



OYO¹: TECHNICAL INTERVIEWS

“Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.” Abraham Lincoln

Get your whiteboard ready! Technical Interviewing is a must-have skill for any CS major. Similar to traditional interviews, the goal is for the employer to evaluate your potential. Technical interviews require practicing and focusing on two key skills – coding and communication.

1 | The Questions

The problems that the interviewer asks have specific requirements. They must be short enough to be explained and solved reasonably quickly, yet complex enough that not everyone can solve them. Often these problems have challenging restrictions and may require algorithmic tricks or uncommonly used features of a programming language.

2 | Programming Languages

You should have thorough knowledge of mainstream languages like Java, C++, C and Python, or languages specifically required for the job. Make sure you are comfortable with the use and syntax of these languages and brush up on them before the interview.

3 | CS Concepts

The questions will cover data structures and algorithms. Approach all scripting as a coding exercise - it should be clean, rich and robust code. Remember what your Programming with Data Structures (187) professor said during tests - all problems will have a short elegant solution. If you start writing a lot of code, take a step back and rethink your approach. You might be heading in the wrong direction. You should ask clarifying question and make sure you completely understand the problem before you start working on it.

4 | Interactivity

Talk to your interviewer and tell them what you're doing. If you stare at the whiteboard silently, they are not going to know if you're making headway or you're just stuck. If you communicate well, they might say, "Looks good! Go ahead and code it," or "That might work but there is a more efficient solution." Interactivity takes practice – with yourself, a friend, and even alumni.

5 | If When You Get Stuck




These questions are designed to be challenging. If everyone could solve them, then the employer is not going to be able to judge your proficiency. Don't get frustrated – ask for assistance or explore a different approach. Keep showing interest in the problem and do not give up. Part of the interview is testing whether you have a passion for solving challenging problems.

6 | Recommended Resources

- BOOKS: [Cracking the Coding Interview](#) (CTCI) & [Programming Interviews Exposed](#) (available to preview in CS360)
- ONLINE TUTORIAL: <https://techdevguide.withgoogle.com>
- WEBSITES: leetcode.com and hackerrank.com
- ARTICLE: <https://careers.google.com/how-we-hire/interview/#onsite-interviews>
- HANDSHAKE: Schedule an “[Interview Coaching](#)” appointment with a career advisor
- OTHER RESOURCES? Let us know about your favorite technical interviewing resources!

¹ On-your-own “OYO” resources help you begin to find answers to your questions now.

For more information or other career-related questions, contact our **CICS Careers** team.

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