits into the overall argument.	Some paragraphs seem superfluous or irrelevant.
	Are the sentences concise?	The sentences are concise and to the point. There are no unnecessary details.	There are run-on sentences that include unnecessary information or cause the reader to lose track of the point.
Mechanics/Spelling/Grammar			
	Is the grammar and punctuation correct? Are there spelling errors?	There are no major grammatical errors. The spelling and punctuation are correct.	There are significant grammatical and spelling errors. Punctuation is misused or forgotten.
	Are there transitions from one paragraph to the next?	The writer moves from one paragraph to another using transition words (i.e., In addition, Therefore).	The writer moves from topic to topic without connecting the information or preparing the reader for a change in topic.

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FAQs for Onsite Interviews

How will the on-site Interview be structured? You should expect a series of interviews (typically 4-5), which will last roughly 60 minutes each. The beginning of each interview will be a mixture of behavioral and technical style questions. At the end, interviewers will reserve 5-10 minutes for questions from you.

When should I hear the results of the interview? AWS is candidate and customer obsessed, and we commit to sharing the outcome of your interview with you within 5 business days.

Where can I find the Leadership Principles to review? Amazon's Career Center identifies the Leadership Principles, in addition to other resources you may find helpful to you. Please click [here](#) for direct access to the Leadership Principles.

What is the onboarding process after accepting? Once you accept our offer, our Background Check vendor, Accurate, will send you an email requesting you to complete a form to conduct a criminal background check. The process typically takes about 1-7 business days and must be completed prior to beginning employment with us.

What is the process and requirement for paid relocation? During our Prep call, we will discuss relocation if you live 50 miles from your new work location.

What is the break out of compensation? Our total compensation package generally has the following components, depending on the role you're being hired into:

- **Base Salary** (Salary or hourly wage you receive in your regular paycheck) – this is meant to cover the base compensation for the work / role you're performing
- **Sign-on Bonuses** (Received year one and year two of employment) – this is provided to new hires in years 1 and 2 as a supplement to Base Salary and to facilitate employees' transition to Amazon's equity ownership focused compensation model
- **Equity in the form of Restricted Stock Units (RSUs)** if eligible – this rewards our employees for thinking like owners of the company. This is an important element of the total compensation and meant to tie our employees' actions to the long-term performance and success of the company

What are RSUs and what is the vesting schedule? A Restricted Stock Unit or RSU is the right to receive a share of Amazon.com common stock in the future, provided that you meet certain conditions. After the conditions (also called the vesting requirements) are met, Amazon distributes the shares. At Amazon and its subsidiaries, the vesting requirement is time-based, meaning the shares are issued after a set period of time from the hire or award date. The value of RSUs is equal to the number of shares multiplied by the Fair Market Value of Amazon.com stock (often referred to as the stock price). The reason why we provide RSUs to our employees is because we want everyone to be owners of the company. As owners, you have a vested interest in the performance of our company. Customer obsession is also one of our Leadership Principles so we want you to learn how to work backwards from our customers.

Recommended reads:

<https://blog.aboutamazon.com/job-creation-and-investment/8-amazon-facts-you-didnt-know>

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Template for Amazon OS Interview Prep

Hi Future Amazonia (Name),

Thank you for taking the time to connect earlier today. This is the email I referenced in our call. Below are more details, links to some case studies, and articles that you may find valuable as you prepare for your upcoming interviews.

After your interview the team will huddle to discuss how you did during the process. I will then be in touch within one week either by phone or email to let you know the next step, which is typically a hire or no hire decision.

Here are a few items about what to expect from your day:

- Your technical/functional experience within the job function
- Your leadership potential. We evaluate each of our candidates against a set of [Amazon Leadership Principles](#) so we'll be asking you lot of "tell me about a time when" time questions. We want to make sure that you can be successful at Amazon. Please visit this link to review our Leadership Principles (<https://www.amazon.jobs/principles>)

Please check out the links below.

- **Onsite Interview Prep:** <https://youtu.be/Vh20A2TMVKE>
- **Phone Screen Prep:** <https://youtu.be/A-SzF5xYJPY>
- **System Design:** <https://youtu.be/gNQ9-kgyHfo>
- **Coding Sample:** https://youtu.be/mjZpZ_wcYFg
- **Leadership Principles:** <https://youtu.be/CpcxVE5JIX4>
- **How to prepare for your software Engineering Interview:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KgDcPve-BTU>

Here are two links you can use to brush up on your coding: <https://leetcode.com/>, [HackerRank.com](https://www.hackerrank.com/)

Please join us for a 90 minute Instructor led interactive Software Development Engineering Interview Preparation. This training is held monthly. The next upcoming session is listed below along with facilitator and moderator if you are interested in

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Ellen Smith is the event organizer and will have the latest link for RSVP



attending please be sure to RSVP here:

<https://softwarelearningseriesjan20.splashthat.com/>

- Whiteboarding:
 - 1) Use a thick pen and paper with and share drawings with the interviewer through the video camera; or
 - 2) Use your favorite drawing app on their computer and share screen in Chime; or
 - 3) If needed, use a free whiteboard web-based product such as <https://awwapp.com/>, and share the screen through our AWS Chime chat.
- Most folks will ask you why you want to work at Amazon. We are all very passionate about our products and services and the way in which we're building it, so we want to hire people who are coming over for the right reasons. Hint: Do a little research.
- You will meet with 5 interviewers when you are onsite/virtual. Each interviewer will cover a specific topic with you – remember to employ the **STAR Methodology** (Situation, Task, Action, Result) when responding to your interview questions! We do not give out the names of the people that you will be meeting with for two reasons. 1) Schedules change and 2) The interview will provide ample time for you to learn about us and about working at Amazon.
- If it applies to the role that you are interviewing for I would go to into our [Case Studies](#) and [AWS Whitepapers](#) section for review. I also suggest running some quick starts, logging into console, developing a point of view on our services and the overall experience. For your viewing pleasure we have some great examples on: [AWS Youtube Channel](#)

When you have a moment, please send me an informal email to confidentially share how the interviews went from your perspective. Hiring is one of the most important things we do at Amazon to grow and scale our business and your feedback is valuable as we strive to improve the experience candidates have during the interview process. I look forward to speaking with you again. If you have any questions prior please do not hesitate to reach out.

See more info about Interviewing at Amazon here:

https://www.amazon.jobs/en/landing_pages/interviewing-at-amazon

Benefits are located here: https://www.amazon.jobs/en/landing_pages/benefitoverview-us

PTO here: https://www.amazon.jobs/en/landing_pages/pto-overview-us

Amazon Articles (Optional Reading):

- [Amazon Earnings Numbers Show AWS Success](#)

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- [America's Best CEO's](#)
- [Jeff Bezos' Top Ten Leadership Lessons](#)
- [#11 on Forbes "Most Innovative Global Companies"](#)
- [World's Most Admired Companies](#)
- <http://aws.amazon.com/blogs/aws/>
- [This chart shows why Amazon's cloud will be hard for Microsoft, Google, and everyone else to beat](#)
- [Amazon Web Services CEO Andy Jassy 'optimistic' AWS will become a \\$100B business, but no spinoff plans](#)

One last thing, the attire here at Amazon is very casual. I usually tell candidates NOT to wear a suit. Feel free to dress in business casual attire if you desire.

I look forward to talking soon, thanks and good luck! I hope that you have a good day of interviews and that you will get a good sense of what it is like to work at Amazon Web Services. I look forward to talking again soon!

|

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