



Preparing for an Interview with **the D. E. Shaw Group**


DE Shaw & Co

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At the D. E. Shaw group, we devote care and attention to identifying, recruiting, and supporting world-class talent.

We recognize that finding the right place for your next career step can be time consuming, if not all consuming. So that you can put your best foot forward, we want to help you understand our firm, how you can contribute to its future, and how it can contribute to yours.

We hope you find the following information helpful as you prepare to meet with us.

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

You don't need prior finance knowledge or experience to be a great candidate. We're looking for people who:

- **Uphold high standards:** We want to understand how you uphold high standards. What practices do you follow to ensure you treat colleagues and peers with respect and professionalism? How have you handled ethical decision-making in the past?
- **Analyze rigorously:** We're eager to hear what you've learned from your experiences. What would you do differently in retrospect? How could you have improved an outcome? What questions would you tackle next? We're interested in the thinking that guided your approach and how you assessed the result.
- **Communicate clearly and concisely:** Details and enthusiasm make for great answers, but only if they make sense in the context of the questions asked. Remember the essence of what you're trying to communicate. Pause and organize your thoughts to structure your answers. Recap the problem you were trying to solve before explaining how you approached it.
- **Thrive on collaboration:** We often work in groups, small and large, so we care about your contributions as a member of a team. How have you learned from and shared your insights with others? How have you tackled challenging projects with peers? What role(s) do you most enjoy as part of a group?
- **Demonstrate intellectual curiosity:** Whether it's your research, jobs or internships, past projects, classes, extracurriculars, or something else altogether, we want to hear about your passions, areas of expertise, and what motivates you.



GETTING READY FOR YOUR INTERVIEW

We want to get to know you—your experiences, interests, and, most importantly, how you think about and approach problems. Before speaking with us, consider how you might:

- **Tell your story:** Your experience is more than a series of bullet points on a resume. What have been your motivations, ambitions, and thinking at key moments in your education or career? What drives you? How has your approach to work evolved? We're also curious to learn things beyond your resume, like accomplishments outside of work or school, or additional fields of interest.
- **Dig deep into your experiences:** Be prepared to explore the details behind the jobs, activities, and projects on your resume (without disclosing anything confidential, of course). What were their challenges, and how did you learn from them? How did you work with teammates to achieve your goals? What was the thought process behind your work?
- **Ask us questions:** An interview is a two-way street, and we encourage you to use the time to learn more about us. Ask us questions that can help you make decisions about your next career steps, assess how working with us might address things you find important, and reveal the depth of your curiosity.

Tip: One way to help effectively communicate your ideas, experiences, and what interests you about our firm is to practice telling your story out loud and verbally responding to potential questions. You can ask a friend, career counselor, or recruiter to be your audience, or just use a mirror or video camera.



WHAT WE MIGHT ASK YOU

We're curious to see how you process new information and approach challenging problems, not simply whether you arrive at a "correct" answer, know a particular mathematical technique, or are fluent in a specific programming language.

You can expect a range of questions on your past experience (**behavioral questions**), hypothetical situations you might come across in your work with us (**situational questions**), and in-depth prompts that demonstrate your capacity for analytical thinking based on real-world examples (**case studies**). These questions are meant to help us better understand your proficiency in skills relevant to the role you're interviewing for.

Case studies are questions or prompts based on real-world situations that ask how you might tackle a specific problem or challenge. A case study may include discussion with an interviewer, a written response, or an exercise similar to work one might do in the role. We use case studies to learn about how you process new information, weigh which data are most important, assess the pros and cons of different approaches, and justify and present your recommendations.

Interviews for **trading and fundamental analyst roles** do not assume pre-existing technical or financial knowledge, but will assess your comfort applying statistical and logical reasoning.

For **technical roles**, including those in **quantitative analysis** and **software development**, you'll be asked questions from different areas of mathematics and/or computer science in addition to behavioral questions. These technical questions aim to evaluate what techniques, concepts, or algorithms you use to pursue a solution, and how deeply you understand their uses and limitations. Technical questions may cover probability, mathematical statistics, algorithms, logical thinking, and/or programming.

Interviews for **systems-focused roles** may similarly seek to evaluate your computer science and programming competencies or your subject matter expertise. These interviews could include questions that assess your understanding of complex computational processes and interactions within distributed systems, as well as your operational problem-solving.

For **non-technical roles**, the majority of your interviews will consist of behavioral and situational questions, and interviewers will follow up to get more detail. For certain roles, you may be asked analytical questions that encourage you to apply logical reasoning in forming an answer.



What We Might Ask You (Continued)

We’ve included a few examples of different question types in the table below.

Behavioral Questions	Situational Questions	Case Study Prompts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How has your approach to solving a specific problem evolved with more experience or new information?• When have you collaborated with a team to achieve goals?• How have you impacted the teams you’ve worked on? What were your individual contributions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What would you do if you were working on a project and weren’t sure about your next steps?• How would you approach building relationships if you were new to a project or team?• Imagine that you need to make a decision that isn’t clear-cut. How would you weigh the pros and cons?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Company X is trying to decide whether to renovate its office space or move to a new location. What factors would you consider to help make a recommendation?• What businesses or industries do you think will be impacted by shifts in energy production to renewable sources?



Having the following in mind can be useful as you respond to case study prompts or analytical questions:

Tip: Keep similar principles in mind when responding to behavioral and situational prompts—“show your work” by accounting for any assumptions you’re making, and sharing the information you’re using (or that you’d seek) to inform your approach.

- **Do you understand the question?** Before diving in, make sure you know what you’re being asked. If you’re not certain, feel free to ask for clarification (we do this routinely in our day-to-day work). As you move forward with your response, check in with your interviewer to see if they’re following your thought process.
- **How do you want to approach solving the problem?** As you organize your thoughts, consider the structure you’d want to follow as you work. Think about any follow-up questions you’d like to ask your interviewer.
- **What are your assumptions?** Be aware of any assumptions you’re making, and share these with your interviewer to help them follow your thinking.
- **What potential solutions have you identified?** Be sure your potential solutions directly address the problem. Do you have a systematic way to identify the best solution? If so, how are you assessing the pros, cons, and trade-offs of that solution relative to other possible approaches?
- **How are your solutions supported?** As applicable, check that your answer is supported by your quantitative and/or qualitative analysis. Are you providing a rationale for why a certain solution is best? How would other information change your assessment?
- **What would your next steps be?** Showing your interviewer that you can grasp the broader context and can offer insights into the implications of your analysis separates a great answer from a good one. Can you think of additional risks and next steps?



AFTER AN INTERVIEW

The typical stages of a successful hiring process include the following:

application review, phone interview and virtual interviews, references, and finally an offer.

We don't take shortcuts when it comes to recruiting and developing extraordinary talent, so our hiring process might take several weeks. We'll do our best to keep you updated, but don't hesitate to reach out to your recruiter if you have any questions.

For more information on our firm, please visit our [website](#). Good luck with your interview!



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