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5 Changes Developers Want to See in Your Interview Process

Insights based on 80,000+ survey responses from the HackerRank developer community
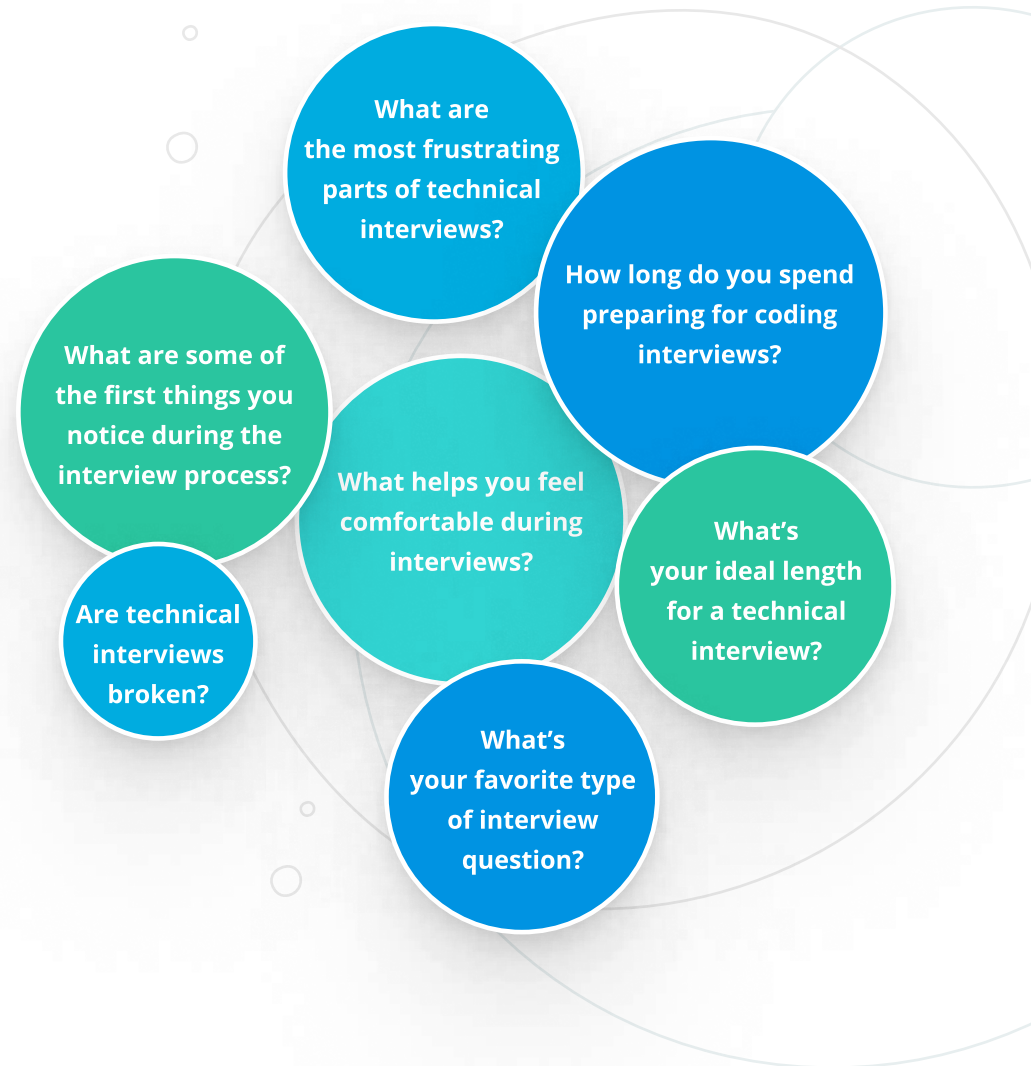
Introduction

The way companies hire developers has a massive effect on their ability to build high-performing teams. But what do developers themselves think of these hiring processes?

In late 2022, we conducted a series of surveys on LinkedIn polling our audience of developers about their opinions on technical interviews. We asked a total of ten questions and received more than 81,000 responses.

And their answers surprised us.

