

Rethinking Interviewing in an AI Era

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LeadDev Berlin 2025

Hello, I'm Justin Lee!



Software Engineer
Notion



Interviewer
Arc.dev



Course Instructor
Udacity



Former Consultant
Novacoast

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Query for Questions and Solutions



Audio Capture to LLM





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**Realtime Screen-capture, OCR-
>LLM**



Off-screen Tool for AI Assistants



Webcam Adjustor for Fixed Gaze



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Presentation Overview

The Problem

AI and outdated formats in interviews

The Programming Interview

Revealing practical engineering skill

The System Design Interview

Uncovering experience and judgement

The Role of the Interviewer

Creating human, high-signal interviews

AI is powerful at retrieving
information — humans
bring context, judgment,
and intent.



AI Excels At

Structured, knowledge-based tasks

Generating code and recalling patterns

Following known solutions



Humans Excel At

Contextual, judgement-based reasoning

Explaining how and why decisions were made

Navigating tradeoffs and real-world nuance



AI Excels At

Structured, knowledge-based tasks

What is a mutex?

Generating code and recalling patterns

Build an LRU cache.

Following known solutions

Design Google Docs.



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Contextual, judgement-based reasoning

How did you handle concurrency here?

Explaining how and why decisions were made

What improvements did you see with a cache?

Navigating tradeoffs and real-world nuance

What features can you cut out to meet the POC timeline?



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“Please turn off your AI tools during the interview.”

“I’d say maybe 20% to 30% of the code that is inside of our repos today are probably all written by software [AI].”

**Satya Nadella,
CEO of Microsoft (2025)**

Why shape interviews
around what AI can easily
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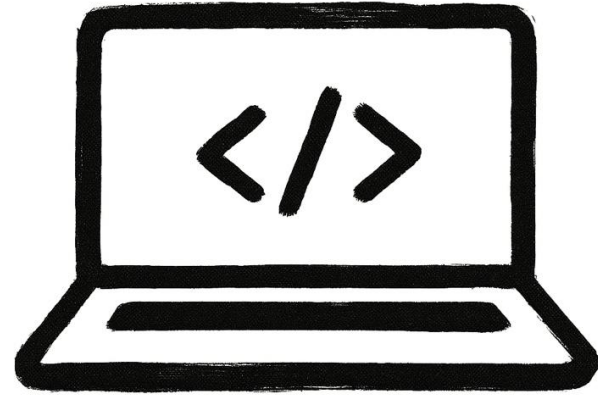
Navigating tradeoffs and real-world nuance

Let's design interviews that
focus on what humans do
best – not just what AI
already does well.

Designing Interviews for Humans



The Programming Interview



The Myth of the Perfect Question



Harder != Better

Complex questions shifts from collaboration to solving a challenge.



Complex = Stress

Candidates go silent and treat the interview as a stressful exam.



Loss of Signal

You stop seeing how they think – the thing you came to evaluate.

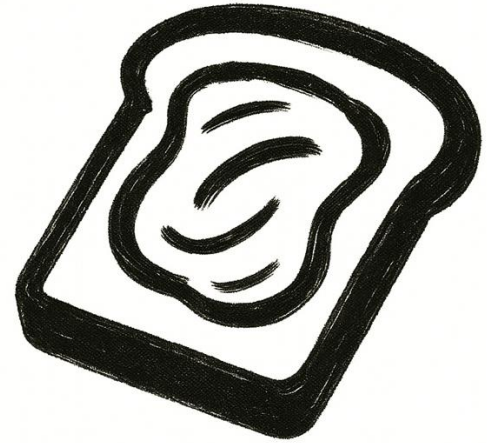
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The Question is the Delivery Mechanism

"I don't care if you finish"

