

The Job Interview

Interviewer: So, tell me, why are you interested in this position?

J.M.: Well, I've always wanted to work in the games industry and I'm just passionate about all this.

Interviewer: Passionate? That's interesting. Why is that?

J.M.: Because... well, it's kind of hard to explain but when you see things like, say.... Oh! When you look at a game like Pac-Man and you see all these mazes and ghosts and Pac-Man himself, everything just seems to fit together as one big system. It's like a giant machine where every piece has its defined role within the greater whole of the game. You can still find new things about it that surprise you after years of playing it. When I look at something like that, when I see the cogs turning in all these mechanisms and how it all works together so seamlessly, my mind just goes "oooooh".

Interviewer: It sounds to me as if you have a strong understanding of mechanics and the systems underlying them. What is your experience in this regard?

J.M.: I wouldn't say that I have a strong understanding of them but.... Well, when I was young I used to play games like Mario and Zelda with my brother who is two years older than me. He had more patience for it so he always did the hard parts while I would watch him and try to figure out what was going on. I suppose that must have been a form of reverse-engineering how they work, trying to understand the rules they were based on and how it all fit together.

Interviewer: It sounds like you've been studying games from an early age. What can you offer us that makes you an attractive candidate for this position?

J.M.: Well, I've always had a lot of ideas about how to improve existing games or change them altogether so they become something different.

Interviewer: Can you give me an example of that?

J.M.: Well, I remember playing Pac-Man with my brother and we were having a lot of fun but it was kind of the same thing over and over again. So I came up with this idea where you could play Pac-Man but at the same time play as ghosts against him instead of only having them move along predefined paths. The ghosts would then act more like hunters, each with its own personality that you'd get to know over the course of playing it.

Interviewer: That's an interesting angle. And what questions can I answer for you?

J.M.: Well, what would you expect someone in this position to know about game design?

Interviewer: We'd expect the person in this position to have a good understanding of game design and mechanics. They should be able to identify what makes games fun and/or engaging and how they can be used in different ways for different purposes. Also, they should be able to identify problems with designs and come up with possible solutions.

J.M.: Aha! That's great, because I always used to get in trouble at school for correcting my teachers on things like that.

Interviewer: Any other questions?

J.M.: Yes, I have one. How important do you think the "idea" behind a game is in comparison to how it actually plays?

Interviewer: I'd say that both are equally important. Having a great idea is nice, but if that idea doesn't translate well into an actual game then there's not much point to it. That said, having an idea to begin with is often the hardest part, so we believe that investing into an idea and turning it into something real will give us a better chance at identifying what we want. We don't just want to make video games, we want to create worlds and experiences out of them.

J.M.: That sounds perfect! So when can I start?

Interviewer: We're glad you're interested in this position. It sounds like it's clear that you have a lot of ideas and passion for games, which is important to us. Unfortunately, we can't offer you a job right now so please don't take this the wrong way.

J.M.: Oh... Why not?

Interviewer: As you've probably seen in the Ad, this is a position that requires at least three years experience. You haven't worked for any game companies so far and we can't offer you anything right now.

J.M.: That's fine by me, I'll work for free if necessary!

Interviewer: I'm sorry but we can't do that either.

J.M.: But...

Interviewer: It's nothing personal, we'll stay in touch and let you know if anything changes.

J.M.: But... Well, thank you for your time! I'll be waiting to hear from you.