The key takeaway? **Developers aren't too happy with the current state of technical interviews**. However, their responses hint at strategies that employers can use to build more effective and equitable hiring processes—and ultimately, drive better candidate experiences.

What are the most frustrating parts of technical interviews?

How long do you spend preparing for coding interviews?

What are some of the first things you notice during the interview process?

What helps you feel comfortable during interviews?

What's your ideal length for a technical interview?

Are technical interviews broken?

What's your favorite type of interview question?

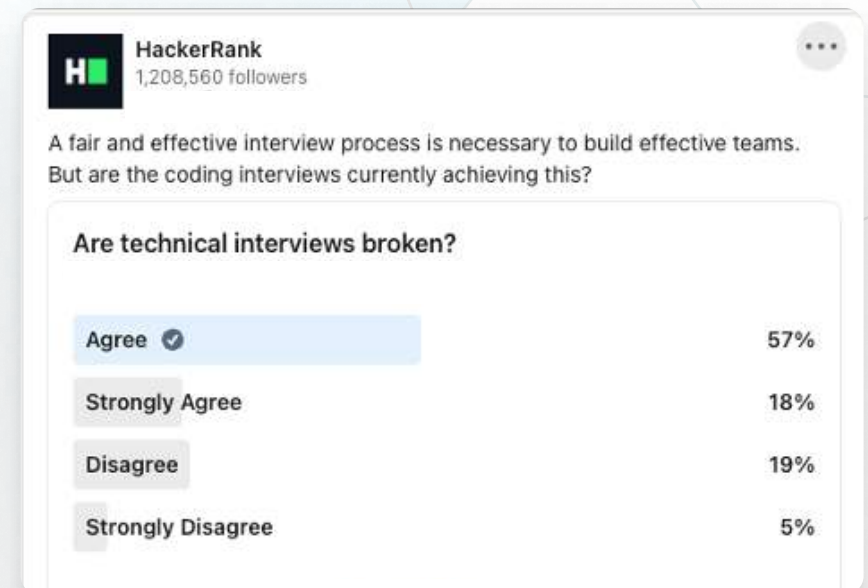# 75% of Developers: Technical Interviews Are Broken

One of the most surprising findings of our survey was the generally negative sentiment developers have about the current state of technical interviews.

75% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that technical interviews are broken.

What does this mean for employers? Simple.

Three out of every four candidates are frustrated with your hiring process.

This is an urgent problem, because developer dissatisfaction with interviews has a direct impact on hiring outcomes.

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A fair and effective interview process is necessary to build effective teams. But are the coding interviews currently achieving this?

Are technical interviews broken?

Agree ✓	57%
Strongly Agree	18%
Disagree	19%
Strongly Disagree	5%

Unhappy Developers Lead to Unaccepted Offers

In another poll, 34% of developers reported that the quality of interview questions impacted their decision to accept a job offer.

Another 26% flagged candidate experience as the main factor influencing their decision to accept a job offer.

The takeaway?

A developer's experience during the hiring process has a real impact on their decision to accept an offer.

Fortunately, developers identified a number of changes they'd like to see in how the tech industry interviews.

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Does the interview process influence your decision to accept a job offer? What are some of those factors?

Easy to Use Environment	17%
Quality of Questions	34%
Rapport With Interviewer	23%
Candidate Experience	26%

5 Ways to Improve Your Interview Process

Three in four developers feel technical interviews are broken, but our survey results also pointed toward factors employers can address right now to improve their interview processes.

1 Embrace Shorter Interviews

92% of developers think technical interviews should be one hour or less.

Of that 92%, half think interviews should be one hour.
The other half (46% of total) think interviews should only be 30 minutes.

That's far shorter than current industry standards. But when more than nine in 10 developers agree on something, it's worth listening.

Embrace shorter interviews. Your candidates—and likely your interviewers—will appreciate it.

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What's your ideal length for a technical interview?

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30 Min	46%
1 Hour	46%
1.5 Hours	5%
>1.5 Hours	3%

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Ask More Real-World Questions

When it comes to improving technical interviews, 65% of developers said they wanted more real-world questions.

While algorithmic-style challenges have been a staple of technical interviews for some time, there is growing frustration with this format among candidates.

