

Skills Based Hiring Toolkit



Test Partnership

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Introduction

Skills-based hiring has been on the rise since about 2023 and remains a hot topic in 2026. The core principles aren't new; hire people based on what they are capable of rather than based on their experience or background, but the term "skills-based" has inspired many more organisations to take note and adopt the benefits.

This toolkit will walk you through the steps you need to take to implement skills-based hiring in your organisation.

This toolkit has been prepared by Test Partnership. Test Partnership develop candidate assessments, and have been advising companies how to adopt skills-based hiring for years. The process is tried and tested, so we thought we'd lay it all out in this toolkit for other people to follow.

Adopting a skills-first hiring strategy significantly broadens the pool of capable candidates. One study by LinkedIn¹ suggests you can expect to increase your talent pool by as much as 10 times.

Focusing on a candidate's capabilities (or "skills") over factors like educational background improves diversity and fairness in your hiring process. A skills-first approach builds a resilient workforce against shifts in technology and the wider commercial landscape. By identifying current skills within your team and working out what skills you need to meet your business objectives, you can implement more precise hiring, development, and mobility initiatives, ultimately boosting your retention rate² by up to 34%.

(1) <https://economicgraph.linkedin.com/research/skills-first-report>

(2) <https://www.linkedin.com/business/talent/blog/talent-strategy/why-skills-based-hiring-starts-with-job-descriptions>

This toolkit will guide you through what skills are, how to identify the skills you need, and how to assess who has those skills. Get all of these right, and you will have an efficient, effective, and fair skills-based hiring process.

Working through this toolkit should give you all the steps you need to transition to a skills-based hiring process. However, if you ever need some expert guidance the friendly team at Test Partnership are happy to talk you through any of it.

Talk to the skills-based experts Tests Partnership here: [book a call](#).



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Contents

Section 1:	Introduction
Section 2:	Identifying soft skills required for your role
Section 3:	Identifying hard skills required for your role
Section 4:	Identifying cognitive skills required for your role
Section 5:	Understand how skills can be assessed
Section 6:	Decide how to assess skills
Section 7:	Next steps

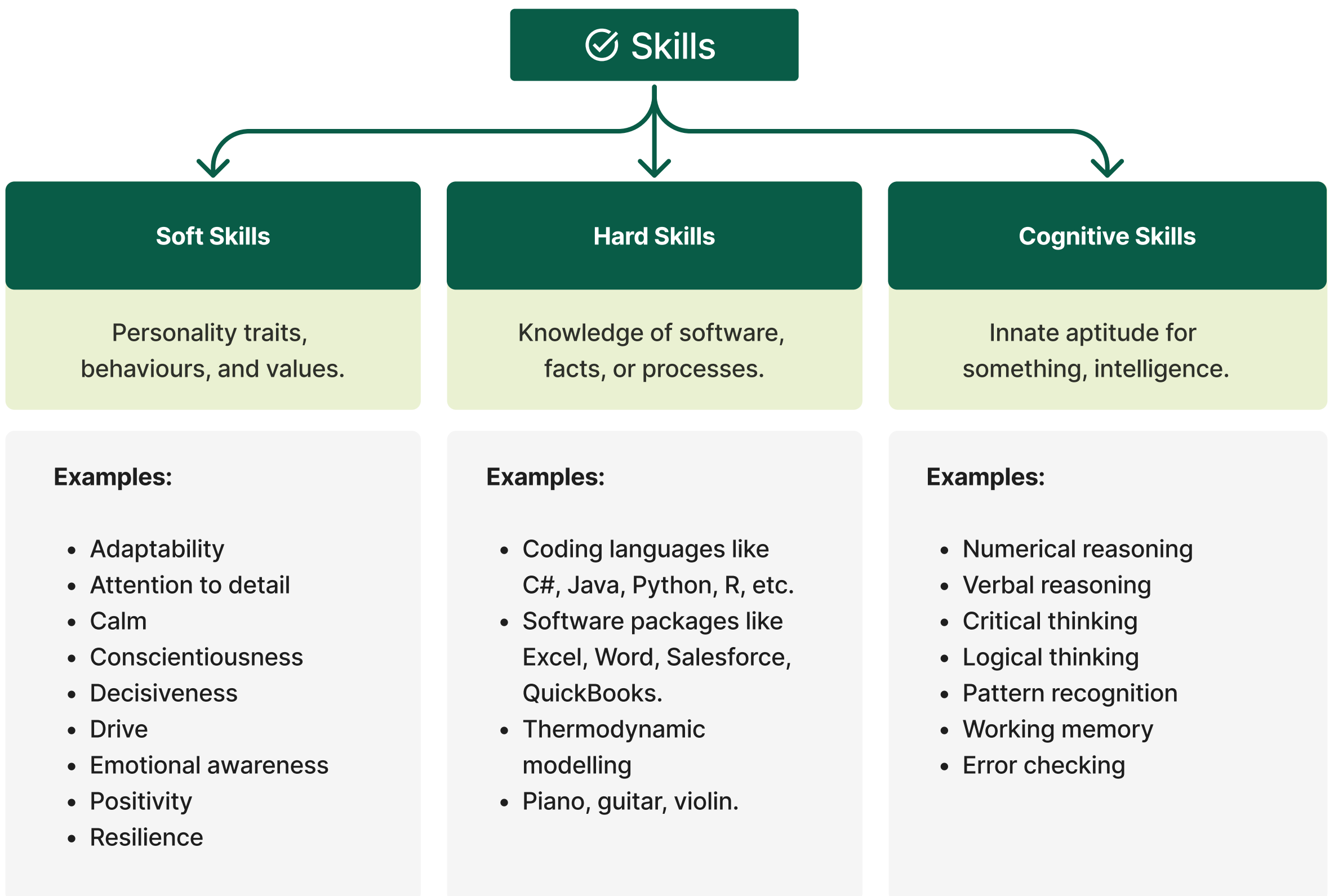
SECTION 1: Understanding what skills are