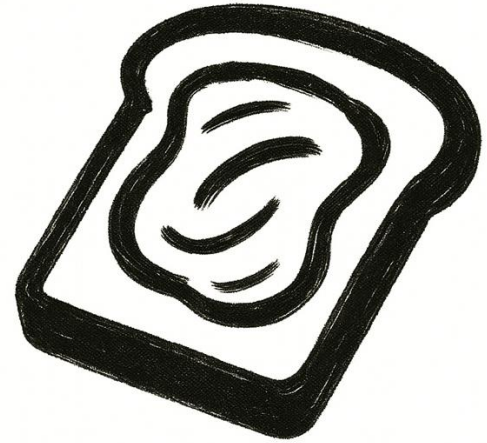
- Focus less on getting the right answer
- Look for debugging and familiarity with tools
- Your goal is not to proctor a test



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Key Characteristics



Keep it simple

The problem should be solvable in ~30 mins



Make it realistic

Try to anchor the question on what your team actually does



Be clear and transparent

Explain that you care more about process than perfection

Examples to Get You Started

- **Join two JSON objects** together off a common key, like a SQL join
- **Read a file** and parse specific values from it
- **Expand an existing SQL query** to filter additional objects
- **Write a simple cache** by landing data into a flat file
- **Create a queue consumer** that reads messages and processes them
- **Investigate Spark logs:** based on the data, what are some reasons the job may have failed?
- **Analyze API behavior:** given logs and a Grafana dashboard, what should infra improvements should we prioritize?
- **Frontend API Querying:** given a component that fetches and displays user data, modify it so it refreshes periodically without breaking user input or causing flicker

```
const directory = [
  { userId: 1, name: "Ava Johnson", phone: "+1-415-555-4821", version: 1 },
  { userId: 1, name: "Ava Johnson", phone: "+1-415-555-9822", version: 2 },
  { userId: 2, name: "Noah Kim", phone: "+1-312-555-9014", version: 1 },
  { userId: 3, name: "Olivia Brooks", phone: "+1-617-555-3649", version: 1 },
  { userId: 3, name: "Olivia Brooks", phone: "+1-617-555-0000", version: 2 },
];

const registrations = [
  { userId: 1, email: "ava.johnson@examplemail.io", confirmed: true, version: 1 },