Consider posing real-world technical challenges instead. Not only will you better deliver on developer preferences, but you'll also enable your hiring team to evaluate the skills a candidate actually needs on the job.

But asking the right questions doesn't just help your team identify candidates with the right skills. 34% of developers said **the quality of interview questions impacts their decision to accept a job offer.**

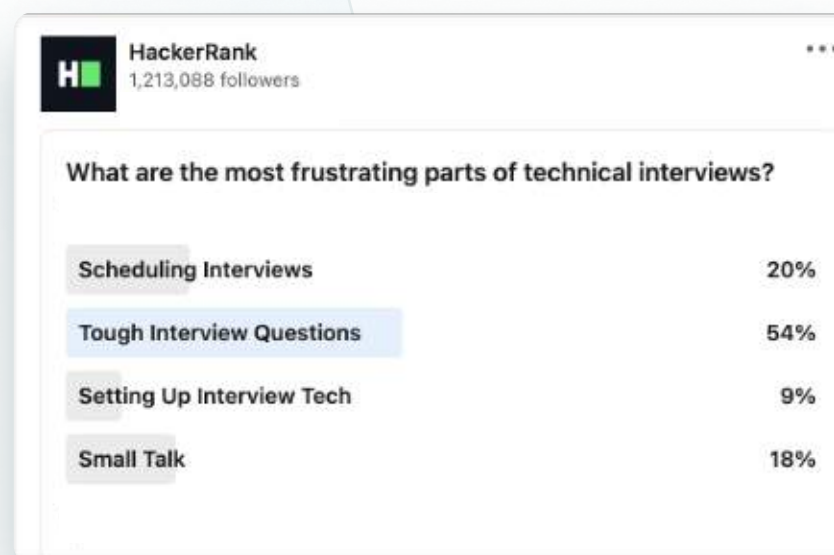**3**
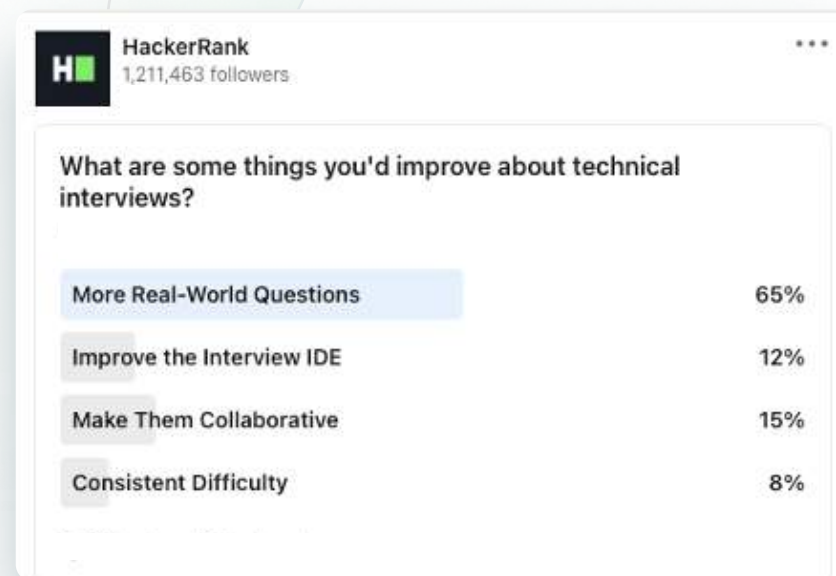
Align Your Questions to the Role

The majority of developers (54%) called out tough interview questions as the most frustrating part of interviewing.

We found further evidence of question difficulty in how long developers prep for an interview. 41% spend several weeks preparing, and another 22% spend days getting ready.

That's a huge time commitment. Part of that extensive preparation is likely spent practicing for difficult questions with little relevance to the actual role.

Question difficulty should align to the experience level of the position and the level of work a developer will perform on the job. Interviews should give the candidate the opportunity to demonstrate their most relevant skills.

If you're asking questions directly related to on-the-job skills, candidates won't have to spend weeks preparing for them.

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What are the most frustrating parts of technical interviews?

Scheduling Interviews	20%
Tough Interview Questions	54%
Setting Up Interview Tech	9%
Small Talk	18%

4 | Communicate the Process

A number of developers expressed frustration with how employers communicate their interview processes.

