The Interview Guide

A guide that covers all the different topics and common questions you should keep in mind while preparing for interviews. These are from some online resources and mostly from my personal experiences.

Contents

Getting Interviews

What is a good resume?

- One page
- Relevant skills (use keywords for job applying for)
- Personalize based on role/company applying for
- Show some online presence (portfolio, blog, github, etc.)
- Top title should match the job role applying for
- Work experience should highlight your work more than the company
- Remove the word "I" and make point straight forward
- Use action words (what you did instead of what your role was)
- Show your impact instead of your responsibilities
- Only include sections that are important (Experience, Projects, Education, Technical Skills, etc.)
- No typos or bad grammar
- Be honest with your resume

Read more about good resume here

What if you don't have much experience?

- Show github contributions (open-source, commits, etc.)
- Website (portfolio with some projects)
- 1-2 Big Projects are better than 15 small projects
- Participating in Hackathons
- Blog, Youtube or some other kind of online presence (twitter, linkedin, etc.)
- Show other skills that can be useful for the role (managing people, etc.)
- **Just show your passion**

How to use LinkedIn?

- Tailor it just like your resume
- Keep updating your profile (Recruiters are more likely to contact your if they see you've update your profile recently)
- Use keywords with experience, algorithm uses keywords a lot
- Get referrals and recommendations

What is Cold Emailing?

The basic way is to ask for referrals form the company employees by send resume.

Go beyond that by sending your best project or portfolio, possibly to HR direct or maybe even the CTO or someone at head positions. Tell them you'd like to work for them or ask if you can get into a chat to learn from them and then smoothly ask about open positions.

You can directly message CEOs or heads too if it's a small a startup or small company. Tell them the tech stack you mastered in and ask to solve one of their real life problem free of charge. In return you'd just like an interview.

Here's a sample email -

```
 Hey $BOB,

I saw your presentation at $CONFERENCE last year on Youtube (rr point to some work they have done).

Great stuff; loved what you did with $FOO, in particular

$COMMENT_PROVING_YOU_KNOW_WHAT_YOU'RE_TALKING_ABOUT.

I'm also a $FOO developer. I noticed that your company is hiring

or $ROLE. I'd love to be a part of your team. Do you have a

few minutes to chat on Thursday about what you guys are doing?


Thanks,

Yourname

Your website or any public profile link
```

Where to find the jobs?

- LinkedIn (use filters)
- HackerNews (use monthly "Who's hiring?" list)
- AngelList - Specially for startups
- Hired, TripleByte, WhiteTruffle - They have quizzes and company contacts you based on scores
- meetup.com (go to meetups and connect to people)

Non-Technical Interviews

There are 3 major questions they're trying to answer by interviewing you -

1. Can you do the job?
2. Will they like to work with you?
3. Are you going/willing to improve?

During The Interview

- Think of interviewer as your friend only
- Don't be scared
- It's not do or die
- Think of it as testing your interview skills
- Prepare 2-4 hero stories about yourself around these topics
    - Success
    - Leadership
    - Technical
    - Challenge

Tell me about Yourself

This question can have a lot different variations like walk me through your resume, etc.

It is the best ques for you because you get to chose the path of the rest of the interview through the answers you provide cuz they'll ask follow up questions.

Things to keep in mind -

- Cover all the 4 hero points someway
- Should be around a min long or so
- Talk about things you want them to ask about
- Try to stand out by saying what makes you unique
- Talk about projects and skills that make you perfect fit for their team
- Talk about the why of your coding journey and make it like a story
- Make them think how everything you've done in the entire journey makes you the perfect candidate

Literally sell yourself :)

Why Us?

One of the most common questions. Again, make the feel special and make yourself stand out.

Some things to mention are -

- You've been following them & the work they do
- You did similar work and you can add value in a major way and learn from them
- Make your answer stand out
- Make them you're here for the long term
- Show you did a lot of research liked you've talked to other people from the company
- Mention some of the keywords from the job description

Just show you've worked on similar things and did your research on what problem the company is trying to solve. Now you want to add value to their and have the perfect skill sets for that.

Why did you leave your last company?

- Don't at all be negative or bitch about stuff
- Just say you want to grow
- Want more challenge
- Want to work on a specific X problem

What's a problem you solved & How did you solve it?

This is a v good question to stand out so prepare it in advance. Use one of the past company or personal projects to talk about this.