  { userId: 1, email: "ava.johnson@examplemail.io", confirmed: false, version: 2 },
  { userId: 3, email: "olivia.brooks@examplemail.io", confirmed: false, version: 1 },
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```

What Attributes Are You Measuring?



Thinking Process

- Runs and tests code incrementally
- Uses debuggers or logging, not guesswork
- Clarifies requirements before coding



Communication

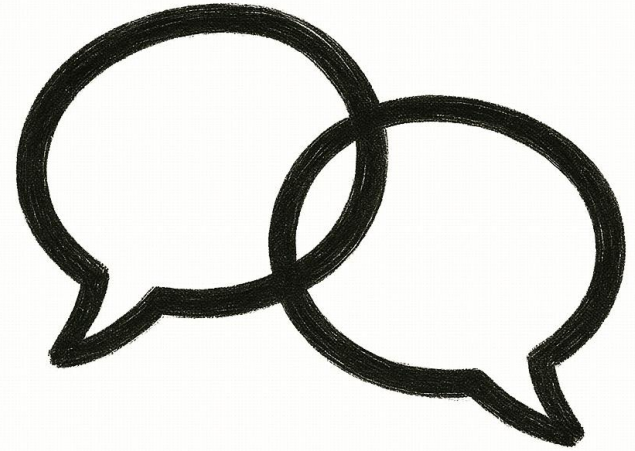
- Explains reasoning clearly
- Responds to feedback, not arguing or freezing
- Balances confidence with humility



Engineering

- Writes clean, structured code
- Knows how to search, read, and apply docs
- Evaluates tradeoffs, not just syntax

System Design



Much like engineering,
there is no right answer.

Use questions as anchors to
explore experience and
judgement, not just
knowledge.



Knowledge Based

"Tell me about the tradeoffs with this design."

"How would you build this system?"

"Which tool would you pick here?"

"How can we scale this design?"



Experience-Based

"For this scenario, did you make a tradeoff between maintainability and performance?"

"Have you built something like this before? What was that experience like?"

"If you were using this tool to build the component, what trade-offs would you consider?"

"After it shipped, what kinds of issues or bugs came up, and how did you handle them?"



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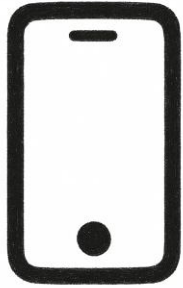
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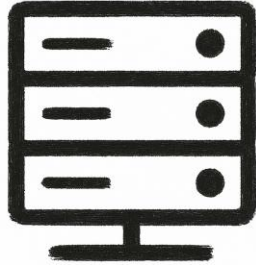
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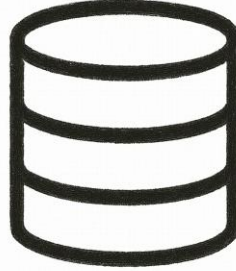