Before you start thinking about the skills required to be successful in a role, it's important to understand what is generally meant by skills.

Skills are things that people are good at. Skills are not the same as qualifications or years of experience. Just having experience in something doesn't necessarily make you good at it. To determine whether someone is good at something, we need a process to objectively assess how good they are. What we're trying to do with skills-based hiring is **find the best person for the job** based on what they can do rather than what they have experienced.

1.1 Breaking down the concept of skills

It's common to break down skills into three types of skill: soft skills; hard skills; and cognitive skills.



Soft Skills

Personality traits, behaviours, and values.

Notes

Soft skills can't easily be learned or changed; you are who you are.

It's not possible to have high levels of every soft skill, for example someone who is naturally very trusting will have to work harder at being vigilant.

Soft skills are what make up your personality; they contribute to how you approach tasks and what situations you are likely to thrive in.

The right combination of soft skills can be the difference between a star employee and a premature leaver.

Hard Skills

Knowledge of software, facts, or processes.

Notes

Hard skills can be learnt. Typically this would be from education, training, practice, or experience.

Depending on the hard skill, some people may find it easier to learn a skill than others. For example someone with an eye for aesthetics will probably enjoy learning Photoshop.

Think whether you need someone to possess a hard skill from day one, or whether you actually want someone who is interested in learning multiple hard skills over the course of their career.

Cognitive Skills

Innate aptitude for something, intelligence.

Notes

Cognitive skills can't be learnt; they're related to your innate level of intelligence.

Combining multiple aptitudes (for example numerical, verbal, and inductive) gives a good measure of overall 'cognitive ability'. Research suggests that cognitive ability is the best predictor of job performance (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998) as it feeds into everything the employee does.

'Smart' people learn faster, solve problems faster, and generally intuit the best thing to do at the best time. Hiring for cognitive ability is one of the best things you can do.

Soft skills and cognitive skills are perhaps the most important. A mixed blend of soft skills and cognitive skills will be required for every role. However, only specialist roles tend to demand hard skills; for example a knee surgeon needs to know the anatomy of a knee. Knowledge of a particular software package might eventually become outdated, so in many roles the ability to learn new hard skills is more important than having those hard skills in the first place.

Compare the idea of skills with the alternative: experience or qualifications:

⊗ Experience

Experience

Time spent in a role or doing something

Examples:

- Two years in retail
- One year leading a team
- Two years as CEO
- One year building a marketing plan
- Two years growing a startup
- One year back-packing across Australia

Qualifications

Approved body certifies the achievement

Examples:

- A levels
- PRINCE2 certification
- University degree
- PhD
- Chartership
- MBA
- Olympic medal 🏅

Having these experience says nothing of how well they did them. Luck, and circumstance might have led someone to get work experience at a law firm, but what you really want to know is will they be a good lawyer if you hire them?

