How to Stand Out to OpenAI Recruiters

At OpenAI, we're building safe AGI that benefits all of humanity. We look for people who are inspired by this mission and ready to tackle big challenges. As you prepare for the interview process, the below advice shared recently by our Head of Recruiting, Joaquin Quiñonero Candela, can help you make your best impression.

For more information, watch Joaquin's entire talk. To join our conversations with leading AI thinkers and doers, sign up for the OpenAI Forum. And to keep up with OpenAI's policy ideas and data-based policy insights, check out our Substack, The Prompt.

Take a Thoughtful Approach

Our work is intense and fast-paced—alignment with our mission is what drives us. Be prepared to thoughtfully answer, "Why OpenAI?"

Keep communication clear, succinct, and intentional: When you're going to communicate, be intentional—think, edit, speak. *(Editor's note: watch Joaquin pause before he responds to questions. No need to copy that—just know that it's OK to take a beat before you answer!)*

Ask clarifying questions: Interviews are a two-way street—we want to know why you're excited about OpenAI, and you should learn if OpenAI is the right place for you. Don't be afraid to ask questions about our mission, culture and people.

Don't rush: Make sure that you understand the question before answering or coding.

Demonstrate Key Qualities

Ownership mindset: Show how you've taken full accountability for outcomes, driven cross-team solutions, and gone beyond your formal responsibilities.

Agency: Highlight times when you've made decisions autonomously and sought out answers on your own.

Show that you're a builder: At OpenAI, everyone is an operator, so highlight examples when you have combined strategic thinking with strong execution.

Show curiosity: We look for people who are always learning and whose curiosity fuels exploration and demonstrates a growth mindset. Building responsible, beneficial AI requires people who are curious about the world, other disciplines, and the ethical implications of their work.

Answer the "Why?"

Demonstrate impact: Our interviewers will go deep, ensure that you understand the impact of your work, what your individual contributions have been, and how you have approached problems and explain the "why" behind your work.

Show your work: Be prepared to explain your reasoning and show how you get to the right answer. If you think you'll be asked key questions, practice with ChatGPT Voice Mode. We care less about a correct answer and more about how you arrived at your answer.

Embrace Our Culture

Build for tomorrow: Focus on long-term solutions and innovation, not just quick fixes.

Embrace challenge and growth: OpenAI pushes you to explore, experiment, and grow daily.

Be comfortable with uncertainty: We value curiosity, adaptability, and the willingness to "get comfortable with being uncomfortable.

Graphics created using ChatGP

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