

# Your experiences and Amazon's Leadership Principles



Amazon's Leadership Principles are used to guide business in almost every way. Amazon Software Development Engineers use our Leadership Principles every day, whether we're discussing ideas for new projects or deciding on the best approach to solving a problem.

A significant portion of the interview will be dedicated to understanding how you've already been demonstrating our Leadership Principles. Complete the steps below to reflect on how you've applied the Leadership Principles in your professional experiences.

**Step 1. List your significant professional moments.** List 10-15 significant professional experiences you've had. This includes everything from the goals achieved and risks taken to how you've failed and grown in the process. Don't worry about the details right now – just focus on triggering your memory. If you're having trouble, consider looking through your resume, prioritizing experiences from your most recent positions.

1.	6.	11.
2.	7.	12.
3.	8.	13.
4.	9.	14.
5.	10.	15.

**Step 2. Recall the specifics.** Interviewers will be diving deep into these examples, so it's best to refresh your memory ahead of time. We suggest using the STAR framework to recall the details. Complete the table below for the first significant professional moment you listed in step 1. Repeat for each moment.

Significant professional moment #1		
STAR framework	Ask yourself	Details
<u>S</u> ituation	What was the context/background for the situation you were in? Where did it occur, when did it happen? What was the goal?	
<u>T</u> ask	What was your role? What were you trying to achieve? Why was it important? What were the risks/consequences if nothing happened?	
<u>A</u> ction	What did you personally own? How did you do it? How did you influence the outcome? Who else was involved? What was the most significant obstacle you faced?	
<u>R</u> esult	How did you measure success for this project? What results did you achieve? (e.g., metrics) What trade-offs did you have to make to achieve this? What did you learn or would have done differently?	

**Step 3. Consider the Leadership Principles.** Now that the details are fresh, consider which of the 16 Leadership Principles you demonstrated in each significant professional moment. It's likely that there are multiple Leadership Principles involved in each moment. All the Leadership Principles definitions are included in the next pages of this guide for your convenience.

**You may notice that your experiences have not covered all 16 Leadership Principles – that's to be expected. Take some additional time to read through any non-covered Leadership Principles to see if it makes you think of an additional professional moment to add to your step 1 list.**

Significant professional moment	Leadership Principle(s) demonstrated
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
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9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	

**Next Steps.** You're ready to demonstrate to your interviewers how you've already applied the Leadership Principles in your professional experiences. Feel free to bring your short list of significant professional moments to the interview, with the following tips in mind:

- **Answer the interviewers' questions.** Don't try to squeeze in an example from your list if it doesn't really address what the interviewer is asking.
- **Don't read from a script.** This guide walks you through the exercise of remembering your significant professional moments in detail. Don't become dependent on them and end up reading to your interviewer.
- **Remain flexible.** The interviewer will be asking follow-up questions or prompting for additional details throughout your answer.
- **Use a range of examples.** All else being equal, use different significant professional moments with your interviewers to demonstrate a range of experiences.
- **Use recent examples.** All else being equal, prioritize sharing your most recent experiences.

Leadership Principle	Description
Customer Obsession	Leaders start with the customer and work backwards. They work vigorously to earn and keep customer trust. Although leaders pay attention to competitors, they obsess over customers.
Ownership	Leaders are owners. They think long term and don't sacrifice long-term value for short-term results. They act on behalf of the entire company, beyond just their own team. They never say, "that's not my job."
Invent and Simplify	Leaders expect and require innovation and invention from their teams and always find ways to simplify. They are externally aware, look for new ideas from everywhere, and are not limited by "not invented here." As we do new things, we accept that we may be misunderstood for long periods of time.
Are Right, A Lot	Leaders are right a lot. They have strong judgment and good instincts. They seek diverse perspectives and work to disconfirm their beliefs.
Learn and Be Curious	Leaders are never done learning and always seek to improve themselves. They are curious about new possibilities and act to explore them.
Hire and Develop the Best	Leaders raise the performance bar with every hire and promotion. They recognize exceptional talent, and willingly move them throughout the organization. Leaders develop leaders and take seriously their role in coaching others. We work on behalf of our people to invent mechanisms for development like Career Choice.
Insist on the Highest Standards	Leaders have relentlessly high standards — many people may think these standards are unreasonably high. Leaders are continually raising the bar and drive their teams to deliver high quality products, services, and processes. Leaders ensure that defects do not get sent down the line and that problems are fixed so they stay fixed.
Think Big	Thinking small is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Leaders create and communicate a bold direction that inspires results. They think differently and look around corners for ways to serve customers.

# Leadership Principles



Bias for Action	Speed matters in business. Many decisions and actions are reversible and do not need extensive study. We value calculated risk taking.
Frugality	Accomplish more with less. Constraints breed resourcefulness, self-sufficiency, and invention. There are no extra points for growing headcount, budget size, or fixed expense.
Earn Trust	Leaders listen attentively, speak candidly, and treat others respectfully. They are vocally self-critical, even when doing so is awkward or embarrassing. Leaders do not believe their or their team's body odor smells of perfume. They benchmark themselves and their teams against the best.
Dive Deep	Leaders operate at all levels, stay connected to the details, audit frequently, and are skeptical when metrics and anecdote differ. No task is beneath them.
Have Backbone; Disagree and Commit	Leaders are obligated to respectfully challenge decisions when they disagree, even when doing so is uncomfortable or exhausting. Leaders have conviction and are tenacious. They do not compromise for the sake of social cohesion. Once a decision is determined, they commit wholly.
Deliver Results	Leaders focus on the key inputs for their business and deliver them with the right quality and in a timely fashion. Despite setbacks, they rise to the occasion and never settle.
Strive to be Earth's Best Employer	Leaders work every day to create a safer, more productive, higher performing, more diverse, and more just work environment. They lead with empathy, have fun at work, and make it easy for others to have fun. Leaders ask themselves: Are my fellow employees growing? Are they empowered? Are they ready for what's next? Leaders have a vision for and commitment to their employees' personal success, whether that be at Amazon or elsewhere.
Success and Scale Bring Broad Responsibility	We started in a garage, but we're not there anymore. We are big, we impact the world, and we are far from perfect. We must be humble and thoughtful about even the secondary effects of our actions. Our local communities, planet, and future generations need us to be better every day. We must begin each day with a determination to make better, do better, and be better for our customers, our employees, our partners, and the world at large. And we must end every day knowing we can do even more tomorrow. Leaders create more than they consume and always leave things better than how they found them.