# The Job Hunt

# Admin

- Quiz?

- Lets talk about soft skills episode 446

# The Job Market

- Current job market has some new/unusual features
- Layoffs have returned to normal level
- Hiring is 'interesting' though
- Student examples?

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- Atlantic magazine refers to 'frozen job market' with low unemployment and low hiring

# Skills mismatch?

- Some discussion of a 'skills mismatch'
  - Employers want
    - Communication skills
    - Teamwork
    - Critical thinking/problem solving
    - Lifetime learning/curiosity/always-be-learning
    - Referred to as either 'soft skills' or 'professional skills'
- See https://www.naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/the-gap-in-perceptions-of-new-grads-competency-proficiency-and-resources-to-shrink-it

  and
- https://www.hult.edu/blog/wi skills survey/

# Coffee cup test

- Sometimes interviewers start unusual 'tests'
  - "Stress test" from the 2000s
  - Microsoft "did you learn test"
  - And what is the "coffee cup test" that is so popular in the last year or so?

# Coffee cup test

- Sometimes interviewers start unusual 'tests'
  - "Stress test" from the 2000s
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  - And what is the "coffee cup test" that is so popular in the last year or so?
    - Offer candidate coffee/tea/etc early in the interview, when interview is over, see what they do with the cup
      - Those who just leave are too lazy/devoid of social skills to work there – don't hire
      - Those who clean up or ask what to do with the cup remain in the running

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    - If they salt/pepper/hot sauce the food without tasting the food
        - Then don't hire.

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- What are they checking (what is the reasoning) here?
    - Is candidate so stuck in their ways that they don't check the current state first
    - Assumption: that will carry over to their work behaviors

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  - What is this intended to check?

    - First: Can the candidate actually write

    - Second: Can the candidate use the alphabet (which has profound implications for many many jobs, including developers who do string comparisons)

    - Third: Can the candidate do a simple task without complaining.

      - This last reason was more controversial

# The tech interview stages

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    -

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- Every company is different but tech hiring tends to be a long process
  - Higher salaries than the median
  - Companies need high skill employees.
  - Most expensive thing to do in states like MA?
    - Firing someone – especially a high salary individual.
  - So most companies try very hard to hire only 'highly qualified individuals'
    - With the exception of that short period from late 2020 through very early 2022

# The tech interview stages

- Every company is different but
  - tech hiring tends to be a long process
  - Sample tech hiring progression: middle often in arbitrary order
    - HR interview (often by phone) : do you hit the bare minimum personality to go on
    - Dev phone interview: do you seem to have any skills at all
    - Take home test: can you work on a non-trivial project
      - Used to be paid.
    - In person interview (possibly two – possibly longer) – usually with devs
      - White board coding
      - Problems that reduce to algorithms
      - Pair programming
      - Meet the team (ask them questions)
    - Possible interview by management

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  - Meet people, talk to people, get to know them
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  - Was always the best way to get a job
  - In the world of "AI slop" is nearly the only way.
- Who are your first natural networking partners?

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- Who are your first natural networking partners?
  - The recent BSU grads that you made friends (or at least worked with) earlier in your major.

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  - Meetups:
    - It seems like meetup.com is still the place for technical meetups
    - https://www.meetup.com/home/ (eventbrite is trying to break in)
    - Don't bother with online ones – not really worth it for the 'hallway track'
  - Hackathons:
    - Natural showcase of what you are capable of.
    - Some hackathons in the greater Boston area – some false matches
    - https://www.eventbrite.com/d/ma--boston/hackathon/
    - Wider: https://devpost.com/hackathons
  - Job Fairs
    - Not as good, but still – make a good impression and get through the AI screen
    - Thursday, April 3, 2025  12:00– 3:00pm Tinsley Athletic Center Gym.  T/R Class will move there for that day signing in will be a quiz

# plan

- If you have a company that you want to work for
  - Maybe find some of their employees on linkedIn
  - See if they post about attending or running meetups – prioritize going to those meetups.
  - DON'T STALK A POTENTIAL EMPLOYER
    - But, what they put on linkedin is intended to be public.

# A reason companies like networking

- Companies like people they know are real
  - Dec 2024: it comes out that North Koreans were working remote US dev jobs using stolen identities
    - https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cpdnz3elwzvo
  - In 2022 (height of remote everything in tech) the person who took the job was not the one who (remote) interviewed:
    - https://www.askamanager.org/2022/01/the-new-hire-who-showed-up-is-not-the-same-person-we-interviewed.html

# Dress for Success

- When you show up for an in person interview, you want to dress for success
  - If you can find out what the normal work attire is, (here your networking will help you) then
    - Dress one level up
    - If everyone wears battered T-Shirts, we a polo shirt.
    - If everyone wears polo shirts, wear a button up shirt.
  - Please please: If you wear a sport/suit jacket tuck in the shirt under it!!
  - Ties? complicated
  - And of course – the very basics:
    - https://blog.solomonpage.com/2016/06/10/interviewing-101-attire-hygiene-checklist

# Pre-employment checks

- Lots of companies will do a check before you get too far along in the interview process
  - Like what?

# Pre-employment checks

- Lots of companies will do a check before you get too far along in the interview process
  - Probably including
    - Check your github – maybe try a project
      - only make working projects public,
    - Check your linkedin
      - Are you in network with anyone they could ask you about?
    - Check any and all social media that they can find.
      - Former student objected: "What I do on my time is none of their business"
      - It depends on how far up the hierarchy you are – high enough and you make the company look back eg "BSU employee does bad thing"
      - https://www.entrepreneur.com/business-news/taco-bell-executive-fired-after-drunkenly-assaulting-uber/252442
      - https://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/can-employer-fire-me-getting-dui-while-i-off-work.html
    - Google you – see what comes up – don't have a name doppelganger

# Background checks

- Those pre-employment checks can be done without asking or telling you.

- But if you get really close to employment, will likely ask you to sign an agreement for a background check
  - Use one of several companies that will look into data
    - Sex offender registries
    - Felony convictions
    - Bankruptcies
  - And if defense, security clearance screening
    - Will talk to a bunch of people in your life looking for vulnerabilities.
    - Credit rating etc.

# What did I miss?

- What else about hiring these days did I miss.