



## EXAMPLE INTERVIEW PROCESS

The table below outlines the interview process we recommend for most early-stage hardtech companies. It's designed to:

- 1) identify the real and qualified candidates (the % of AI-generated resumes and fake applicants is only increasing)
- 2) make great hires in terms of alignment for the role and for the company culture you want to foster and
- 2) involve the hiring team at appropriate stages to share in the workload while conserving their time

### Steps in the Interview Process

Interview Stage	Who does it?	Where is it, and for how long?	What is the purpose of this stage?	How does the candidate get to the next stage?
Application Review	Applestone Consulting	<1 minute per applicant	Review the applicants resume and see if they meet the basic qualifications for the role on-paper.	The reviewer assesses candidates and leaves feedback, advancing or rejecting based upon the qualifications for the role.
[OPTIONAL - ONLY WHEN NEEDED] Candidate Questionnaire	Applestone Consulting	5 minutes review time	Provide an additional check of applicant qualifications when application materials don't fully capture the qualifications for the role, or the volume of "on-paper" qualified applicants is high.  This is conducted to avoid people entering the interview process who would be quickly found to lack the necessary qualifications.	Review candidate responses and complete a scorecard. Advances or rejects based upon outcome.

Values Alignment Screening Call	Applestone Consulting	30 minutes on phone or video	<p>The purpose of the Values Alignment Screening Call is to discover alignment with our company and culture. This is the first stage because we are building the cultural foundation of our company. People can be brilliant in a technical sense, but if they don't align with who we are, then it's not a good idea to hire them.</p> <p>In this interview, we also look for alignment between the candidate's career goals and the growth path for the role they are applying to.</p> <p>In addition, we verify that they meet the on-site work requirements for the role, are eligible for employment here, and are aligned with the salary range.</p>	Interviewer determines that the candidate is sufficiently aligned with your vision and values and meets basic work requirements. They then schedule the next interview for any candidate that passes the Values Alignment Screening Call.
Skills and Expertise Interview	Hiring Manager for the role	45-60 minutes on phone or video	The purpose of the Skills and Expertise Interview is for the hiring manager to determine whether or not the candidate's background is indeed relevant to the role and if they are likely to have the skills necessary to be successful in the role.	The Hiring Manager determines that the candidate has a relevant background and is likely to have the skills necessary to be successful in the role and indicates rejection or advance in the scorecard for the interview. AC then either rejects the candidate or schedules the next interview.
Technical Interview	Hiring Manager and at least one designee from the appropriate team	60-90 minutes for candidate interview. May also may include hiring team discussion afterwards. The candidate will present either the requested information with Q&A throughout. Remember to include an opportunity	<p>The purposes of the Technical Interview are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To evaluate the expertise of the candidate in action through a Technical Assessment, and</li> <li>• To see how the candidate interacts with some of their future teammates.</li> </ul> <p>The Technical Assessment can consist of</p>	Each member of the interview panel writes their independent opinion on whether or not the candidate demonstrated the expertise, appropriate social interactions, and communication skills necessary for the job. At the hiring manager's discretion, they move on to the next stage. AC either rejects or coordinates the on-site interview

		<p>for the candidate to ask questions of the interview panel.</p> <p>For a Skills Demonstration, the hiring manager structures the length of time and group involved around the specific needs for the role.</p>	<p>any combination of the three technical interview types as needed for a particular role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior Work Presentation</li> <li>• Design Exercise</li> <li>• Skills Demonstration.</li> </ul> <p>The Skills Demonstration is most often used for non-technical roles and performed at the time of the interview. For some roles, the Skills Demonstration may need to be performed on-site and rolled into the On-site Interview Stage.</p>	stage.
Signing of NDA	Applestone Consulting	Via email and/or Docusign	The candidate will be coming on-site and potentially digging into confidential details about our company and technology, so we want them to understand the confidentiality requirements.	Once they sign, they are ready to come on-site.
On-site Interview	Hiring Manager, one co-founder, and other team members who would be working with the hire.	On-site for 120 minutes. This consists of: 30 minute site tour, 60 minutes with team members (either in structured interviews or informal introduction/conversations), 30 minutes with a company co-founder or other leadership not yet included in the interview process.	<p>The purposes of the On-site interview are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give the candidate a chance to see our facility and picture themselves joining the company.</li> <li>• Give our executive leadership team the opportunity to get the candidate excited about our vision, and possibly exercise any veto power on hiring the candidate.</li> <li>• Provide an additional opportunity for internal stakeholders to meet and evaluate the candidate.</li> <li>• Give the People Ops leader the opportunity to pre-align on the terms of the offer we may make the candidate and request references.</li> </ul>	The company co-founder gives a positive review to the hiring manager for the candidate. Other interviewers provide feedback/scorecards for their portion of the interview.

Reference Calls	Applestone Consulting (or Hiring Manager if desired)	2-3 reference calls (depending on needs of the role), no more than 15 minutes each.	<p>The purposes of the reference calls are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Resolve any open questions about their prior experience. I.e. What were they responsible for?</li> <li>● Determine what motivates this candidate.</li> <li>● Determine what is the best way to work with this candidate.</li> <li>● Ask if there is anything not apparent that we should know about the candidate.</li> </ul>	<p>The candidate provides at least three references.</p> <p>If the reference calls raise flags, AC and the Hiring Manager confer and decide if an additional conversation with the candidate is needed. If they advance, AC gets final approval for the compensation package range and schedules an Offer Negotiation call with the candidate.</p>
Offer Negotiation and Benefits Review	Applestone Consulting or CEO/Operations Leader	15-30 minute call	<p>The primary purpose of this call is to align with the candidate on the terms of their offer, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Salary</li> <li>● Equity</li> <li>● Title</li> <li>● Start Date</li> </ul> <p>The secondary purpose of this call is to review the benefits/PTO, etc offered by the company.</p>	<p>The candidate agrees to a package that would be compelling, and then either AC or the company drafts an offer letter. The offer letter is sent to the candidate via email with benefits information and a copy of the required employee agreement.</p>

**Want support with your hiring process?**

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