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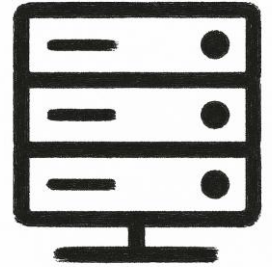
Mobile Device



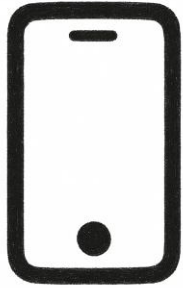
Ingress Server



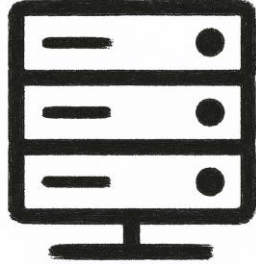
Datastore



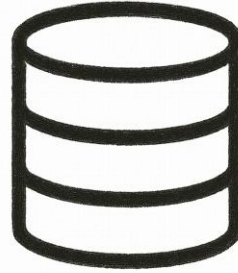
Query Server



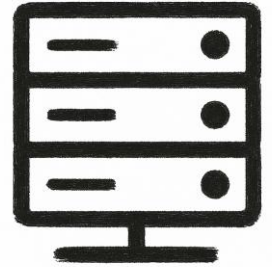
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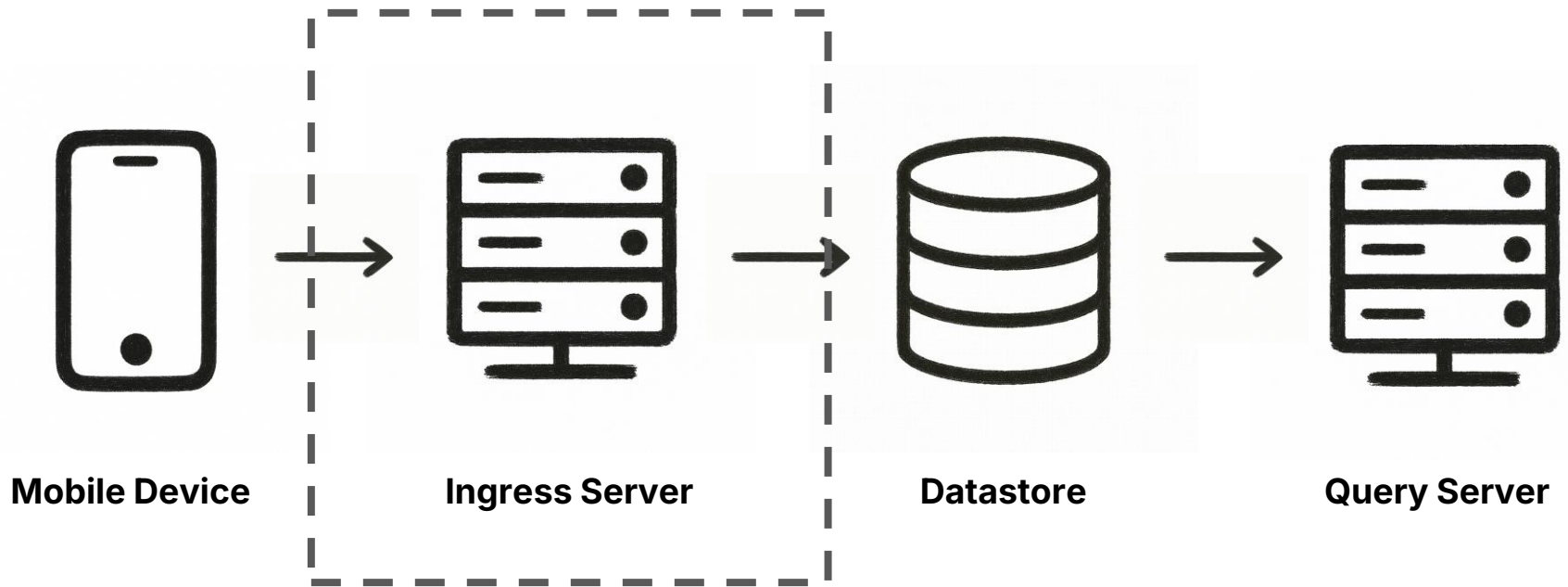
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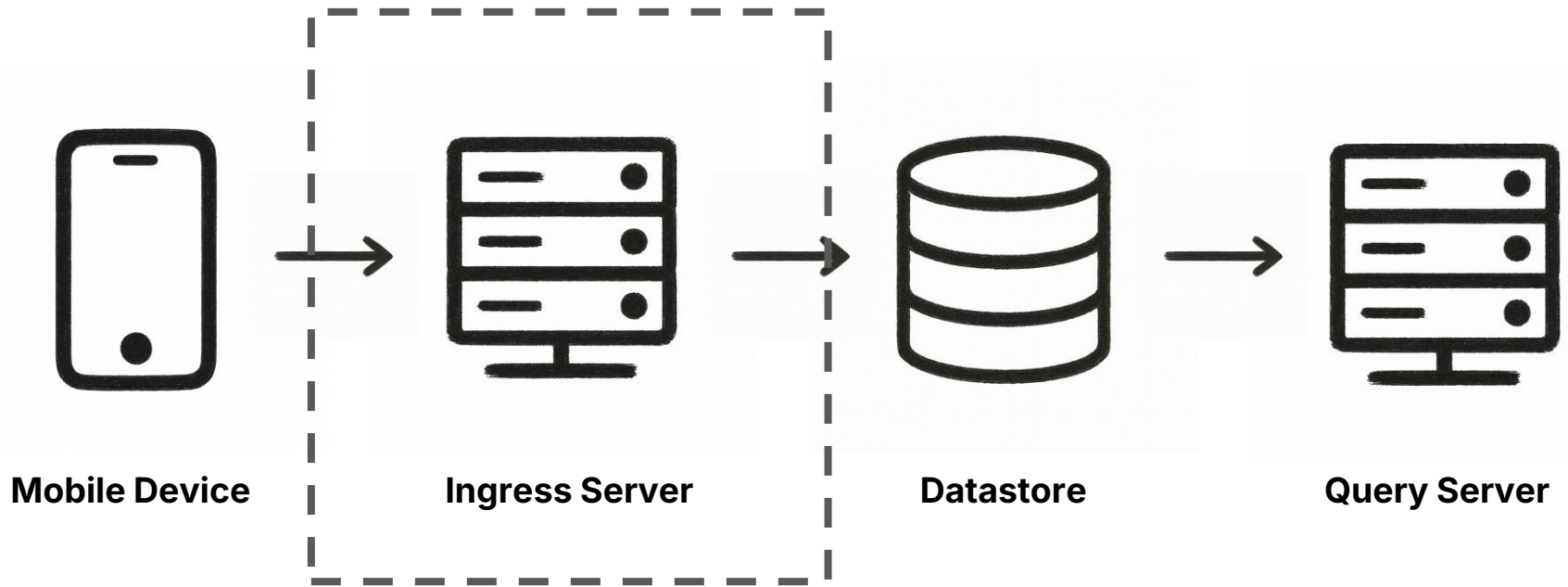


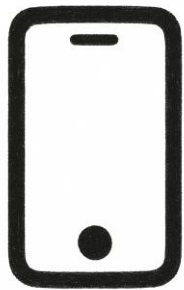
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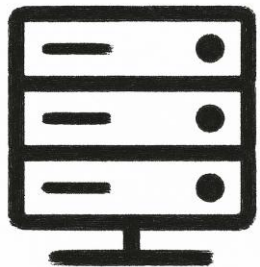
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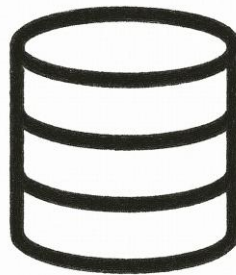




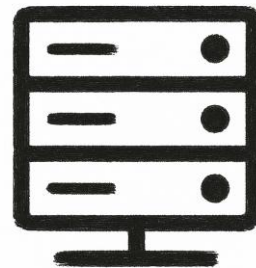
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Ingress Server



Datastore



Query Server

What Attributes Are You Measuring?



Reasoning and Judgement

How they reason through trade-offs and decisions.



Communication and Collaboration

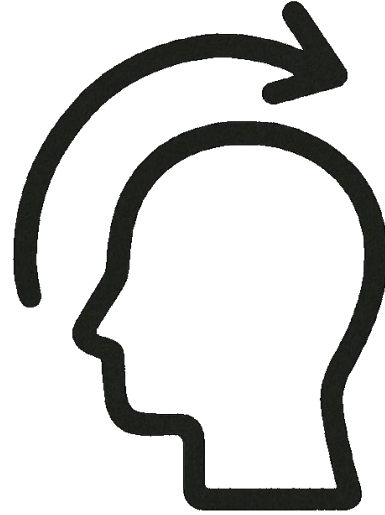
How they explain their thinking and adapt to changing conditions.



Experience and Relevance

How they draw on real experience over theory.

Rethinking the Interviewer Role



Create an environment
where the candidate can do
their best work.

Set the Context



This isn't just an exam.



Encourage experience.



Create space for problem solving.

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Learning Through Interviews

Conducting interviews can be more than a chore – they're an opportunity to learn and expand your own perspective.



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Interviewer Tips



Redirection

Gently steer candidates out of trivia mode by asking for trade-offs / past experiences.