Requiring minimum years of work experience is a common trap where people inadvertently introduce socio-economic biases into the recruitment process. Well-connected parents, prestigious schooling, or the ability to accept unpaid work all risk distorting the demographics of the candidates you filter in/out.

Qualifications are great to prove someone has completed some formal training or achievement, but think carefully about what that qualification is measuring.

The classic example is a degree. Getting a degree is difficult, but what skills does it show you have? Perhaps: analytical thinking; goal-focus; data analysis; planning; self-directed learning...beer drinking ability. But do you definitely need all of those, and wouldn't it be easier to just measure those skills if that's what you need?

We're not saying don't require a degree or years of experience, we're just saying make sure you have a good reason for asking for it.

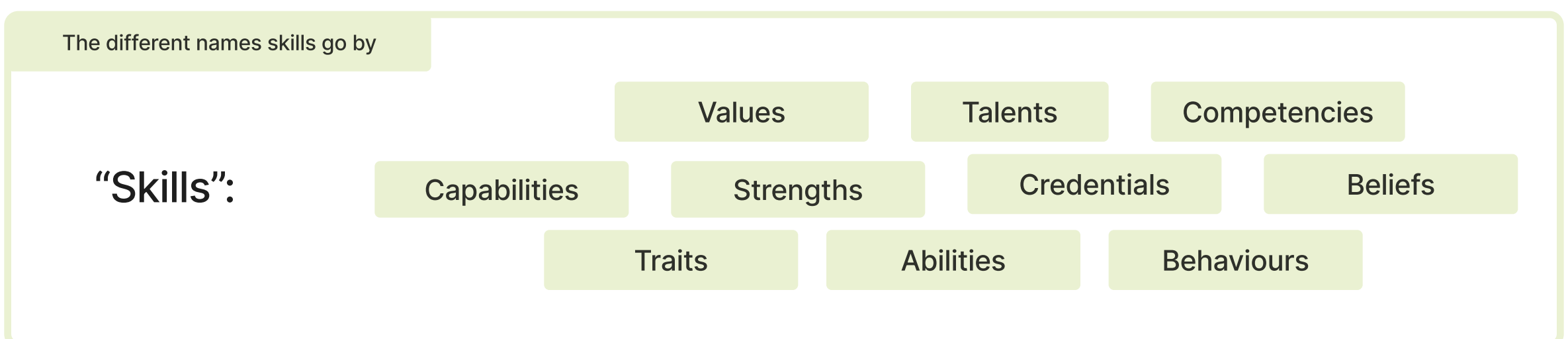
Remember, by carefully identifying your requirements you will be opening up your talent pool to potentially better candidates and a more diverse set of candidates. The key is to avoid setting **arbitrary requirements**.

If you were to select candidates based on experience or qualifications, you would unnecessarily be excluding candidates and narrowing your talent pool. By adopting skills-based hiring you get access to a wider talent pool and you more closely align the employee with the role. Win-win.

Skills-based hiring is a process that aims to accurately identify the skills (rather than education or work experience) you need to be successful in a role, then find candidates who have those skills. This ensures an accurate and fair talent acquisition process that enables organisations to unlock a much larger talent pool than they otherwise would.

1.2 Skills can go by many names

Now that you understand what is meant by skills-based hiring (as opposed to experience-based hiring), you'll recognise that skills can go by many names. Since skills are basically just human attributes, you might hear people refer to them interchangeably as follows:



1.3 Let's get started applying the toolkit

Now you've read about the differences between skills-based hiring and experience-based hiring, it's time to work through this toolkit. It's best if you have a job you are hiring for, or will have soon, so that you can apply the principles to a working example. This toolkit can be used as a reference document, but it's most powerful when you apply each step to a real role you are hiring for.

Checkpoint

- I've read about the differences between skills-based hiring and experienced-based hiring.
- I have a job post in mind which I can apply this toolkit to.

SECTION 2: Identifying soft skills required for your role

The first step to adopting an effective skills-based hiring approach is to establish the skills you are looking for. This is important to get right because it will affect your whole scoring system on who to hire. We've broken this process down into three sections:

Section 2: you will identify the **soft skills** required for your role.

Section 3: you will identify the **hard skills** required for your role

Section 4: you will identify the **cognitive skills** required for your role

2.1 Identify ~10 soft skills with your team

Discuss the requirement with HR, line managers, hiring managers, and existing employees in similar roles. You're trying to establish the skills that make someone successful in the role you're hiring for. You can get this information from many sources within your organisation.

