

Interviewer: Great. So the first question I'd like to ask you is how did you find your work with Amazon?

Interviewee: You said, how did I inquire?

Interviewer: How did you find your work with Amazon?

Interviewee: Oh, I saw that there was an ad on the Amazon website and someone had also told me about it. So I got on the website and with one click and I saw that there was no opening in my area and then I got on a wait list after I signed up. That was about a year and a half ago.

Interviewer: Okay. So you put your name on the wait list a year and a half ago? And then when did you start working for them?

Interviewee: Two weeks ago.

Interviewer: Oh, cool.

Interviewee: I think two or a week ago. It was probably like the day that you posted online or the day before.

Interviewer: Okay, cool. And when did you actually complete the application for the job? Was it when you were put on the wait list or did you have to wait a while to apply to the job?

Interviewee: I had to wait a while, so you get on the wait list and then once an opening in your area comes up, they ask you for additional information and then you fill it out and once you're pretty much the holding up or the factor that holds everyone up is a background check. That's the part that takes the longest, and as soon as you finish your information and you wait for your background checks to come through, then you're good to go.

Interviewer: Cool. So did they contact you over email when you got off the wait list?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. Did you have to download the app in the meantime?

Interviewee: Yes. You are directed to sign up and download the app prior to being off of the wait list.

Interviewer: Oh, okay. So you just had it on your phone but weren't really using it in the meantime?

Interviewee: Correct. They tell you to actually keep on checking the app multiple times a day in order to see if a position opens up or if your app allows you to proceed with the process of onboarding, that they call it.

Interviewer: Oh, wow. Were you surprised that it took so long to get off the wait list?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Yeah. And the other person that you knew who was working with them was, is it the same kind of Flex job?

Interviewee: Yes, it is.

Interviewer: Okay. Are they working in the same area as you?

Interviewee: No, we're actually, I'm in the Navy and he is as well and he moved on to [city].

Interviewer: Oh, okay. So they were different markets, it wasn't that you were watching someone in your market who already had a job?

Interviewee: Correct.

Interviewer: Okay, I see. And all right, so you said that you have another job in the meantime. So do you juggle your job with the Navy and you juggle the Flex job? Are those the kinds of things that you're doing every day?

Interviewee: Yes. It's not every day. It's really infrequent because it just started and right now I just do it whenever I see a little available spot if I feel like it. It's just little extra here and there.

Interviewer: Yeah. Is it hard to do both jobs and control your time?

Interviewee: No, it's super easy because you dictate how much time and effort you put into the secondary because of course the Navy is primary and Amazon Flex is just, Hey, if I feel like doing something for like three hours on a Thursday between six and nine and it's after work and all that stuff then it's all good or I can just choose to not do anything and it doesn't really impact me, it's just something to do.

Interviewer: Yeah. So in the weeks that you've been doing this job, how many blocks have you taken?

Interviewee: Four.

Interviewer: Four. And are they all typically in the evening or the weekend or something like that?

Interviewee: Yes, evenings after six or after 5:00 PM and I do anytime during the day on the weekends.

Interviewer: Are there other blocks that are available during the day or are they all mostly in those time periods?

Interviewee: I'm not sure if they are because I changed my availability and I don't know if that somehow works into the app and they only show you or present you with blocks that meet your available time that you set up yourself.

Interviewer: Oh, that makes sense. So has it been hard to sign up for the blocks?

Interviewee: It has been. There's some people, I guess that this is their main job and they sit on there, scoop them up as soon as they pop up.

Interviewer: Yeah. So do you find yourself doing that?

Interviewee: No, it's not that serious for me. I just go in there, if I see some I'll check it out, but if not, you know, just close the app and try again later.

Interviewer: Yeah. How far in advance have you been able to sign up for a block?

Interviewee: One week on Saturday, I signed up for this upcoming Saturday for a three hour block delivering from the Amazon warehouse.

Interviewer: Oh cool. Oh, so is it that they all get posted for the week at the same time and you sign up then?

