Technical practitioner interview questions, and what good answers show

26 October 2026 · 6 min read · blogs.iictp.org/technical-practitioner-interview-questions

Good interview questions for a technical lead or practitioner ask about decisions, not trivia. Here are twelve, each with what a strong answer tends to show. Use them to prepare, or to interview.

TL;DR The short version

- Good questions for technical leads ask about decisions, not trivia.
- The post gives twelve questions across architecture, delivery, applied AI and people leadership.
- Each comes with what a strong answer tends to show, so you can use them to prepare or to interview.

Read online, listen to it, or change the text size: https://blogs.iictp.org/technical-practitioner-interview-questions

Architecture and design

1. **Tell me about a design decision you wish you had made differently.** Strong answers name the constraint they missed and what they changed afterwards.
2. **How do you decide where to draw a service boundary?** Look for hiding likely change and for data ownership.
3. **When have you chosen a simple solution over a clever one?** Look for cost awareness and for restraint.

Delivery and quality

1. **How do you keep releases small without slowing the team down?** Look for automation, feature flags and fast feedback.
2. **Describe an outage you were part of.** Strong answers cover detection, response and what changed in the system, not blame.
3. **How do you handle technical debt with a manager who wants features?** Look for pricing the debt in terms the manager cares about.

Applied AI

1. **Where have you used AI in your work, and where did you decide not to?** Look for verification of output and awareness of failure modes.
2. **How would you test a feature built on a language model?** Look for examples, edge cases and guardrails.

People and leadership

1. **How do you give feedback that someone does not want to hear?** Look for specifics and respect.
2. **What would you do when two strong engineers disagree on an approach?** Look for decision records and a clear way to decide.
3. **How do you grow someone who is more junior than you?** Look for deliberate practice, not just delegation.
4. **What do you stop doing when you take on more scope?** Look for honesty about the shift from doing to leading.

Related credential: Certified Technical Practitioner. Explore the exam facts and syllabus.

Sources and further reading

1. IICTP. TPBOK domains. iictp.org/standards/tpbok.

Published by IICTP, an independent technical credential body, on 26 October 2026. The current version of this post is at https://blogs.iictp.org/technical-practitioner-interview-questions. More guides: blogs.iictp.org.