Time to **brainstorm** the skills you each think are required to be successful in the role. It's best to do this with your hiring / TA team, but if the 'team' is just you that's fine too. Remember, it's only the skills that you think are required for **success** in the role. This is your chance to model the perfect employee 🤖.

Not sure about going through toolkit this on your own? Have a chat with our friendly team at Test Partnership and we can help you get setup with skills-based hiring in no time.

Book a call: <https://www.testpartnership.com/book-a-call.html>

Your first task, which begins on the next page, will be to identify what soft skills are required for your role. After that we will do the same for hard skills and cognitive skills until we have a full list of skills required for your role.

At this brainstorming stage, anything goes; list everything you can think of, and then discuss what each skill is and why someone in the role would or would not need it. We're aiming for about 10 soft skills but this is just a guide; **anywhere between six and twelve** is a good balance between focusing on the important skills and having a broad talent pool. Drop any skills that you think you could live without.

Task 2.1 →

TASK: Brainstorm the top 10 soft skills you think are needed for the role

Time to get some pens and start thinking about the role.

TIP: Remember “soft skills” are related to personality and behaviour.

TIP: Check our list of soft skills in **Appendix A** for ideas on what soft skills could go here.

TIP: It might help to break this down into sections. For example what soft skills are needed to: interact with colleagues and clients; produce high quality work; progress in their career...etc.

On the next page is an example of what this brainstorm might look like. But no peeking until you're finished 😊.

You should now have a list of about 10 soft skills required to be successful in the role. Here's an example of what you might have for a fictional engineering role:

Soft skills

<i>Confident -</i>	<i>we need them to be able to talk to clients.</i>	<i>Inquisitive -</i>	<i>this helps them investigate problems, learn and pick up knowledge.</i>
<i>Organised -</i>	<i>With all the different clients and systems, being organised is important.</i>	<i>Methodical -</i>	<i>Some of the calculations they do we need people who can methodically work through complex datasets.</i>
<i>Driven -</i>	<i>High-performers will be driven to succeed, not just plod-along.</i>	<i>Shows initiative -</i>	<i>when they work on-site they need to be able to work autonomously and think on their feet.</i>
<i>self-directed -</i>	<i>candidates need to be able to be in control of their own development.</i>		
<i>Collaborative</i>	<i>Almost everything they do will require good teamwork, so this skill is important.</i>	<i>Diligent -</i>	<i>With all the regs we need people who take the rules seriously and apply them to their work.</i>

Analysing your role and thinking deeply about what skills a high performer will pose can be difficult. You need to understand the role and understand what sort of skills exist. So definitely involve other people in your organisation to help you with this step.

At Test Partnership we've helped hundreds of companies with this step, and we quite enjoy it. If you need help or just want to run something by us please do ask: <https://www.testpartnership.com/book-a-call.html>

Using real data from real jobs, we've built up a database of the skills that map to performance in different roles. We can check what we've done before and see what might apply to your specific situation.

2.2 Record the top 10 soft skills you've identified

From your brainstorming and discussion you should now have about 10 soft skills your superstar model employee will have. Write down these soft skills here.

Task 2.2 →

TASK: Record the top 10 most important soft skills from your brainstorming session

What are the top soft skills that will make your new hire successful?

Soft skill 1	Soft skill 2	Soft skill 3	Soft skill 4
Soft skill 5	Soft skill 6	Soft skill 7	Soft skill 8
Soft skill 9	Soft skill 10		

You don't have to put exactly 10 here, aim for anywhere between 6 and 12 soft skills.

When we come to assess candidates on these soft skills in Section 6, we won't expect candidates to be perfect at all of them; we're just listing what skills we think are important to the role and we'll rank performances later.

SECTION 3: Identifying hard skills required for your role

This Section 3 is similar to Section 2 but this time we're looking for hard skills.

3.1 Identify hard skills with your team

Again, include your colleagues in this discussion; hiring managers, team leaders, and existing employees will all have valuable views on what makes a great employee. We're trying to model the perfect employee here. Even if they don't exist, we're establishing the criteria against which we will measure applicants.

TIP: Remember "hard skills" are generally experiences or knowledge people acquire over time. No one is born with the knowledge of how an engine works for example, but sometimes a job requires that knowledge. In many jobs it's fine to teach people these skills as they go and you don't need them to arrive with that knowledge.

TIP: check our list of hard skills in **Appendix B** for examples of what you could list here.

