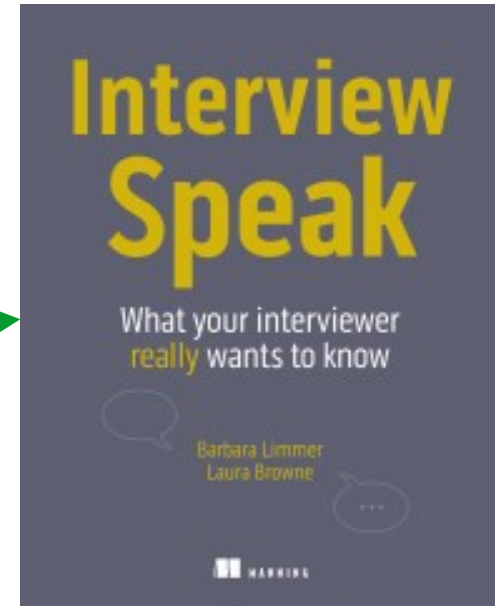


The Interviews

Admin

- Quiz?
- Podcast
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wl2IWewj-UA>
- A lot of the material here comes from
 - <https://www.manning.com/books/interview-speak>
 - I recommend it if you haven't done dozens of interviews already



General Advice

- First let's do some general advice – then try to apply this in some real examples

Get To know your interviewer

- Get to know your interviewer
 - If you can ask who you will be meeting with (you often can)
 - Look them up on linkedin
 - Don't stalk them – going to their house is stalking – but anything on linkedin is intended to be seen by colleagues and potential colleagues
 - Find points of commonality
 - Same School/University?
 - Same prior employer?
 - Same city?
 - Same meetup?
- Even if not: Story of candidate here who looked up project 1 Sprints

Get to know interviewer II

- Book suggests looking around office for points of commonality
 - Only works if interview is in interviewer's office
 - Can go badly in shared office
 - ADT sales rep. Story
- Book also suggests (correctly) that one of your big goals is to be someone that interviewer would want to work with
 - As podcast said, “would this person be a net positive or net negative if they were my colleague for the next two years”

Know yourself

- Review your resume and have stories prepared for the important parts
- Prep with common interview questions and have stories for them
 - E.G. “why did you apply to our company, what attracted you to us?”
- Read the job ad and prepare stories for the
 - What you will do
 - And
 - Required and preferred qualifications sections
 - More on this in a bit.
- From programming podcast: *“be so prepared it seems like you didn’t prepare”*

Why might you not get the job

- Classes of reasons
 - Things that have nothing to do with you
 - Things you can't control
 - Things you can control
- Lucky volunteer take a stab at this?

Why might you not get the job

- Classes of reasons
 - Things that have nothing to do with you
 - Company decides to cancel search/hiring freeze (Happened to me)
 - Internal hire
 - Things you can't control
 - They want someone with a particular cert
 - They want someone with previous experience in their exact stack
 - Things you can control
 - Preparation
 - Comfort level
 - Hints for using this in the April 2nd job fair?

Know yourself

- Danny and Leon:
 - Prepare so much that they can't tell you prepared
- Limmer and Browne:
 - Know behavioral vs Hypothetical vs General questions
 - But in all cases if you can answer from past experience that is strongest.

Answer Frameworks

- Several standard answer Frameworks
 - If the company tells you which one they prefer USE IT!
- PAR
 - Problem Action Result
- STAR
 - Situation Task Action Result
- SOAR
 - Situation Obstacle Action Result

What to avoid

- When answering question in the interview
 - Give specific answers, not generic ones
 - “I helped my group” – not helpful for you to get the job
 - “I mediated between two feuding group members and had both interact with me rather than each other so that our project succeeded” – much better.
 - I vs We, know when to use each
 - “I led the team and we accomplished XX” – example from the book
 - Avoid filler words
 - Um, ah, etc. (yes I know this is easier said than done)
 - Avoid weakening words (we used this for politeness sometimes)
 - “I try to”, “I think” etc

The bad

- What is a crap sandwich? (using a-proper-for-class version of the term)
 - Lucky volunteer?

The bad

- What is a crap sandwich? (using a-proper-for-class version of the term)
 - Start with a positive
 - Then the negative
 - Then another positive.
- You will be asked about negative things
 - Interview Speak suggests you respond with the sandwich.
 - Don't dodge completely, that comes off as disingenuous
 -

The bad

- Make your crap sandwich
- You will be asked about negative things
 - Interview Speak suggests you respond with the sandwich.
 - Example:
 - Question: “Tell me about a time when you failed to complete a project”
 - Answer: “I’m proud of the fact that I normally get all of my projects in on time and complete, but when the blizzard of ‘26 knocked out my power, I wasn’t able to complete one project after it came back. Since then I have made sure to start early enough that even if something unexpected happens, I will still finish on time.”

