Agile Hiring: It's a Team Sport

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What do You Normally Do When You Hire?
You Review a Resume

- You do a phone screen
- You ask behavior-description questions
- How do you detect “agile” behavior?
- It’s not always easy...
Plan to Iterate

- Hiring strategy
- Job analysis
  - Is the basis for everything:
    - Job description
    - Ad
    - Interview matrix
    - ...
Who Here Has an Agile Team?

* Each agile team is unique and has some similarities:
  * Collaboration
  * Helpful
  * Cross-functional
  * High initiative
  * High respect
  * Roles tend to blur
Technical Skills

- Functional knowledge:
  - Testing and development techniques
- Product domain expertise:
  - Problem-space expertise
  - Solution space expertise
- Technology:
  - How well the candidate uses the tools
- Industry expertise:
  - What the customers expect, how well the candidate understands the problems solved by the system
Behaviors, Not Practices
Six “Agile” Behaviors

- People who can collaborate
- People who can ask for help
- People who are willing to take small steps and get feedback
- People who are willing to do something that is good enough for now
- Adaptable people
- People willing to work outside their expertise
It’s All About Cultural Fit

- Culture is composed of:
  - What people can discuss
  - How people treat each other
  - What the organization rewards
Types of Questions

- Closed questions establish the facts
- Behavior-description questions: “Tell me about a time when…”
- Auditions
- Hypothetical questions: “What would you do if…”
- Meta-questions: “What else should I ask you?”
Questions That Don’t Discover Anything

- Irrelevant questions
- Puzzles, riddles
- Questions not about work
- “Why do you want to work here?”
- Strengths, weaknesses
- See my article in the April pragprog magazine
"Think back to a recent project. Give me an example of a time you had to work with other people to make sure that you could finish something. What happened?"
Ask for Help

* "Think back to your most recent project. Tell me about a time you did not understand something. What did you do?"

* “Tell me about a recent time you did not think you could finish when you needed to. What were the circumstances? What did you do?”
Small Steps and Ask for Feedback

* "Tell me how you like to work. Think back to the last feature you worked on. When did you ask for feedback?" ... "Why?"

* For people new to/inexperienced with agile:

  * "When you work on your projects outside of work, how do you work? Give me an example."
Do Something Good Enough For Now

* "Tell me about a recent time you did not know everything at the beginning of the project. What did you do?"
Adaptable

* "Tell me about a time when you did not have the conditions you would've liked for your project. What did you do?"
Willing to Work Outside Their Expertise

- "Tell me about a time you took on work to help the team. What was that like?"
- "We work on things we may not be comfortable with in order to finish a feature for an iteration. Have you ever been in that position?"
- "Tell me about a time you did something you thought was not in your job description. What did you do?"
### Organize the Interview to Hire as a Team

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Interviewer One</th>
<th>Interviewer Two</th>
<th>Interviewer Three</th>
<th>Interviewer Four</th>
<th>Interviewer Five</th>
<th>Everyone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
<td>8:00–8:45</td>
<td>8:45–9:30</td>
<td>9:30–10:15</td>
<td>10:20–11:05</td>
<td>11:05–11:50</td>
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<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td>Conference Room A</td>
<td>Interviewer Two’s Office</td>
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Meet to evaluate the candidate
Make Decisions as a Team

- Use limited consensus to make decisions after the interview
- Roman consensus
What Questions Do You Have?
Let’s Stay in Touch...

- *Hiring Geeks That Fit* on leanpub.com, Pragprog.com, Amazon
- *Manage Your Job Search* on leanpub
- Much more on [www.jrothman.com/blog/htp](http://www.jrothman.com/blog/htp)
- Pragmatic Manager:
  - [www.jrothman.com/pragmaticmanager](http://www.jrothman.com/pragmaticmanager)
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