

# Technical Interview Practice

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October 29, 2016

- ▶ You can't really teach someone how to interview well.
- ▶ You can make them aware of certain things so that they can improve.
- ▶ At the end of the day, it's all about practicing.

## About the Process

# Review a few things before an interview

- ▶ Review common data structures
  - ▶ You will learn/are learning them in 122
  - ▶ You'll learn even more in 210 next year
- ▶ Review common algorithm questions.
  - ▶ Don't mess up on an easy question!
- ▶ Make sure your resume doesn't mention anything you're not comfortable talking about.
- ▶ Look into what the company does.
  - ▶ They'll usually ask you, "Why do you want to work here?"

# Pre-interview Routines

- ▶ Have a pre-interview “routine” that gets you ready to do an interview.
  - ▶ Example: smile into a mirror for 5 minutes
    - ▶ If its on-site and I’m in a waiting room, I just cover my mouth and smile.
  - ▶ The Hidden Power of Smiling  
<https://youtu.be/U9cGdRNmdQQ>
- ▶ Do anything you can to improve your confidence before going in.

# Interviews are all about talking & communicating

- ▶ You're most likely being interviewed by an engineer.
- ▶ They don't expect you to be the biggest algorithm master on the planet.
- ▶ They want to make sure that if you get hired that they'd be happy to have you on their own team.
- ▶ Be excited about the company.
  - ▶ Don't let the interviewer get the vibe that this isn't your first choice.
- ▶ Make sure to always be talking about your thought process.
  - ▶ If there's a span of time where it's completely silent you are doing something wrong.
  - ▶ Always be explaining what you're thinking about and what you're writing.

# The types of questions vary wildly

- ▶ For the most part, you won't get asked terribly difficult interview questions.
- ▶ Most interview questions you'll encounter will be easily solved using a hashtable.
- ▶ Interview questions are meant to be solvable in a short amount of time, but usually there are multiple stages to the answers.

# Answering Questions



# How to solve interview questions

- ▶ Always give the worst answer first.
  - ▶ If you immediately have a solution to a problem, even if it is super slow, say it.
  - ▶ I cannot stress the importance of this enough.
  - ▶ You absolutely **MUST** let the interviewer know that you can solve it.
- ▶ After that, you can try and optimize it.
  - ▶ Remember that the interviewer isn't just trying to make sure you know how to solve these problems
  - ▶ He/she is trying to see how you go about solving the problems.
- ▶ If all goes wrong, chances are the interviewer is going to give you a hint.
  - ▶ They understand that there's pressure to solve the problem.
  - ▶ If an interviewer gives you a hint, run with it.

Practice Time!

# Common Linked List questions

- ▶ Print out the elements in a linked list in order.
- ▶ Detect a cycle in a linked list.
- ▶ Reverse a linked list.

# Final tips

- ▶ Don't take it personally if you don't get good news.
  - ▶ Two interviewers at the same company will ask you completely different questions and would conclude different things
  - ▶ Just because you didn't pass with one doesn't mean you are not good enough.
  - ▶ Don't believe me?
  - ▶ <http://blog.triplebyte.com/who-y-combinator-companies-want>
- ▶ Don't get arrogant after getting offers.
  - ▶ Future interviewers will detect your arrogance and that's a huge turn off.