Backing Off

If someone goes too deep or talks nonstop, pause and reset to refocus on the goal.



Exploring Further

If answers are too high-level, dig deeper into specific problems or decisions made.



Ask for Responsiveness

Remind them it's okay to make shortcuts; just call out any intentional ones.

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Our friend **Miguel Angel Durán García** will be revealing the technical AND communication interview questions you all want to know in a live mock technical interview with Arc.

Tune in on June 23 at 11:00 AM (PT) on Midudev's Twitch channel to get a glimpse and prepare for your remote interview.



midudev - Twitch

twitch.tv

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/arcdotdev_midudev-twitch-activity-6945268824531173377-AKOh?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop&rcm=ACoAAAnI_9MB1w0Bky3MyqGBbw3U75yATKXABwc



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https://www.linkedin.com/posts/arcdev_midudev-twitch-activity-6945268824531173377-AKOh?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop&rcm=ACoAAAnI_9MB1w0Bky3MyqGBbw3U75yATKXABwc



Arc

@arcdotdev

...

We're wrapping up the interview!

...and he made it! 🏆

Miguel's feedback for our interviewer:

- It's very important is that you highlighted what I did great
- You're listening to me and it made me feel comfortable
- I hope more interviewers would do that!

#technicalinterview



midudev



Justin (arc.dev)

<https://x.com/arcdotdev/status/1540056396536107008>

**Reframe for AI
Era**



**Test Real
Engineering
Skills**



**Prioritize
Experience and
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