



## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR COMPUTER SCIENCE & INNOVATION MAJORS

Software engineering companies have a variety of approaches and timelines in the hiring process. Generally speaking, larger companies have a more formal interview process involving a selection committee who conducts phone interviews, video web chats online, and one or more site visits. Smaller companies may have a more streamlined approach resulting in a quick phone interview followed by an interview on-site. Most questions will be geared towards your technological proficiency. Some will inquire about your personality and teamwork skills.

### Preparation:

Research your employer thoroughly, refine your resume, select appropriate attire, create a list of questions to ask the employer, and get a good night's sleep. Also be sure to familiarize yourself with the interview's location.

### Practice:

Set up a mock interview with Career Collaborative, a friend, family member, or colleague. Rehearsing your responses is a great way to boost your confidence and craft how you communicate your experiences. Remember to research the company and tailor your responses to show how your talents and personality match the position. Practice avoiding words such as "uh," "um," "you know," and "like," and bad body language habits of twirling hair, tapping a foot, or drumming fingers.

### Presentation:

When answering questions, remember the "3 P's":

- **Ponder:** take a moment to reflect on why the employer has asked a question. This will help you frame your response and speak to the skill set, value, or ability being measured.
- **Prove:** if you say that you have developed excellent organizational skills, give specific examples of situations where you demonstrated a high level of organization.
- **Project:** always be genuine and confident in responding to questions, asking questions, and meeting new people during the interview.

### Post-Interview:

Collect your interviewers' business cards so you can follow up with a thank-you card or email. After you leave the premises, take notes on everything you can remember and use the experience to further develop your interview techniques. Check back two weeks afterward unless you hear back sooner or are given different instructions.

## Common Interview Questions to Expect

- Tell us a little about yourself.
- Why are you interested in this position?



- What do you know about this organization?
- What do you consider your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- How do you anticipate using the skills/knowledge you've acquired in your internship(s) and classes?
- Talk about a time when you were not able to build a successful relationship with a difficult person.
- Describe how your position in a group project contributed to your team's goals.
- Are you a "big-picture" person or a "detail-oriented" person? Give an example.
- Describe a time when you had to take a risk at work. What was the outcome?
- What would former coworkers/professors/supervisors say about you if we called them?
- Describe the work environment that you thrive in.
- How did you get along with your last supervisor?

## Interview Questions Specific to Computer Science & Innovation

- Software Engineering is a rigorous major. What has been your most challenging course so far?
- What insights would you share with incoming students about your major?
- Give two examples of times when you've demonstrated your willingness to work hard.
- What sorts of things have you done to become better qualified for your career?
- Describe the most significant written document, report, or presentation you've completed.
- Describe a work situation in which you had to take a risk. What was the outcome?
- Has anyone ever asked you to do something unethical? What did you do?
- Talk about a time you had to confront a peer, customer, or colleague.
- Describe a time when you served as a project manager.
- What is your decision making process?
- What do you do when you are faced with an obstacle to an important project? Give an example.
- Give an example of when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done.
- Talk about a time when you took responsibility for an error and were held personally accountable.

## Asking Questions

So many people are concerned with making a good impression during a job interview that they forget it's a two-way street. You're there not only to market yourself, but to find out if the job and company are right for you. At the end of your interview, the interviewer will expect you to ask questions. Here are some options:

- What's an average day like?
- How would you describe the culture here?
- What qualities are you looking for in the person who fills this position?
- What is the next step in the hiring process? Or, when might you make a hiring decision?
- What tools/applications/languages do you use?



- What are the biggest opportunities and challenges facing the company or department right now?
- What typical projects or tasks do employees/student interns work on?
- What makes an employee/student intern successful? What traits are best suited for your company?
- How do the various members of the team work together? Who is the team leader?
- How would successful performance in this position be measured?
- Is there much turn-over in your company?
- What's your preferred management style?
- Are there opportunities for professional development?

## Top Traits Employers Seek

Every employer is looking for specific characteristics and the winning candidate will have the right combination of them. These are the top traits that employers want. In your interview, find a way to talk about the ones you have.

- Honesty/Integrity
- Dedication/Tenacity
- Loyalty
- Professionalism
- Self-Motivation
- Adaptability/Flexibility
- Reliability/Responsibility
- Positive Attitude
- Self-Confidence
- Willingness to Learn