Task 3.1 →

TASK: Brainstorm the hard skills you think are needed for the role

Think about the hard skills your ideal candidate will possess.

Asking for 'two years of experience' in something might put off candidates who have learnt that thing outside of work, for example they followed a course online or picked it up from a personal project. If they have the knowledge, does it matter how they acquired it? So ask for 'knowledge of x' or 'familiarity with x' instead of 'years of experience working with x'.

Remember you're trying to filter out candidates based on merit, not on arbitrary or indirect requirements.

You should now have any hard skills you think are required to be successful in the role. Or perhaps, particularly for an early talent role, you don't have any hard skill requirements. Typically school-leaver or graduate roles are looking for people with potential (soft skills and cognitive skills) rather than experience (hard skills).

Here's an example of the hard skills you might have for a fictional engineering role:

Hard Skills

Familiarity with CATIA

We all work with this particular CAD package at an advanced level.

They will need to know the principles of views, layouts, and rendering.

We don't need them to be an advanced user, but our training will not be suitable for someone with zero knowledge of the software.

We could teach them this, but the highest performing candidates will adopt our training faster and more effectively if they already have an existing understanding of CATIA.



Want to know more about assessing skills?
Talk to the skills-based experts at Test Partnership: [book a call](#)

3.2 Check you haven't listed too many hard skills

In most jobs, the candidate can learn on the job. And some hard skills will become redundant over time so there's little point in hiring someone based on that time-limited knowledge. So let's sense-check the hard skills you've listed.

Task 3.2 →

TASK: Review and refine the hard skills from your brainstorm session

What are the hard skills you genuinely need someone to have?

Hard skill 1

- We definitely need someone who has this knowledge from day one, rather than someone whom we can train over time.
- This hard skill will be useful for a long time and won't go out of date soon.
- We've considered whether this requirement will unfairly limit our talent pool.

The third checkbox is to cover things like for example having an MBA; not everyone can afford an MBA so check that this is an actual requirement to perform well, rather than an arbitrary hurdle.

Hard skill 2

- We definitely need someone who has this knowledge from day one, rather than someone whom we can train over time.
- This hard skill will be useful for a long time and won't go out of date soon.
- We've considered whether this requirement will unfairly limit our talent pool.

Hard skill 3

- We definitely need someone who has this knowledge from day one, rather than someone whom we can train over time.
- This hard skill will be useful for a long time and won't go out of date soon.
- We've considered whether this requirement will unfairly limit our talent pool.

So far you've identified soft skills and hard skills for your role. Just one more category to go; cognitive skills....

SECTION 4:

Identifying cognitive skills required for your role

Section 2 was about the soft skills you are looking for i.e. someone's personality traits. This Section 4 is about cognitive skills, which is someone's innate intelligence or aptitude for something.

4.1 Identify cognitive skills with your team

Including anyone else in your team you can find, think about what cognitive skills the 'perfect employee' would have. Ideally you'd need them to be intelligent, but in what particular way? Numerical ability; critical thinking ability; verbal reasoning ability...? In **Appendix C** we list the most common cognitive skills.

Some obvious examples are: a good lawyer will need critical thinking ability; a good actuary will need numerical reasoning ability; and a good software engineer will need inductive reasoning ability.

TIP: Remember "cognitive skills" generally cannot be learnt. People are born with different cognitive abilities in different areas. In all areas, from work to sport to music, you need a combination of natural ability (cognitive skills) and the disposition to work hard (soft skills) to be the best. Let's map out what the best looks like and see if we can hire them.

For this type of skill, unlike say soft skills, you don't have to be super-targeted with the type of cognitive skills you list. For example in a marketing role you might not immediately think the candidate requires numerical ability, but by including numerical ability as a requirement you will be improving the overall measure of cognitive ability, which is an excellent broad predictor of job performance in all roles.

The only downside to requiring too many cognitive skills here is that when we come to assess them (see Section 6) then the selection process takes longer and you risk candidate attrition. It's a balance.

For a quicker (yet equally predictive) measure of general mental ability, MindmetriQ gamified assessments are the perfect choice. They combine ai-resistant design with an improved candidate experience perfect for early-careers.

Here, you will be considering the role you're hiring for and identifying what cognitive abilities you would need from the ideal candidate.

Task 4.1 →

TASK: Identify two to five cognitive skills you think are needed for the role

Think carefully about your role. What abilities would the ideal employee have?

TIP: Check our list of cognitive skills in **Appendix C** for ideas on what to include here.