Interviewee: I don't believe so. I believe, well, I'm still kind of new to it so it seems like they maybe present them to certain people that have been doing it maybe for longer. And then the ones that I happen to see are the ones that people have, for some reason, they've had to drop [inaudible 00:07:19] they weren't able to fulfill their obligation, so they released them to allow someone else to pick them up.

Interviewer: Oh, I see. And when you started, did you have some kind of training for the job?

Interviewee: Yes, there was. I think there were about maybe seven, eight, nine something like that videos that they played through the app?

Interviewer: Yeah. Did you watch them?

Interviewee: Yes, I did.

Interviewer: And were they helpful?

Interviewee: They were, I think they were very well put together.

Interviewer: Oh, good. How long did it take to watch them?

Interviewee: I think it was less than an hour, I believe. They weren't real long videos, some of them would be like four minutes or be like seven minutes.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: The time varied.

Interviewer: Yeah. So you could do it in one sitting?

Interviewee: Yeah, a hundred percent.

Interviewer: Yeah. And have you had anything go wrong on a delivery yet?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: No? Do you think if something went wrong, do you have like a manager or somebody that you can talk to?

Interviewee: They direct everything to the, I guess it's called, driver support. I'm not 100% sure if it's called driver support, but there's pretty much a call center that you call if you're experiencing difficulty and then they assist you as the best they can.

Interviewer: Okay. And did you know that from watching the videos or how did you figure that out?

Interviewee: Yes, the video, but I figured that it would be set up like that because of the reputation of Amazon and how well they have their system in place. I knew that there would be something that they would have available to mitigate any issues that arise from drivers.

Interviewer: Yeah. Did you have to sign a contract or something when you started the job?

Interviewee: There may have been something that was digital, but there was no physical signature. It might've been a [inaudible 00:09:18] maybe initial or something. I know there's the tax form that you fill out, but as far as contract, I don't believe so. But I know there's some kind of agreement on there.

Interviewer: Yeah. And did you do that when you downloaded the app itself or that came through once you were approved to drive?

Interviewee: I believe it was after the approval. I don't want to mix them together, but I believe it was during the onboarding process, when your essential driver [inaudible 00:09:43] your information goes through correctly.

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. And so when you do the job, do you have to enter information into the app that you're using?

Interviewee: Yes. You scan a barcode or first you get your ID scanned or your license scanned when you arrive at the warehouse and then when you pick up your packages, you scan them to properly account for all the packages in which you are going to deliver on your route.

Interviewer: And then when you drop them off, do you have to enter anything?

Interviewee: If you don't fulfill your, I guess, if you can't deliver something for some reason, then you have to scan those packages back in.

Interviewer: Okay. And when you drop stuff off at the house or, yeah, when you show up to the house and have to drop something off, what do you have to do?

Interviewee: You scan it and put it as delivered.

Interviewer: Oh.

Interviewee: Or you can take a picture of it at the location too if you want.

Interviewer: Yeah. Have you had to do that or no, not yet?

Interviewee: No, I didn't do that.

Interviewer: Yeah. And how many, I mean with the four shifts that you've done, I guess, has it been a pretty similar number of packages in each of these blocks that you ended up delivering?

Interviewee: Yes. Just various sizes.

Interviewer: And how many hours were each of those blocks?

Interviewee: Oh, they were three.

Interviewer: Oh cool. Do you have like a variety you can choose from between the two, three and four hours?

Interviewee: Not the ones that I've been presented that I've seen that pop up on the app have been either two, three and I believe I saw a five hour one, one day.

Interviewer: But you've chosen to do the three hour ones?

Interviewee: Yes because for some reason the five hour one, I believe it started at 2:00 PM, I think that's the reason I didn't take that one.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative) I see. For the blocks, have you had to drive really long distances?

Interviewee: I would say no.

Interviewer: No? Like within an hour or something of the warehouse?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah? Okay.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: I'm just going to be ... so do you think in the future, would you try to do more blocks or do you like the way that you have it structured right now?

Interviewee: I like the way it's structured right now. I don't want to take too much time away from my family.

Interviewer: Yeah. And with the blocks that you did take did it end up paying about the same each hour or is there a big variation in how much each hour pays?

