

Interview Preparation Guide

Before the Interview

Thorough preparation before you step into the room or join the video call is the single most critical step in making a great first impression. The work you put in beforehand sets the foundation for how clear, structured, and confident you appear throughout the rest of the conversation.

Master Your Elevator Pitch

Your elevator pitch is your introduction and sets the initial tone for the conversation. It should run between 30 to 60 seconds while clearly highlighting who you are professionally and where your core strengths lie.

- Keep it concise. Lengthy intros take time away from answering technical questions and asking your own.
- Practice out loud until your delivery feels natural and conversational rather than memorized.
- Use a timer or stopwatch to keep your response strictly within your target time window.
- Record yourself on video or audio to spot filler words, uneven pacing, or a flat tone.

Know the Role & Company

Walking into an interview without deep context on the business leads to surface-level answers. You need a clear understanding of what the team builds, why the position is open, and how your skills solve their current problems.

- Review the company LinkedIn page and website. Learn what products or services they offer, read recent press releases, and review their core values.
- Research your interviewer on LinkedIn before the meeting to understand their background, role, and focus within the organization.
- Compare the job description side by side with your resume to map out clear overlaps in technical skills and industry experience.

Connect Your Background to the Role

Hiring managers do not want a list of past job duties; they want proof that you can handle their specific technical challenges. Connect your past work directly to the core responsibilities outlined in the job post.

- Create a list of 3 to 5 real projects or stories from your career that directly align with the role's primary requirements.
- Rehearse these examples using a structured framework like STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) or CAR (Context, Action, Result).
- Focus heavily on tangible outcomes. Be ready to discuss measurable business results, efficiency gains, or technical trade-offs rather than basic daily tasks.

5 to 10 Minutes Before the Interview

The final minutes before an interview should be spent getting into the right mindset and checking your setup. Eliminating last-minute technical friction allows you to focus entirely on the conversation.

- Dress professionally and spend 5 minutes on simple breathing exercises or posture adjustments to calm nervous energy.
- Arrive at the office or log into the virtual meeting platform 5 to 10 minutes early.
- Test your camera, microphone, speaker outputs, and internet connection ahead of time if the interview.

During the Interview

Once the interview begins, your main objective is to remain present, attentive, and engaged. You have done the preparation work, so focus on having a balanced, professional dialogue rather than feeling like you are taking an oral exam.

- Listen fully to each question and ask clarifying questions if a prompt seems vague or incomplete.
- Take concise notes to keep track of key details, but never let note-taking interrupt active eye contact or active listening.
- Maintain comfortable body language, clear posture, and an even, deliberate tone of voice throughout the call.
- Practice total honesty. If you lack experience with a specific tool or methodology, admit it directly and explain how you would quickly get up to speed.
- Ask thoughtful questions throughout the discussion. Genuine curiosity about engineering practices, team structure, and business goals signals real interest in the position.

After the Interview

The interview does not end when the video call disconnects. The steps you take immediately following the conversation reinforce your interest and leave a lasting, professional impression on the hiring team.

- Write down key takeaways, names, unexpected technical topics, and questions you found challenging immediately after the call finishes.
- Send a brief, professional thank-you email to your interviewers within 24 hours of the meeting.
- Personalize each email by referencing a specific project, shared interest, or technical discussion point from the interview.

Frameworks for Impactful Answers: STAR vs. CAR

When answering behavioral or project-based questions, unformatted answers tend to wander. Using a proven story framework keeps your responses structured, concise, and focused on your personal impact.

The STAR Method

- **Situation:** Set the scene with brief background context. What was the company, project, or technical challenge?
- **Task:** State your specific responsibility in that situation. What needed to get solved, and why was it important?
- **Action:** Detail the exact steps you took. Highlight your individual contributions, tools used, and leadership decisions.
- **Result:** Quantify the outcome. Share metrics, performance improvements, revenue growth, or lessons learned.

The CAR Method (Streamlined Alternative)

- **Context:** Briefly explain the technical background, problem, or constraints you faced.
- **Action:** Describe what you personally did to resolve the issue and how you executed the strategy.
- **Result:** Deliver the final business outcome, metric, or technical performance improvement.

Our Coaching Services

Technical skills earn the interview, but clear communication, narrative structure, and strategic positioning land the offer. We help senior ICs and technical leaders navigate critical career transitions with confidence.

Core Coaching Focus Areas

- **Technical vs. Management Track:** Decide whether to scale as a Staff IC or pivot into team leadership.
- **Executive Alignment:** Translate architecture trade-offs and tech debt into business metrics leadership values.
- **Burnout & Capacity:** Set firm scope boundaries to protect deep-work focus without friction.
- **Reviews & Compensation:** Position project metrics to negotiate promotions and comp increases.

Targeted Coaching Programs

- **The 60-Minute Career Audit:** A targeted session to resolve immediate career bottlenecks and build a 90-day roadmap.
- **Technical Leadership Audit:** A dedicated 60-minute diagnostic evaluating team operations, delegation, and stakeholder strategy.
- **The Job Search Sprint:** A structured 9-week program to overhaul outreach, portfolio positioning, and interview pipelines.
- **Interview & Story Coaching:** Live, 1-on-1 simulations to tighten STAR stories and handle high-stakes panel questions.

Is Coaching Right for You?

- You clear recruiter screens but stall out during hiring manager or system design panels.
- You struggle to frame technical impact succinctly without getting pulled into the weeds.
- You are stepping into leadership responsibilities without clear guidance or structured mentorship.

Ready to Build Your Strategy?

Let's discuss where you sit today and what you want to build next.

- **Discovery Call:** [Schedule a Free 30-Minute Intro Call](#)
- **Coaching Services:** [Explore Full Programs](#)
- **LinkedIn:** [Connect with Amy](#) | [Company Page](#)