

1. Pre-interview exercises

- a. Reducing stories to minimum possible unit (25 +/- 5 min)
  - i. Group work on modifying one group member's story – they give and we say the minimum possible unit, then retell with only one extra detail
  - ii. Everyone pairs off and does it for each others' stories
- b. Lecture on minefields (15-20 min)
  - i. Pattern matching on academics or people who just want to solve interesting problems
  - ii. General selfishness – pay, benefits, vacation (eg what is the healthcare plan but not how many weeks of vacation you get)
  - iii. Until you get the job, you are in selling mode
  - iv. Filtering during the interview is a sign of weakness
    - 1. Learn the rules before you break them
- c. Weakness Identification and correction (45 min )
  - i. Pair off and identify the weaknesses in my “tell me about yourself story”
    - 1. Lecture on “Internal game” – Sports psychology of interviewing – convey excitement
      - a. This usually runs counter to how people think of themselves
      - b. Don't “pretend to be someone who doesn't suck”, go in as someone who think they're awesome
      - c. Get into a certain frame of mine pre-interview – don't think of how to trick people, become the person who doesn't think about it at all
      - d. “People care more about your strengths than they do your weaknesses”
  - ii. Group work to fix one person's story weaknesses and then pair off to do that for each other
  - iii. Take someone else's “errors fix” and tell it to someone else just the way they told you
  - iv. Short lecture on how to respond when **they** bring up your weaknesses, with examples
- d. Break

2. Run interviews (3 interviewing, 3 interviewee-ing, 15 min each, 2 min writing down only feedback, 3hrs)

- a. Announce that you will have to make a hiring decision – justify it to us without telling anyone. Everyone gets a job or company culture they're trying to hire for. They get 5 minutes to come up with a list of questions they want answers for – they'll show it to us and we'll give them feedback to ensure the questions are suitable.
  - i. Jobs to hire for:

**1. Robert's ideas 1**

2. **Robert's ideas 2**
  3. **Robert's ideas 3**
  4. **Robert's ideas 4**
  5. **Robert's ideas 5**
  6. **Robert's ideas 6**
  7. Quicksilver Consulting - Hiring a data scientist who will only be able to work on a given problem for an hour before being forced to give a result useful to clients – they get infinite computing power but only an hour to think and code.
  8. Facilitation Inc. – Hiring a data scientist whose main job is connecting clients and other data scientists. They need to be able to do sales and also explain what is being done to clients' data and why our work makes them money
  9. Military contractor – Hiring a data scientist to work on battlefield camera drones. They must be able to handle classified datasets and deliver accurate results since lives depend on their work. Deliberate is better than fast.
  10. Exploration – A gateway to a parallel universe where math doesn't work was discovered at Berkeley National Labs. Now that the gate is open, we need data scientists to make sense of the garbled information coming back from our probes. They should demonstrate success in unknown or uncertain environments and be willing to doubt their conclusions.
  11. Fashion industry – Hiring a data scientist who can deliver results while looking like they belong – good communications skills, posture, and being well dressed are more important to our clients than dazzling technical skills, but those certainly don't hurt
  12. News research – Hiring a data scientist to do research on current events to follow and predict trends. They must demonstrate success in an ever-changing environment and be able to talk about the data side of current events.
- b. Give instructions for feedback – for three minutes after each interview ends, the interviewer should not talk to the person they just interviewed. Instead they should write feedback down in the context of the job they're hiring for. People who were interviewed should make brief notes about things to work on and then prepare for the interview they will give.
  - c. Run first pair of interviews
  - d. Break, collect group knowledge on how to attack these hiring questions, give people more time to refine questions
  - e. Add Hidden agendas for Interviewers – one per round
    - i. Go very in depth, ask for more details about one of their stories many times
    - ii. Probe any weaknesses
    - iii. Get people to give numbers – quantify everything

- iv. Be nice – give them a chance to shine. Interviewee should feel like they crushed the interview afterwards.
  - f. Hidden agendas for Interviewees
    - i. Probably not
  - g. Collecting group insights
- 3. End

#### Outline of ideas to cover for the second Saturday class

- Things that you shouldn't say
  - Pattern matching
    - Academic / interesting problems over value problems
    - Mention that you're their second choice
- Deconstructing stories to the minimum possible unit
  - Possible exercises:
    - Get someone to tell a story, improv reduce it down to the minimum possible unit, ask if that's interesting. Ask group to reformulate it and add one detail back in. (Possibility: Retell the story to be as long as possible without it being boring, much like the awkwardness exercise with pausing for time to think)
    - Deliberate inclusion of a flaw
      - Tell your story to someone and deliberately include something that makes you look weak – have a good explanation for what you did and why or what you learned / took away
      - What are 'good' flaws to mention?
  - Check around youtube and others for more resources
- Hidden agendas
  - Robert likes giving the applicant the hidden agenda
    - More fun
  - I liked giving the interviewer the agenda
    - Possibly more realistic
- Tell me more / awkward silence
  - A good way to break this up is to ask for feedback and let the interviewer guide where they want to go next
- How to get out of holes
  - Features of getting into holes
    - Realize you just said something damaging, need to talk more to get out
    - Recognize you have a weakness, make preemptive excuses
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  - Features of getting out

- “Best way is to not get into holes in the first place”
  - Wrap it up fast
  - Pause, take a breath, acknowledge you just said something damaging / controversial / bad, and move on
  - “I can talk about it more if you like”
- Have them interview each other
  - Interviewers pounce on one thing that seems weak - Ask followups
- Extensions from last week
  - Modifying your own stories – tell it again but now emphasize leadership
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