40% of developers reported that the first thing they notice during an interview is how the process is communicated in advance. 20% of respondents also identified scheduling as the most frustrating part of interviewing.

Fortunately, the solution to these is fairly straightforward.

Hiring teams and recruiters should over-communicate key details about the interview process.

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What are some of the first things you notice about companies during the interview process?

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Rapport with Interviewer	17%
Technical Set Up	12%
Relevance of Questions	32%
Communication of Process	40%

5 Use Modern Interview Tech

Developers and tech teams work at the forefront of innovation. But many companies continue to conduct technical interviews with outdated tools.

It's 2023, and it's still common to force candidates to code in word processors, share screens—or even write out solutions with pen and paper.

The tools you use to interview candidates should demonstrate a commitment to a higher level of innovation.

The solution is to adopt an IDE built specifically for interview settings. IDEs allow candidates and interviewers to code, create and collaborate in real time, while giving hiring teams the admin tools they need to make smarter hiring decisions.
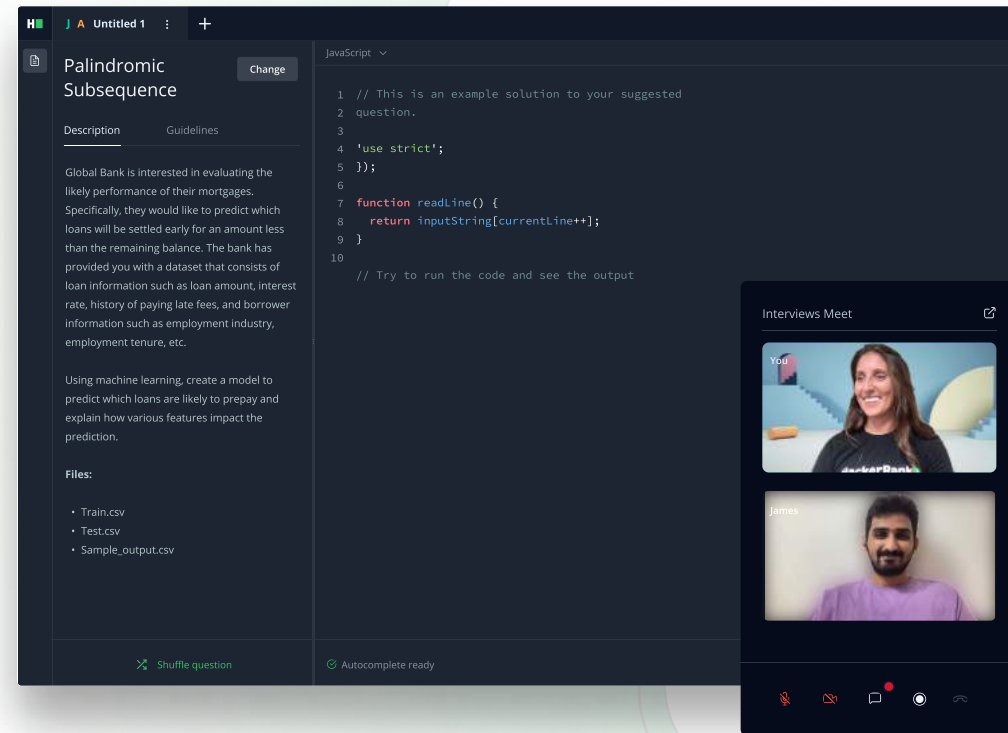
The Future of Work is Driven by Skills

Developers aren't happy with the current state of technical interviews. They want interview questions more aligned with the skills required by the role they're trying to land.

Many hiring processes don't offer that alignment, leaving developers feeling that they're wasting hours—even weeks—preparing for irrelevant questions.

With a renewed focus on skills-based interviewing, the tech industry can shape a future where the skills a job requires and the skills an interview evaluates align. Where interviews are enjoyable and respectful of everyone's time.

And where developers everywhere have the opportunity to showcase their real-world skills, join teams they believe in, and start building the future.

Reboot Your Technical Interviews

See how HackerRank can help you develop a seamless hiring experience that developers love.

[Chat with an expert]