

112 Engineering Manager interview questions to ask your applicants

Questions

1. Tell me about a time you had to make a tough call that impacted your team's morale. What did you learn?
2. How do you ensure every team member feels heard, especially the quiet ones?
3. Describe your approach to giving feedback, both positive and constructive.
4. What strategies do you use to motivate your team to meet ambitious goals?
5. Explain how you handle conflicts within your team. Give a specific example.
6. How do you prioritize tasks and projects for your team, considering deadlines and impact?
7. Tell me about a time when a project failed under your watch. What went wrong, and what did you do?
8. How do you stay up-to-date with the latest technologies and trends in engineering?
9. Describe your process for onboarding new team members.
10. What is your approach to performance reviews and individual development plans?
11. How do you foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement within your team?
12. What metrics do you use to measure the success and productivity of your engineering team?
13. Explain how you balance the needs of individual team members with the overall goals of the company.
14. Tell me about a time you had to manage a team through a period of significant change or uncertainty.
15. How do you delegate tasks effectively to your team members?
16. Describe your experience with different software development methodologies (e.g., Agile, Waterfall).
17. What steps do you take to ensure the quality and reliability of the code your team produces?
18. How do you handle situations where a team member is consistently underperforming?
19. Tell me about a time you had to advocate for your team to upper management.
20. How do you build trust and rapport with your team members?
21. Describe your approach to estimating project timelines and resources.
22. What is your understanding of the different roles within an engineering team?
23. How do you ensure that your team is aligned with the company's overall vision and goals?
24. Tell me about a time you had to make a decision that was unpopular with your team.
25. How do you create a psychologically safe environment for your team?
26. Describe your experience with managing remote or distributed teams.
27. How do you handle situations where there is disagreement on technical approach among team members?
28. Tell me about a time you helped a team member overcome a significant challenge.
29. Describe a time you had to manage a team through a significant change in direction or priorities. How did you ensure everyone stayed motivated and aligned?
30. Imagine a scenario where two of your direct reports have a serious conflict. How would you approach mediating the situation and helping them find a resolution?
31. Tell me about a project where your team missed a deadline. What went wrong, and what steps did you take to recover and prevent similar issues in the future?
32. Explain your approach to performance reviews. How do you deliver constructive feedback and help your team members grow professionally?
33. Describe a situation where you had to make a difficult decision that was unpopular with your team. How did you handle the fallout?
34. How do you balance the need to deliver results quickly with the importance of maintaining high code quality and long-term maintainability?
35. What strategies do you use to stay up-to-date with the latest technologies and trends in your field, and how do you encourage your team to do the same?
36. Suppose you notice a team member is consistently underperforming. What steps would you take to address the issue and help them improve?
37. How do you foster a culture of collaboration and knowledge sharing within your team?
38. Explain how you prioritize tasks and manage your time effectively as an engineering manager.
39. Describe your experience with different software development methodologies (e.g., Agile, Waterfall). What are the pros and cons of each, and when would you choose one over the other?
40. Tell me about a time when you had to advocate for your team's needs to upper management. What was the situation, and what was the outcome?
41. How do you measure the success of your team and individual team members?
42. Imagine you inherit a team with low morale. What are the first few things you would do to improve the situation?
43. Describe a time you had to give difficult feedback to a high-performing team member. How did you approach the conversation?
44. How do you approach delegation, and what factors do you consider when deciding who to delegate tasks to?
45. Explain your philosophy on technical debt. How do you manage it, and how do you balance it against the need to deliver new features?
46. Describe a time when you identified a problem with a process or workflow and took the initiative to improve it. What was the problem, and what was your solution?
47. How do you handle situations where you disagree with a decision made by your superiors?
48. What are your thoughts on remote work and distributed teams, and how do you ensure effective communication and collaboration in that environment?
49. How do you handle the situation when an engineer on your team wants to switch to a different tech stack/team?
50. What is your approach to risk management in software development projects?
51. Can you tell me about your experience with mentoring junior engineers?
52. How do you balance the demands of project management with the need to support your team's technical growth?
53. What is your understanding of CI/CD pipelines, and how have you used them to improve the software development process?
54. How do you ensure the accessibility and inclusivity of your team's work environment and culture?
55. Explain how you stay organized managing multiple engineers and projects. Please provide examples of tools you use.
