



QUESTION BANK · INTERVIEW

Interview Prep Question Bank

Behavioral, technical, executive, and closing prompts — with the answer frameworks that consistently produce offers.

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PDF Question Bank

AUDIENCE

Every stage of interview loop

USE

Prep · Rehearse · Refine

Question Bank · Interview

Interview Prep Question Bank

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How to use this bank

This document holds roughly 80 interview prompts organized by category, along with the frameworks that consistently produce strong answers. Do not try to memorize an answer for every prompt. Instead, prepare five reusable stories that cover the underlying themes — leadership, problem solving, conflict, measurable impact, learning from failure — and rehearse delivering each story three different ways.

Every strong answer follows the CGARL structure: Context in one sentence, Goal in one sentence, Action in three to five sentences (always first-person), Result in one sentence with a number, and Learned in one sentence. Total delivery: 90 to 120 seconds. Anything longer erodes credibility.

Print this. Highlight the 15 prompts you think are most likely for your target role. Rehearse those 15 out loud, on a timer, until each one lands cleanly under two minutes.

Section 1 · Opening questions

- Walk me through your background.
- Tell me about yourself.
- Why are you looking?
- Why this company?
- Why this role?
- What are you looking for in your next role?
- Where do you see yourself in three years?
- What are your salary expectations?

Framework — the 90-second background walk

Frame your career as a three-arc story, not a chronology. Arc one: where you started and what you learned. Arc two: the middle stretch where you built the skills you are proud of. Arc three: what you are looking to do next and why this role fits. Two minutes total, one arc every 40 seconds.

Section 2 · The layoff question, in every form

- Why did you leave your last role?
- Walk me through your transition.
- I see you have been at your last job for X years — what happened?
- How are you handling the search?
- What have you been doing during the gap?

Framework — the calm, 15-second answer

"My role was impacted by a company-wide restructuring in [month/year]. I am proud of what I built there, and I am now focused on roles where I can bring [two or three skills]. Which is why I was excited about this role — [specific thing about this job]." Deliver it once, deliver it calmly, then let the interviewer choose whether to follow up.

- Never badmouth your former employer, manager, or team.
- Never volunteer details beyond the one-sentence explanation.
- Always pivot to the role in front of you at the end of the answer.

Section 3 · Behavioral — leadership

- Tell me about a time you led without authority.
- Tell me about the most difficult team you have managed.
- How do you build trust with a new team in the first 90 days?
- Tell me about a time you had to influence someone senior to you.
- How do you handle underperformance on a team?
- Tell me about a time you had to make an unpopular decision.
- How do you set direction for a team when the strategy is ambiguous?

Section 4 · Behavioral — problem solving

- Tell me about the most ambiguous problem you have owned.
- Tell me about a decision you made with incomplete data.
- Walk me through a hard trade-off you had to make.
- Tell me about a time you had to change direction late in a project.
- Tell me about a time you had to solve a problem outside your area of expertise.

- Tell me about a time your first solution did not work — what did you do next?

Section 5 · Behavioral — conflict and disagreement

- Tell me about a conflict with a peer.
- Tell me about a time you disagreed with your manager.
- How do you handle a stakeholder who does not want to hear the answer you have?
- Tell me about a time you had to say no.
- Tell me about a difficult piece of feedback you gave someone. How did you deliver it?
- Tell me about the hardest feedback you have received.

Framework — the disagreement answer

Interviewers are not testing whether you avoid conflict. They are testing whether you can disagree without damaging the relationship. Structure: name the disagreement in neutral terms, describe how you understood the other side, describe how you presented your view, describe the outcome, and describe what you learned about handling the same situation next time.

Section 6 · Behavioral — measurable impact

- Tell me about your proudest accomplishment.
- Walk me through a business result you are proud of.
- Tell me about a project where the outcome exceeded expectations.
- How have you improved a process or system?
- Tell me about a time you saved the company meaningful money or time.

