

A PRACTICAL GUIDE

Practice Like It's Real

An AI-era mock interview system, built for the questions you can't rehearse by memorizing answers.

INTRODUCTION

Rehearsed Answers Don't Hold Up Anymore

Interviews changed twice in the last two years, and most prep advice hasn't caught up. First, more interviewers now ask directly how you use AI in your work, a question with no safe memorized answer, because a vague one signals you don't actually use it and a defensive one signals you're hiding something. Second, some companies now run a first-round screen with an AI interviewer itself, meaning your first real audience might not be a person at all.

Neither of these is solved by rehearsing polished answers to a list of common questions. They're solved by practicing the way you'd practice anything else you want to hold up under pressure: repeatedly, out loud, against something that pushes back. This guide is a system for that, what to practice with, and a routine that builds real fluency instead of memorized scripts.

SECTION 1

The Mock-Interview Landscape

You have more ways to rehearse an interview than you probably realize, and each is good at exposing a different weak spot. Use more than one; each catches something the others miss.

THREE WAYS TO PRACTICE, AND WHAT EACH ONE CATCHES

AI role-play interviewer. Claude or a dedicated mock-interview tool plays the interviewer and asks follow-ups in real time. Best for volume, you can run a full round in 15 minutes, and for practicing the AI-usage question specifically, since it can push back the way a skeptical interviewer would.

Recorded self-review. Answer out loud on video, then watch it back. Best for catching what you can't hear in your own head, filler words, a rushed close, an answer that trails off instead of landing. Uncomfortable the first time, and the fastest way to fix delivery.

A human mock partner. A friend, mentor, or peer who asks real follow-up questions you didn't prep for. Best for pressure-testing whether an answer actually holds up when someone pushes on it, the one thing neither of the other two fully replicates.

PROMPT • AI MOCK INTERVIEWER

Act as an interviewer for a [role] position at a [type of company]. Ask me one question at a time, wait for my answer, then ask a natural follow-up before moving on, the way a real interviewer would. Include at least one question about how I use AI tools in my work. At the end, tell me honestly which answer was weakest and why.

The instruction to ask a real follow-up matters more than the question list itself, that's the part scripted practice never gives you, and the part that actually determines how an interview goes.

SECTION 2

A Routine That Builds Fluency, Not Scripts

The goal of practice isn't a memorized answer, it's the ability to construct a good answer on the spot, because the real question is never worded exactly like the one you rehearsed. A short routine run consistently beats one long cram session every time.

THE WEEKLY ROUTINE

Twice a week, one 15-minute AI role-play round covering a mix of behavioral, technical, and AI-usage questions. Once a week, record yourself answering the 3 questions you're least confident on and watch it back the same day. Once every two weeks, a full mock round with a real person.

THE 3 QUESTION TYPES TO ALWAYS DRILL

Behavioral ("tell me about a time..."), answered with a specific story, not a general philosophy. Portfolio walkthrough, explain one project's decisions out loud, not just its result. AI-usage, a concrete example of a task AI sped up and how you checked the output, not a general statement that you "use AI a lot."

PROMPT • THE AI-USAGE QUESTION, SPECIFICALLY

I need to answer "how do you use AI in your work" for a [role] interview. Here's a real task I used AI for recently: [describe it]. Help me shape this into a 45-second answer that names the specific tool, what it sped up, and how I verified the output before it went out. Avoid anything generic or vague.

This question rewards specificity more than any other in a 2026 interview, a vague answer reads as unfamiliarity, and an over-enthusiastic one without a verification step reads as a risk.

PROMPT • POST-MOCK REVIEW

Here's the transcript of a mock interview I just ran: [paste]. Identify the 2 weakest answers and explain specifically what made them weak, vague, too long, missing a result, no clear story structure, and rewrite one of them as an example.

Review right after the round, while the answer's still fresh enough to feel exactly why it fell flat, not days later when it's just a transcript.

*You don't get better at interviews by knowing more answers.
You get better by building an answer under pressure enough times
that it stops feeling like pressure.
Practice like it's real, so the real one feels like practice.*

**Follow Martina La Porta for more on navigating an AI-era career,
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