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Behavioral & Leadership

Interview Questions

*Seen in **Data Engineers**, **Data Scientist** and **ML Engineer** at FAANGs, startups and consulting firms*

Areas Covered

1. Teamwork & Collaboration
2. Conflict Resolution
3. Leadership & Influence
4. Problem-solving & Decision Making
5. Drive & Motivation
6. Adaptability & Change
7. Communication
8. Growth & Learning
9. Initiative & Innovation
10. Customer/Stakeholder Focus
11. Results & Impact

Use the STAR Method

S — Describe the context or setting where you were when the situation occurred. This sets the stage for the rest of your story.

T — Explain the challenge or responsibility you were faced with. It's important to describe what needed to be done and why.

A — Describe the specific actions you took to address the task or challenge. Demonstrate skills, capabilities, or qualities you used.

R — Share the outcome or results of your actions. Ideally, this should showcase a positive impact or learning experience.

1. Teamwork & Collaboration

1. Can you describe a time when your team faced a significant challenge, and how you overcame it together?
2. How do you ensure that everyone in a team feels heard and valued?
3. Tell me about a time when you mentored a teammate.
4. How have you handled a situation where a team member wasn't pulling their weight?
5. Describe an instance when you leveraged the strengths of your team members to achieve a common goal.
6. How do you handle differences in opinion within a team?
7. When working on a project, how do you decide when to collaborate and when to work independently?

2. Conflict Resolution

1. Describe a situation where you mediated a conflict between two colleagues.
2. How do you handle criticism or feedback that you don't agree with?
3. Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a difficult colleague.
4. How have you resolved a misunderstanding with a stakeholder in the past?
5. Can you give an example of a time when you had to compromise to resolve a conflict?
6. Describe a situation where you turned a conflict into a learning opportunity.
7. How do you ensure that conflicts don't escalate and disrupt team dynamics?

3. Leadership & Influence

1. Describe a project you led from inception to completion.
2. How have you motivated a disengaged team member?
3. Tell me about a time you had to make an unpopular decision. How did you communicate it?
4. How do you delegate tasks and responsibilities to your team?
5. Describe a situation where you had to lead a team through a challenging period.
6. How have you influenced the direction or decision of a project without formal authority?
7. Can you provide an example of when you mentored or coached someone to achieve more?

4. Problem-Solving & Decision Making

1. How do you approach solving a problem you've never encountered before?
2. Describe a time when you had to make a decision with limited information.
3. Can you give an example of a significant mistake you made and how you rectified it?
4. How do you prioritize when faced with multiple critical issues at once?
5. Describe a situation where your initial solution to a problem wasn't working, and how you adapted.
6. How do you handle situations when you're faced with conflicting data or viewpoints?
7. Tell me about a time when you had to involve others in the decision-making process.

5. Drive & Motivation

1. What challenges have you set for yourself recently, and how did you go about achieving them?
2. Describe a time when you felt especially proud of a work-related accomplishment.
3. How do you maintain motivation in repetitive or mundane tasks?
4. Tell me about a project you undertook that was beyond your usual scope of work.
5. Describe a situation where you felt like giving up. How did you push through?
6. How do you set short-term and long-term goals for yourself?
7. What do you do when you feel your motivation waning on a project?

6. Adaptability & Change

1. Describe a time when a project's direction changed suddenly. How did you adapt?
2. How have you handled a situation where a tool or methodology you relied on became obsolete?
3. Tell me about a time when you had to learn a new skill or technology quickly.
4. How do you approach change within a team or organizational setting?
5. Describe a situation where you anticipated a change and prepared for it in advance.
6. How do you help your colleagues or team adapt to new changes?
7. Can you give an example of a time when you took a risk, and it paid off?

7. Communication

1. How do you tailor your communication style to different audiences?
2. Describe a time when you had to advocate for your perspective or idea.
3. How have you handled a situation where there was a communication breakdown in your team?
4. Tell me about a time you received complex feedback. How did you process and act on it?
5. How do you ensure clarity when explaining intricate details of your work?
6. Describe an instance where effective communication helped avoid a potential problem.
7. How do you gather feedback from your team or stakeholders?

8. Growth & Learning

1. How do you approach challenges or tasks you're unfamiliar with?
2. Describe a new skill or tool you've learned in the past year.
3. How do you ensure continuous learning and growth in your professional journey?
4. Tell me about a time when you took on a task or role you felt unprepared for.
5. How do you react to and learn from failures or setbacks?
6. What resources or methods do you utilize to stay updated with industry trends?
7. Describe a time when you proactively sought feedback to improve.

9. Initiative & Innovation

1. Describe a process or method you've improved at your current or past job.
2. How do you identify areas of opportunity or improvement in your work?
3. Tell me about a novel solution you've implemented to address a recurring problem.
4. Describe a time when you saw potential in an idea that others dismissed.
5. How do you foster a culture of innovation within your team?
6. Can you give an example of a time when you anticipated future trends and acted on them?
7. How do you ensure that your innovative ideas align with business needs?

10. Customer/Stakeholder Focus

1. Describe a time when you had to pivot a project based on customer feedback.
2. How do you ensure that you're always keeping the user or customer in mind?
3. Tell me about a situation where you had to balance stakeholder expectations with project realities.
4. How do you handle situations where stakeholder needs conflict with each other?
5. Describe a time when you went out of your way to understand the needs or pain points of a customer.
6. How do you gather and act on feedback from users or stakeholders?
7. Describe a project where stakeholder input greatly influenced the outcome.

11. Results & Impact

1. How do you measure success or impact in your role?
2. Tell me about a time when you had to pivot your strategy based on the results of a project.
3. Describe a situation where the results of your efforts were not as expected. How did you handle it?
4. How do you ensure that your work aligns with the larger goals of the organization?
5. Can you give an example of a time when you collaborated with other departments to achieve a significant outcome?