Interviewee: It was the same. It was \$20 an hour, pretty much it would pay out \$60 for a three hour block.

Interviewer: Cool. And how often do you get paid?

Interviewee: Twice a week.

Interviewer: Okay. Is it always the same days during the week?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Have you had to test any new features in the app in the time that you've had it?

Interviewee: No, I have not.

Interviewer: Have there been software updates or any kind of big design changes since you've had it?

Interviewee: Not since I've had it.

Interviewer: No? Okay.

Interviewee: I think they're having an app updates, but the only thing is I wasn't able to fully integrate, not integrate, interact with those updates due to the fact that I was on the wait list. I was just updating the app to stay on the same screen, but I'm pretty sure if I had gotten into the actual app and there would have been way more going on than me just sitting at the, "Hey, we'll let you know when you can drive" screen.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah, for sure. How does this work compared to other jobs you've had before?

Interviewee: This is different. It's way different because didn't really do any delivery stuff that besides this.

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. So what made you decide to join the Facebook group?

Interviewee: Just because I could use everyone there to ask any questions if I have any. It's a resource outside of the resources that Amazon provides, I can draw off other's experience and use it to better my work with Amazon.

Interviewer: Yeah. And have you asked any questions in the group yet?

Interviewee: I don't think so.

Interviewer: No? Do you end up reading what other people are talking about?

Interviewee: You said, do I read them?

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah. Do you go read other threads?

Interviewee: Yes. It's entertaining though-

Interviewer: [crosstalk 00:14:23] Oh yeah.

Interviewee: [inaudible 00:14:24] on Facebook.

Interviewer: Yeah. I was going to ask, has there been anything that helped you or any kind of tips that were shared that you then ended up using?

Interviewee: Sometimes people say when they're getting ready to drop a block and someone else in that same area will be able to pick it up if they would like it.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: However, I have not been able to do that yet.

Interviewer: Yeah. Do you worry about Black Friday? Do you think it will be really busy?

Interviewee: No, I don't.

Interviewer: Do you think you'll take more blocks during that time?

Interviewee: I don't think it will be really busy.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: I believe they will have more blocks, but I believe that as far as busy, I think that as long as you have your assigned time, then everything will be fine. The only thing that will be busy probably will be the actual picking up of the shipments.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative) Is that-

Interviewee: Or maybe twice as many people at the warehouse, they're in that influx of people that are going to be delivering.

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. All right. And so with this, do you think about yourself as sort of a contractor for Amazon or how do you think about your relationship with it?

Interviewee: I would say like an independent contractor.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: Because you supply your own vehicle, they assign you work. So I guess I'd equate it to almost being like a truck driver who owns their own truck but drives through a dispatcher and in our the dispatcher is Amazon and we're actually picking up for the dispatcher company.

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. Can you imagine doing this for a couple of years?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: No. Is your focus on it just sort of the next few months because of the holiday season?

Interviewee: Honestly, I'm focused on it because I'm getting extra money to start a company.

Interviewer: Oh cool. Okay. All right. So then I was going to ask next if there are other jobs you'd like to start in the future and it sounds like you're saving to do that.

Interviewee: Yes. I actually just received my first shipments for my company yesterday.

Interviewer: Oh, cool. Congratulations.

Interviewee: Why, thank you.

Interviewer: All right. So I have a couple of questions sort of about the future of work. Do you worry about things like self driving cars?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: No? How do you feel about them in general?

Interviewee: Self driving cars?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: I think it's kind of cool.

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. Could you-

Interviewee: I believe people will just blame accidents on someone else.

Interviewer: Yeah. Could you imagine Amazon using self driving cars in their delivery fleet?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Why?

Interviewee: I believe that Amazon is really focused on technology and technology increases. I believe that Amazon, if they feel that it's safe, will utilize any available technology to better its services for the customers.

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. And actually the last question I wanted to ask is because I forgot to ask what state you're in right now?

Interviewee: Right now I am in [state].

Interviewer: Okay. And is that where you drive in [state]?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay, great. Great. Thank you so much. I'm going to stop recording now.