

AMAZON LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

BEHAVIOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

How to Use – Ask a one or two questions from 3 to 5 of the most appropriate leadership principles per interview.

Customer Obsession - *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.*

1. Who was your most difficult customer?
2. Give me an example of a time when you did not meet a client's expectation. What happened, and how did you attempt to rectify the situation?
3. When you're working with a large number of customers, it's tricky to deliver excellent service to them all. How do you go about prioritizing your customers' needs?
4. Tell the story of the last time you had to apologize to someone.

Are Right, A Lot - *Leaders are right a lot. They have strong judgment and good instincts. They seek diverse perspectives and work to disconfirm their beliefs.*

1. Tell me about a time when you were wrong.
2. Tell me about a time when you had to work with incomplete data or information.
3. Tell me about a time when you were proposing a solution that other doubted that turned out in your favor.

Insist on the Highest Standards - *Leaders have relentlessly high standards many people may think these standards are unreasonably high. Leaders are continually raising the bar and driving their teams to deliver high quality products, services and processes. Leaders ensure that defects do not get sent down the line and that problems are fixed so they stay fixed.*

1. Tell me about a time when you couldn't meet your own expectations on a project.
2. Tell me about a time when a team member didn't meet your expectations on a project.

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 own team. They never say "that's not my job."*

1. Tell me about a time when you had to leave a task unfinished.
2. Tell me about a time when you had to work on a project with unclear responsibilities.
3. Give me an example of when you took a risk and it failed.

Invent and Simplify - *Leaders expect and require innovation and invention from their teams and always find ways to simplify. They are externally aware, look for new ideas from everywhere, and are not limited by "not invented here". As we do new things, we accept that we may be misunderstood for long periods of time.*

1. Tell me about a time when you gave a simple solution to a complex problem.
2. Tell me about a time when you created a new way of doing something that gave a company a competitive advantage.
3. Tell me about an out of the box idea you had and what was its impact?

Learn and Be Curious - *Leaders are never done learning and always seek to improve themselves. They are curious about new possibilities and act to explore them.*

1. Tell me about a time when you influenced a change by only asking questions.
2. Tell me about a time when you solved a problem through just superior knowledge or observation.

Deliver Results - Leaders focus on the key inputs for their business and deliver them with the right quality and in a timely fashion. Despite setbacks, they rise to the occasion and never settle.

1. By providing an example, tell me when you have had to handle a variety of assignments. Describe the results.
2. Give me an example of a time when you were 75% of the way through a project, and you had to pivot strategy—how were you able to make that into a success story?
3. Tell me about a time where you overcame an obstacle and delivered results.

Dive Deep - Leaders operate at all levels, stay connected to the details, audit frequently, and are skeptical when metrics and anecdote differ. No task is beneath them.

1. Tell me a time when you devised a new way of looking at data that helped improve performance.
2. Describe a time when you had to personally resolve a challenging technical situation which should have been done by one of your employees.
3. Tell me about a time when you had to dive deep into the data and the results you achieved.

Have Backbone; Disagree and Commit - Leaders are obligated to respectfully challenge decisions when they disagree, even when doing so is uncomfortable or exhausting. Leaders have conviction and are tenacious. They do not compromise for the sake of social cohesion. Once a decision is determined, they commit wholly.

1. Tell me about an unpopular decision of yours.
2. Tell me about a time when you had to step up and disagree with a team members approach.
3. If your direct manager was instructing you to do something you disagreed with, how would you handle it?

Hire and Develop The Best - Leaders raise the performance bar with every hire and promotion. They recognize exceptional talent, and willingly move them throughout the organization. Leaders develop leaders and take seriously their role in coaching others. We work on behalf of our people to invent mechanisms for development like Career Choice.

1. Tell me about a time when you mentored someone.
2. Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a poor performer on your team.

Bias for Action - Speed matters in business. Many decisions and actions are reversible and do not need extensive study. We value calculated risk taking.

1. Describe a time when you saw some problem and took the initiative to correct it rather than waiting for someone else to do it.
2. Tell me about a time when you took a calculated risk.
3. Tell me about a time you needed to get information from someone who wasn't very responsive. What did you do?
4. Tell me about a time when you did not have time to weigh all of your options but had to make a decision and how did you come to that decision?

Earn Trust - Leaders listen attentively, speak candidly, and treat others respectfully. They are vocally self-critical, even when doing so is awkward or embarrassing. Leaders do not believe their or their team's body odor smells of perfume. They benchmark themselves and their teams against the best.

1. What would you do if you found out that your closest friend at work was stealing.
2. Tell me about a time when you had to tell someone a harsh truth.
3. Tell me a time when you earned trust of a group.

Think Big - Thinking small is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Leaders create and communicate a bold direction that inspires results. They think differently and look around corners for ways to serve customers.

1. Tell me about your proudest professional achievement.
2. Tell me about a time when you went way beyond the scope of the project and delivered.

Frugality - Accomplish more with less. Constraints breed resourcefulness, self-sufficiency and invention. There are no extra points for growing headcount, budget size or fixed expense.

1. Tell me about a time when you had to work with limited time or resources.
2. Describe a time when you need a bigger budget to achieve the desired results but was not granted it and how you overcame the challenge.
3. Tell me about a time where you thought of a clever new way to save money for the company.