

Hiring against the forest

Most job openings are written from memory and vibes — a list of technologies, some adjectives, "5+ years." A forest lets you write one from the map instead.

Define the opening by roots and target rank. The forest's roots are the derived, honest answer to "what must someone already hold to enter this role?" Add the rank you're hiring at, and the opening defines itself: the entry requirements, plus the rank's skill set at its levels. Sharper than buzzwords — for you *and* for candidates, who can see what the job actually is.

Separate must-have from grow-into. This is the hiring mistake the map prevents best. Roots and the entry rank are the bar; everything above is what the role *teaches*. Screening candidates out on skills the job exists to develop shrinks your pipeline for no reason — you're demanding people pre-learn the growth you're supposedly offering. The forest makes the line explicit: below this line, must arrive with; above it, will grow here.

Read candidates onto the map. Interviews assess the same way the team assesses — skills at levels, using the same behavioural tells (needs help along the way? delivers alone? could teach it?). Each candidate becomes a shape on the heat map: this one closes the testing gap, that one duplicates strengths you already have. "Best candidate" becomes "best candidate *for these gaps*" — a question the map answers almost by itself.

A quiet bonus: openings written this way promise honestly. Candidates arrive knowing what they must bring and what they'll grow — and the ones the map welcomes tend to be the ones the forest was missing.



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