

# DEVOPS INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



In the competitive world of DevOps, employers are looking for the best and brightest out-of-the-box critical thinkers to welcome into their budding organizations. During the process of filling DevOps roles for your enterprise, it's important to know what to look for in an employee. Likewise, for potential employees, being able to prepare for a DevOps interview means understanding some core concepts and ideas.

In the following article, we are going to examine important and oft-referred-to questions in DevOps interviews, as well as what kind of answers to expect or give, should you find yourself in the position of the interviewer or interviewee. But first, let's look at two categories that these questions fall into:

- What do you know about DevOps?
- How are you different?

It should come as no surprise that employers are chomping at the bit to share their knowledge of DevOps, and apply it to what you know, to see if you're a good fit. Additionally, your existing experience with DevOps can shape your differential from other candidates. Here's a look at some questions around each.

*(This article is part of our [DevOps Guide](#). Use the right-hand menu to navigate.)*

## What Do You Know About DevOps?

This is both a question and a category of questions. That's to say, it wouldn't be uncommon for an interviewer to sit down in a room with a candidate and simply start by saying, "Tell me what you know about DevOps." From there a number of other questions could permeate from the

conversation. And these include the following:

## **Agile and DevOps: What's the difference?**

In short, agile is a methodology that runs parallel to DevOps. It focuses on bridging communication gaps between the end-user and the development team, whereas DevOps focuses on the part of the process chain that involves the development team and operations stakeholders. Both are necessary to speed up development times and can be done in concert. DevOps, a newer development than agile, uses agile principles and applies them, internally, to how teams communicate across an organization.

## **What need does DevOps fill in an organization?**

At its core, DevOps is a remedy for the breakdown in communication and collaboration that often occurs between development and operations within an organization. This breakdown results in a lack of efficiency, frustration and slowed release times. DevOps speeds the process back up by implementing technology and processes that help people communicate and collaborate better across an organization. The result is continuous delivery, continuous testing and continuous monitoring of a system that produces release after release.

## **What DevOps tools have you used? What are the best tools?**

Asking what tools a candidate has used is par for course. It gets the candidate and interviewer discussing tools and resources, and allows for a harder question: "In your opinion, what are the best tools?"

There are several ways one can answer this question, but the leading tools for 2019 include:

- Jenkins
- Puppet
- Bamboo
- Docker
- Kubernetes
- Ansible; and
- Git

Being able to identify some use cases for each of these resources could make or break a DevOps interview. After all, some of these tools are legacy and others are among the highest paying DevOps skills of 2019.

## **What is your knowledge of AWS? Chef?**

In an interview, an interviewer is likely to take inventory of the DevOps technology they are already using and ask the candidate about familiarity. In all likelihood, a DevOps organization likely listed its platform technology on the job listing and will be expecting candidates to come prepared with an answer. While we are talking about tools and resources, it would be remiss not to address some of the popular ones:

## **Amazon Web Services (AWS)**

AWS is a prime example of infrastructure-as-a-service or IaaS. As the name suggests, AWS offers a standardized plug-and-play infrastructure with a number of applications and support that allows developers to quickly establish a customized infrastructure for their software development needs. It offers broad-spectrum IT by proving to have deep features and configurations against the backdrop of an open source community.

## **Chef**

When working in a DevOps environment, between cloud, physical and virtual servers, you're working with a number of configurations that can deeply impact integration. Chef offers a solution in the form of a configuration management tool. Facebook and Etsy are among the large enterprises currently using Chef for its ability to effectively manage configurations for businesses that need to scale often.

In addition to the above-mentioned questions, you should be able to understand DevOps key concepts and be able to define them.

## **How Are You Different?**

The next category of questions is where you can really shine. These are the ones all about you. If an employer asks, "How are you different from other candidates?" what they really want to know is, "What unique traits and skills can you bring to this role?" Below are a few additional questions to help candidates and employers, alike, gauge important differentiators in DevOps.

## **What's been your most challenging experience with deployment?**

A question like this could be phrased to showcase a number of different DevOps skills, whether its "deployment", "configuration", "software testing", "orchestration" or what have you. The idea here is that it provides an opportunity for the candidate to describe what a challenging situation looks like for them, and how they overcame it.

Candidates should come prepared with a number of situations to choose from that meet the needs of the discussion. Employers should look for someone with experience navigating the rough waters of DevOps transformation.

## **What are you interested in learning to further your career?**

This question isn't as straight forward as it seems. First, it's usually coupled with other questions like "What have you done to start learning these skills?" So, it's good for candidates to think about times they maneuvered in their career to apply a skill or any continuous education they pursued to this end.

Ultimately, this question seeks to understand if the candidate's skills and aspirations are in line with what the company is doing. DevOps is fast moving. Most organizations, however, have an idea of where they want to be and what they want to be doing in the next 5 - 10 years. When investing in a new employee, you want to make sure it's someone who will be around for the long-term, but perhaps most importantly, this question reveals a natural curiosity that's so important in DevOps

candidates.

## **What is a complex system architecture you've conquered? How did you manage it?**

Similarly to this first question, this one signals the candidate to tell about another challenging experience and how it was overcome. This one, however, is focused on managing a system architecture. This question would be especially relevant to a DevOps engineer, who is likely to be the most responsible for the overall state of architecture.

## **Best and worst experiences communicating and building bridges across development and operations?**

DevOps is a mindset about mending communication between development and ops, and it's something that has to be learned. Being able to provide examples of times when a candidate was able to bridge the gap should show employers whether or not that person has experience with the fundamental principles of DevOps.

## **DevOps Hiring: An Evolution**

As DevOps sweeps up more and more businesses into its culture, that's bound to mean some changes in how companies function within human resources, and with specific regard to hiring processes. The full impact of DevOps on hiring remains to be seen.

What we do know is [more and more businesses are hiring for DevOps positions](#), and offering top salaries. So, if you're in DevOps, there's never been a better time to put your face out there. And if you're an organization still thinking of investing in DevOps, it's high time you start, because the DevOps craze isn't going away yet, and its disruption can be felt across all industries. For more ways on how BMC can help you through the process, [click here](#).