56. Describe a time when you successfully navigated a conflict between engineering and another department (e.g., product, sales). What was your strategy?
57. Describe a time you had to make a strategic decision that was unpopular with your team. How did you navigate the situation, and what was the outcome?
58. How do you balance the need for innovation with the need for stability and predictability within your engineering organization?
59. Tell me about a time you had to completely revamp an existing engineering process or system. What challenges did you face, and how did you overcome them?
60. Imagine your team is consistently missing deadlines, and morale is low. How would you diagnose the root cause and implement a sustainable solution?
61. Describe your approach to building and maintaining a high-performing engineering culture that fosters both individual growth and team collaboration.
62. How do you stay current with the latest technology trends and determine which ones are worth adopting for your team?
63. Explain your experience with managing geographically distributed engineering teams. What strategies have you found to be most effective?
64. Tell me about a time when you had to manage a critical incident or outage. What was your role, and how did you ensure a swift resolution?
65. How do you approach performance management for senior engineers who are already high performers but may be resistant to feedback?
66. Describe a situation where you had to advocate for your team's needs to upper management, even when it meant pushing back on their requests.
67. How do you handle a situation where you believe a direct report is not a good fit for their current role but has potential in another area of the company?
68. What is your philosophy on technical debt, and how do you prioritize its management within your team's workflow?
69. Explain your experience with implementing and scaling agile methodologies across multiple engineering teams.
70. Tell me about a time when you had to make a difficult trade-off between speed of delivery and quality of code. What factors did you consider?
71. How do you ensure that your team's work aligns with the overall business strategy and goals of the company?
72. Describe your approach to mentoring and developing future engineering leaders within your organization.
73. How do you foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement within your engineering team?
74. Explain your experience with managing budgets and resources for engineering projects.
75. Tell me about a time when you had to resolve a conflict between two members of your team. What approach did you take, and what was the outcome?
76. How do you measure the success of your engineering team beyond just meeting deadlines and delivering features?
77. Describe your experience with leading a team through a major organizational change, such as a merger or acquisition.
78. How do you handle a situation where you disagree with a technical decision made by a senior engineer on your team?
79. What strategies do you use to promote diversity and inclusion within your engineering organization?
80. Tell me about a time when you had to make a decision with incomplete or ambiguous information. How did you proceed, and what did you learn?
81. How do you balance the needs of your team with the needs of other teams within the organization?
82. Describe your approach to managing risk in engineering projects, especially when dealing with new or unproven technologies.
83. How do you handle a situation where a team member is consistently underperforming despite receiving coaching and support?
84. What is your philosophy on code reviews, and how do you ensure they are effective and constructive?
85. Explain your experience with implementing and maintaining a robust CI/CD pipeline.
86. Tell me about a time when you had to make a tough ethical decision related to your work as an engineering manager.
87. Describe a time you had to make a critical decision with incomplete information. What was your thought process?
88. How do you balance short-term project needs with long-term team development?
89. Tell me about a time you had to navigate a complex organizational change. How did you support your team?
90. Explain your approach to building a high-performing engineering culture.
91. How do you identify and address skill gaps within your team?
92. Describe your experience with managing remote or distributed teams.
93. How do you ensure that your team's technical decisions align with the overall business strategy?
94. Tell me about a time you had to deliver bad news to your team. How did you handle it?
95. How do you foster innovation and creativity within your engineering team?
96. Describe your experience with mentoring and developing engineering leaders.
97. How do you measure the success of your engineering team beyond just code output?
98. Tell me about a time you had to advocate for your team's needs to upper management.
99. How do you stay up-to-date with the latest trends and technologies in the industry?
100. Describe your approach to managing technical debt.
101. How do you handle conflicts within your engineering team?
102. Tell me about a time you made a mistake as a manager. What did you learn from it?
103. How do you ensure that your team is building accessible and inclusive products?
104. Describe your experience with scaling an engineering team.
105. How do you handle performance issues within your team?
106. Tell me about a time you had to make a difficult trade-off between quality and speed.
107. How do you ensure that your team is following best practices for security?
108. Describe your approach to delegation and empowerment.
109. How do you motivate your team during challenging times?
110. Tell me about a time you had to influence stakeholders with differing priorities.