Very Common Questions

- Now lets try some very common questions

Tell me about yourself

- Common first question
 - “Tell me about yourself”
 - Translation: “I’m giving you a chance to build rapport and show that you can map your skills to their position before we start for real”
 - Suggestion: 30-60 second answer
 - Thank them for the chance to talk to them
 - If you have commonality, mention it (both BSU grads, Both grew up in New Bedford etc)
 - Mention a few skill relevant to the job or projects/experiences relevant to the job
 - Say why you are interested in this position/company

Why are you moving on

- Next universal question
 - Why are you leaving your current position/looking for a new one?
 - **Red flag:** bad mouthing your current employer
 - Use the ‘negative sandwich’
 - “I really enjoyed working at XXX”
 - “there was a recent round of layoffs and that made me think”
 - “I’m so excited for the next chapter”
 - You have an easy one here
 - “I’m graduating and looking for something in this new field”
 - But next time have a story

What kind of salary

- Easier now that MA requires a salary range published.
 - What did the podcast say about this question?

This job

- Why are you interested in this job?
 - Translation: I want to be sure you would do this job for a couple of years – not just any job to hold over till you find something better
 - Ideally convince the employer that you are
 - Competent
 - Interested
 - Story of two competent former students in the industry.
 - One at startup
 - One at defense contractor

Company

- What do you know about our company?
 - Translation: did you do the bare minimum of work to find out about us?
 - Are you the kind of person who prepares for important meetings or tries to wing it?
 - Show enthusiasm about company/product.
 - And that you can find things that are beyond the “about us” page
- Sometimes these last two are combined into a single “why us?” Question.

Career

- What are your career goals?
 - Translation: Are you looking for something not available here
 - So that you leave just when you start to become useful
 - Easy answer: I'm looking for improve my XX and YY skills and will look to advance to other positions as appropriate
 - Where XX and YY are skills for this position
 - Counter: Faculty candidate who clearly wanted to be dean.

Gotcha I

- What are your strengths
 - Translation:
 - What do you think are your strongest selling points
 - And how will they be used in this job?

Gotcha II

- What are your weaknesses?
 - Translation: Are you self aware or are you going to try to BS me?
 - **RED FLAG**: “I’m a perfectionist with no work-life balance”
 - A good way to answer if you can do it for **real**
 - Tell a story about a past weakness/failure – and how you conquered it
 - “I’m not proud of this but when I was in high school I was a total snob, since working at my job at Wendy’s I have learned to appreciate working with people that I never would have spent time with in high school”
- Sometime these last two get combined
 - Pay attention to plurality for this and previous

Why you?

- Why should we hire you?
 - Translation: “Please summarize your top qualifications for this job”
 - And help me see why you **stand out** from the other applicants.
 - Ideally give specific examples of prior accomplishments

Warning Question

- What did you not like at your current/last job
 - Translation: tell me about an activity that you didn't care for at a recent job.
 - Didn't care for is not the same as hate
 - Don't be indiscrete and badmouth boss or colleagues
 - Even if they deserve it
 - Though: If you think every one in the office is toxic and not a single one will give you a recommendation – you might be the toxic one.

Why should we hire you

- Why should we hire you
 - Translation: please summarize the top qualities you have that make you both stand out and a good match for the job
 - You'll notice that a couple of question translate to this same question.
 - You might get different variations from different interviewers

Do you have any questions

- Do you have any questions?
 - Always have questions
 - If you are at the end of a long day, maybe you have asked them all
 - But normally if you have no questions all day, that means you aren't interested in the job.
 - Pay and benefits should not be the focus of questions in any early interview steps
 - That is something to ask about between getting the offer and accepting it
 - Also don't ask
 - something that can be found in the ad
 - or by 30 minutes reading of the company website

Do you have questions

- So what questions are good here: (adjust wording to your form)
 - What would be the top priorities if hired?
 - What does success look like for a new hire?
 - What are some of the biggest challenges for the team I'd be joining?
 - What are some of the team's biggest successes?
 - What are some of the team's current weaknesses?
 - Customers? Other Teams? Etc.
- Then use the answers to these to help position your own later answers

Exercise

- Now lets try an in class exercise. (10 minutes from start)
 - I'll random pair you up
 - One person is the interviewer, the other is the interviewee/applicant
 - Applicant picks one of the jobs below,
 - interviewer gets a list of questions
 - Entry level Jobs (I will also post them to slack)
 - Technical writer: <https://careers.amd.com/careers-home/jobs/81022?lang=en-us>
 - Software Engineer: https://simplify.jobs/p/8ab72203-d72f-4c39-a18e-5275ce06b64a/Software-Engineer-1?utm_source=GHList
 - System/Cloud admin: <https://theapplicantmanager.com/jobs?pos=dt10214&fs=1.0em>
 - SDET(testing): <https://www.taskimpetusinc.com/jobs/job-posting-sdet-automation-tester-work-from-home-hyattsville-maryland/>

Fill in

30

Fill in

“

”