

THE EXECUTIVE HIRING SCORECARD

A Practical Template for Defining Success and Evaluating Senior Candidates

Use this Scorecard before starting interviews.

The purpose of this template is to help your hiring team define what success looks like, identify the capabilities required to achieve it, and evaluate candidates based on evidence rather than intuition.

A strong Scorecard should answer one fundamental question:

What evidence would convince us that this person can solve the problems our business needs to solve next?

HOW TO USE THIS SCORECARD

Complete the Scorecard before approaching candidates.

THE PROCESS CONSISTS OF FIVE STEPS:

01 — Define the Mission

Clarify why this role exists.

02 — Define the Outcomes

Specify what the person must achieve.

03 — Identify the Competencies

Define the capabilities required to deliver those outcomes.

04 — Define the Evidence

Decide how each competency will be tested.

05 — Evaluate Consistently

Score every candidate against the same criteria.

Important: *Do not change the criteria because a particularly impressive candidate has entered the process. The Scorecard should be defined before you evaluate candidates.*

01 — ROLE MISSION

Why does this role exist?

Write one clear sentence describing the fundamental purpose of the role. Avoid describing responsibilities. Focus on the business problem the person is being hired to solve.

Complete the sentence:

We are hiring this person because the business needs someone who can...

Our Role Mission:

Example

Build and scale the company's European sales organization to establish a predictable and repeatable revenue engine.

02 — BUSINESS CONTEXT

What is happening in the company right now?

The right candidate depends on the environment they are entering. Briefly describe the current business situation.

Company Stage

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Early-stage startup | ☐ Transformation / restructuring |
| ☐ Scaling company | ☐ New market entry |
| ☐ Established business | ☐ Other: _____ |

Current Business Situation

What is happening in the business that makes this hire necessary now?

Why Now?

Why is this role critical at this specific moment?

Cost of Not Hiring

What happens if this position remains vacant for the next 6–12 months?

Key Constraints

What limitations will this person need to operate within?

Examples:

- *limited budget;* _____
- *small team;* _____
- *founder dependency;* _____
- *unclear processes;* _____

03 — 12-MONTH SUCCESS OUTCOMES

What must be different 12 months after this person joins?

Define 3–5 measurable outcomes.

These should describe results, not responsibilities.

Avoid: "Improve operations."

Prefer: "Reduce average operational processing time by 30% within 12 months."

OUTCOME 01

What must this person achieve?

How will success be measured?

Target / Metric:

Deadline:

OUTCOME 02

What must this person achieve?

How will success be measured?

Target / Metric:

Deadline:

OUTCOME 03

What must this person achieve?

How will success be measured?

Target / Metric:

Deadline:

OUTCOME 04

What must this person achieve?

How will success be measured?

Target / Metric:

Deadline:

OUTCOME 05

What must this person achieve?

How will success be measured?

Target / Metric:

Deadline:

THE 12-MONTH TEST

Complete this sentence:

Twelve months after joining, this person must have...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

04 — FIRST 90 DAYS

What must happen before the first 90 days are over?

A strong Scorecard should distinguish between long-term outcomes and immediate priorities.

FIRST 30 DAYS

What must the person understand, diagnose, or establish?

FIRST 60 DAYS

What decisions or initiatives should already be underway?

FIRST 90 DAYS

What tangible progress should be visible?

Critical Early Decisions

What are the most important decisions this person will need to make during the first 90 days?

1.

2.

3.

05 — REQUIRED COMPETENCIES

What capabilities are required to achieve the outcomes?

For each critical outcome, identify the capabilities that the candidate must demonstrate. Think beyond generic skills.

Consider:

- functional expertise;
- strategic thinking;
- decision-making;
- adaptability;
- resilience;
- leadership;
- contextual experience.

COMPETENCY 01

Competency:

Why is it required?

Which outcome does it support?

Is it:

- ☐ Critical
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Nice to have

COMPETENCY 02

Competency:

Why is it required?

Which outcome does it support?

Is it:

- ☐ Critical
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Nice to have

COMPETENCY 03

Competency:

Why is it required?

Which outcome does it support?

Is it:

- ☐ Critical
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Nice to have

COMPETENCY 04

Competency:

Why is it required?

Which outcome does it support?

Is it:

- ☐ Critical
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Nice to have

COMPETENCY 05

Competency:

Why is it required?

Which outcome does it support?

Is it:

- ☐ Critical
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Nice to have

06 — CONTEXTUAL FIT

What kind of environment must this person have experience in?

Past success is only useful when it is relevant to the environment the candidate will enter. Evaluate the context, not just the title.

Company Stage

Has the candidate worked in a comparable stage of growth?