We use **SAR** method here. SAR stand for **Situation**, **Action**, and **Result**.

Situation - What was initial problem? Action - What you did to solve it? Result - How did it help?

Talking about results, keep these things in mind -

- Mention numbers, metrics, any form of stats
- Things like scaling, performance, security are really impressive
- Don't make up stuff. Be ready for detailing.
- Don't be negative about the problem.

A really good way to talk about these stuff is imagining that you're on TV and think about people watching you would like your character.

Also, whenever talking about a project or a problem solved, you always wanna bring it back to what the company is looking for.

What's your biggest weakness?

Don't be so generic and give typical answers like "I work too hard", etc.

Give an honest answer but say how you're improving it.

An example can be - "Sometimes when I see a problem I immediately get into coding and trying to solve it. Along the way I realize that it wasn't the best way. I should've planned first. So lately, I've trying to write pseudocode first, writing comments about all the things I need to do before I start coding it and it's been helping me a lot."

Again, use this in your favour and stand out by mention how you're good at improving yourself.

Any questions for us?

Your ques should show you're interested in the company and about working there.

Consider these things -

- Target the interviewer for ques (You) & not the company since everybody likes talking about themselves
- Mention something they mentioned. Shows you were paying attention to them

Examples -

- Where do you think the company is headed in the next 3-5 years. I wanna be here for long term and since you already are here you have mor exp to ans this. (Allow them to talk about the projects.)
- How they joined the company?
- What they wish somebody had told them while starting at the company?
- What's the best thing about working there?

Here is the link to a shit ton of such questions. - [Reverse Interview MF](#)

Finishing the Interview

It's just as imp to make a good last impression as it is for a first impression. After the interview ends, keep these things in the mind -

- Thank the interviewer, say it was nice to talk to them
- Sound excited, energetic and positive
- Ask for specific feedbacks
- Ask around how long it'd be to hear back from them
- Make up a closing statement and sell yourself
  - Talk about interviewer
  - Respect them looking for other candidates
  - Say how you're the best w/o bragging
  - You're willing to learn every single day
- Can also send a thank you email after thanking them for the time. You can mention that you found ans for the ques you wasn't able to answer

Negotiation

"What's your salary expectation?" Don't give them a straight number but do provide one. Like talk about the avg salary in location for that role and say that'd be a good place to start.

Keep these things in mind -

- Don't end the convo
- Provide reasons for everything, don't be greedy
- When asking for time, give a reason (like it's family decision, etc.) and also thank them
- Always negotiate
- Show that you do have other options

Here is one of the best videos on how to negotiate salary - [Watch](#)

Handling Offers

Don't just immediately accept the offer. Say you have interview process going on with a few other companies as well.

- Sound excited
- Thank them
- Ask for some time
- Say you'd be really happy to join

Once you do get an offer, reach out to all the companies you're interview for and tell them you have an offer. Build a sense of urgency since ball's in your court. Send email and say you're waiting for a speedy reply.

If there's a deadline for offer letter, be honest and politely ask for some more time to hear back from other places.

Handling Multiple Offers

When you have multiple offers consider these questions (in the order) and make the decision acc to that -

1. Are you under qualified for your job? If yes, then take it. You'll learn a lot more than you know right now.
2. Consider long term growth potential in the company.
3. Will you respect people around you? Are they smarter than you? Yes should be the right answer.
4. Salary and perks (Don't just compare numbers. They include a lot of benefits)
5. Is your decision out of desperation.

Final Thoughts

It's possible that you might still get rejected but remember, your rejections don't show up on your resume, only your selections do. A famous quote by Dwight K. Schrute - "Not everything's a lesson Ryan. Sometimes you just fail."

When rejected -

- Don't get discouraged. It might be just luck.
- Ask for as many feedbacks as possible
- Ask when can you reapply again
- Know that it's a numbers game. They probably took 10 interviews and rejected 9. Only 1 would be selected.

All you need is just one success. Keep going at it and keep improving yourself.

Just like anything else, giving interviews is also a skill. Learn as you go and keep improving and updating your profile.

Better to focus on 5-10 specific jobs instead of blindly applying at 100 different places.

Conclusion

Thank you for using this cheatsheet!

If you found it helpful please check out more of my work on yodkwtf.com or follow me on twitter. I also run a small youtube channel called Yodkwtf Academy.