Section 7 · Behavioral — failure and learning

- Tell me about a project that failed and what you learned.
- Tell me about a time you missed a deadline.
- What is your biggest professional regret?
- Tell me about a time you were wrong.
- What is a skill you are actively working to improve right now?

Framework — the failure answer

Pick a real failure with a real business consequence. Do not use the fake-humble "my biggest weakness is that I work too hard" pattern — it lands as evasive. Own the specific decision that led to the failure, describe what you would do differently, and name one durable habit you have built as a result. That last piece — the durable habit — is the point of the answer.

Section 8 · Role-specific — technical and case

- Walk me through how you would design [system or workflow].
- How would you approach [ambiguous business problem]?
- Estimate the size of [market / user base / cost].
- Here is a dataset — what questions would you ask?
- Show me a code sample or project you are proud of. Walk me through your decisions.
- How would you prioritize [list of features / initiatives]?

Framework — case round narration

Narrate your thinking out loud. State assumptions before you calculate. Sanity-check the shape of your answer at the end. If you get stuck, describe what you would do next with more time or more data. Interviewers grade decomposition and communication more than the final number — a good process with a wrong number consistently outperforms a right number with silence.

Section 9 · Manager round questions

- What is your management philosophy?
- How do you set expectations with a new direct report?
- How do you handle underperformance?
- How do you develop your team members?
- Tell me about the best hire you have made. What made them successful?
- Tell me about a hire that did not work out. What did you learn?
- How do you balance shipping speed with quality?

Section 10 · Executive / skip-level questions

- How do you think about our market?
- What would you do in your first six months?
- What is one thing you would change about our public strategy?

- How do you build alignment with peer leaders?
- How do you make trade-offs between the priorities of different stakeholders?
- How do you handle a board or executive that is pushing a direction you disagree with?

Framework — the skip-level answer

Skip-level interviewers screen for strategy fit and communication with executives. Their questions are broader and their patience for long answers is lower. Prepare short, opinionated answers — not comprehensive ones. Opinions signal seniority; comprehensive answers signal middle management.

Section 11 · Culture and fit

- What kind of environment do you do your best work in?
- What is your working style?
- How do you handle stress or high-pressure situations?
- What is your relationship with feedback?
- How do you like to be managed?
- What would your last team say about you?

Section 12 · Compensation and closing

- What are your salary expectations?
- Are you talking with other companies?
- What is your timeline?
- What would make you say yes to an offer here?
- Is there anything I have not asked that you wish I had?

Framework — the salary expectation answer

If you can defer, defer: "I would love to understand the scope of the role and the full compensation package before naming a number. Do you have a range budgeted for this role?" If you must give a number, give a range grounded in market data with the bottom at your target: "Based on my research the market for this level and geography is \$X to \$Y, and I would want to be in that band."

Never lie about current or last compensation. Never accept a verbal offer on the call — always ask for it in writing before responding.

Section 13 · Questions you should ask

Ask questions that show judgment. Save small-talk questions for later rounds if at all.

- What does success look like in the first 90 days in this role?
- What is the biggest gap on the team today that this hire is expected to close?
- What problem does this role need to solve first?
- How does the team make decisions when the data is incomplete?
- What is the on-call or after-hours expectation?
- How is performance measured for this role?
- What is the one thing about working here you wish someone had told you before you joined?
- What are the next steps in the process, and when would you expect to be in touch?

Rehearsal drill — the 25-minute daily prep

- Pick three prompts you have not answered before.
- Answer each one out loud, on a timer, under two minutes.
- Record the third one. Play it back.
- Note the two things you would change. Write them down.
- Answer the same prompt again incorporating the changes.
- Stop. Do not over-drill any single prompt in a single day.

Prep quality beats prep quantity. Thirty minutes of focused rehearsal a day for a week produces sharper interviews than a full weekend of cramming the day before.

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