Scale

Has the candidate operated at a similar organizational scale?

Resources

Has the candidate achieved results with comparable levels of resources?

Complexity

Has the candidate solved problems with a similar level of complexity?

Industry / Market

Is industry experience genuinely necessary?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Helpful but not essential

Why?

Environment

What type of environment must the candidate be comfortable operating in?

- ☐ High ambiguity
 - ☐ Rapid growth
 - ☐ Restructuring
 - ☐ Limited resources
 - ☐ International expansion
 - ☐ High regulatory pressure
 - ☐ Founder-led environment
 - ☐ Other:
-

07 — EVIDENCE FRAMEWORK

How will we test each competency?

Every critical competency should have a defined way to evaluate it.

Do not ask: "Are you good at building teams?"

Ask for evidence. "Tell us about the last team you built from scratch. How many people did you hire? What went wrong? What would you do differently?"

COMPETENCY

Interview Question:

Evidence We Want to Hear:

Evidence That Would Raise Concerns:

COMPETENCY

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COMPETENCY

Interview Question:

Evidence We Want to Hear:

Evidence That Would Raise Concerns:

08 — INTERVIEW ARCHITECTURE

What should each stage of the process evaluate?

Avoid repeating the same conversation across multiple interviews. Each stage should have a clear purpose.

STAGE 01 — MOTIVATION & CONTEXT

Purpose:

Understand why the candidate is considering a move and whether the role matches their expectations.

Questions to Answer:

- *Why are they considering a move?*
- *What environment do they perform best in?*
- *What are they looking for next?*
- *Does the role match their expectations?*

Interviewer:

Decision Criteria:

STAGE 02 — TRACK RECORD & BEHAVIORAL EVIDENCE

Purpose:

Understand whether the candidate has solved comparable problems before.

Questions to Answer:

- *What similar challenges have they faced?*
- *What decisions did they make?*
- *What was their individual contribution?*
- *What results did they achieve?*
- *What went wrong?*

Interviewer:

Decision Criteria:

STAGE 03 — STRATEGIC & CONTEXTUAL ASSESSMENT

Purpose:

Understand how the candidate thinks and operates in a situation similar to the one they will actually face.

Evaluate:

- ☐ *Problem structuring*
- ☐ *Prioritization*
- ☐ *Decision-making*
- ☐ *Strategic thinking*
- ☐ *Communication*
- ☐ *Adaptability*

Case / Scenario:

Interviewer:

Decision Criteria:

09 — CANDIDATE SCORECARD

Evaluate every candidate against the same criteria.

Do not score based on general impressions. Every score must be supported by specific evidence.

Scoring Scale

5 — Exceptional Evidence

Clear, highly relevant evidence of successfully solving comparable problems.

4 — Strong Evidence

Strong evidence with minor gaps or contextual differences.

3 — Acceptable Evidence

Sufficient evidence, but not particularly strong or directly comparable.

2 — Significant Concerns

Limited evidence or meaningful contextual gaps.

1 — Clear Mismatch

Insufficient capability or evidence for a critical requirement.

CANDIDATE: _____

Evaluation Matrix

Criteria	Weight	Score 1–5	Evidence
Outcome 01			
Outcome 02			
Outcome 03			
Competency 01			
Competency 02			
Competency 03			
Contextual Fit			
Strategic Thinking			
Decision-Making			

Overall Score

Weighted Score:

Critical Competency Gaps

Strongest Evidence

Biggest Concern

10 — FINAL DECISION

Make the decision based on evidence, not impressions.

What is the strongest evidence that this person can succeed?

What is the biggest risk?

What evidence is still missing?

What critical requirements does the candidate not meet?

What assumptions are we making?

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

- ☐ Strong Hire
- ☐ Hire
- ☐ Hire with Reservations
- ☐ Do Not Hire

Why?

THE FINAL TEST

Before making an offer, ask your hiring team:

Would we still hire this person if their CV looked less impressive?

If the answer is no, return to the evidence.

Ask:

- *What outcomes have they actually delivered?*
- *What comparable problems have they solved?*
- *What evidence supports our confidence?*
- *Which critical competencies remain unproven?*
- *Are we choosing this person because they are genuinely aligned — or because they are impressive?*

THE NEOHIRING SCORECARD PRINCIPLE

A Scorecard does not eliminate judgment from executive hiring.

It makes judgment more disciplined.

The goal is not to remove human intuition entirely.

The goal is to prevent intuition from becoming the primary evidence behind a high-stakes hiring decision.

Define success.

Identify the evidence.

Evaluate consistently.

Hire with clarity.

Precision Talent. Strategic Thinking.