Cognitive skill 1

Cognitive skill 2

Cognitive skill 3

Cognitive skill 4

Identifying **between two** and **five** cognitive skills is a good balance between staying focused on the relevant skills and getting a complete measure of general cognitive ability. Any more than five cognitive skills could risk putting off candidates from applying.

You should now have the cognitive skills you think are required to be successful in the role.

You will probably find that most roles require a certain level of verbal reasoning ability since most employees are required to communicate. And similarly there is an element of working with numbers in most roles. Even if you don't think a type of cognitive ability is 100% relevant to your role, it's a good idea to include at least two cognitive ability requirements because research repeatedly shows that cognitive ability is the best indicator of future performance. People with high general cognitive intelligence make the best employees in any role, so you probably want to select for it.

Here is an example of the cognitive skills required for our fictional engineering role:

cognitive skills

Numerical reasoning -

A natural ability to work with numbers and datasets is important. We can't teach them to be good with numbers - they have to have an innate ability.

Logical reasoning -

Similar with numerical ability, this feeds into a lot of their work being able to produce design layouts and solve complex problems.

We can't teach them to have a logical mind, they have to have a natural affinity for it.

Mechanical reasoning -

The best candidates will have a natural feeling for forces, thermodynamics, sound, and dynamics. Some people are more inclined to possess this mechanical 'sense of feeling' than others and we want those who have it.

4.2 Pull it all together into one skills list

Now, having considered soft skills, hard skills, and cognitive skills, you have a complete list of the skills you need for your role.

That's the most important, and probably most difficult, part of implementing a skills-based approach to hiring. In the next steps (sections 5 and 6) we look at how you go about assessing who has the skills you require.

TIP: See Appendix D for an example job specification that pulls together example soft skills, hard skills, and cognitive skills into a model set of requirements.

Task 4.2 →

TASK: Compile your list of skills

With all the hard work you've done thinking about the skills you need, now you can pull together your lists into one definitive list of skills. You can then update your job adverts to include your list of required skills.

Soft skills

Hard skills

Cognitive skills

Well done! You've now identified the set of skills you know are important for your role, and robust reasoning behind why you're asking for these and nothing else.

You could print it out and call it something cool like 'our skills framework' or 'our skills matrix'.

Checkpoint

- I've identified the soft skills required for my role.
- I've identified the hard skills required for my role.
- I've identified the cognitive skills required for my role.
- I've combined my list of soft skills, hard skills, and cognitive skills into one list of requirements.



Want to know more about assessing skills?
Talk to the skills-based experts at Test Partnership: [book a call](#)

SECTION 5:

Understand how skills can be assessed

Now that you've established the skills someone would need to perform well in your role, it's time to decide how to objectively assess those skills. There are lots of different methods and tools to help you assess skills, and here we review the most common methods so you can start to think about which ones would suit you.

If you wanted to measure how fast someone can run the 100m you would just time them with a stopwatch. But how do you measure how confident someone is? Or their level of cognitive ability?

Measuring behavioural traits and cognitive ability is the job of an occupational psychologist. They publish valid assessments such as our soft skills questionnaires and cognitive ability tests.

Valid objective assessment

The validation process of these professional tests can get quite involved but essentially the process is: identify and isolate a single trait to be measured; research the academic literature on how this has been measured before; find the best set of questions that correlate with that trait; perform calibration studies to check the questions are indeed measuring what they intend; check the questions aren't accidentally measuring something else, check that they aren't discriminating against protected groups; benchmark people's scores on the questions to see what constitutes a high score and what constitutes a low score; then publish the questions into a questionnaire and continue to review the data to check they continue to work over time.

The list of assessment methods in this Section 5 contains two types of assessment that are developed and validated in this way; soft skills questionnaires and cognitive ability tests. We've also included some more popular but less scientific methods like interviewing.

In Section 5 over the next few pages we evaluate different ways you could assess various skills. As you read about each one, tick ones you think might suit your situation. This Section 5 is mostly about research, on Section 6 we will decide which assessment methods to go for and when to use them.

In this Section 5 we will cover the pros and cons of popular methods of assessing skills:

Assessment method		Soft skills	Hard skills	Cognitive skills	Recommended
Situational interviews	p. 22	✓			★★☆☆☆
Soft skills questionnaire	p. 24	✓			★★★★★
Cognitive ability tests	p. 26			✓	★★★★★
Knowledge tests / coding tests	p. 28		✓		★★★★☆
Technical interviews	p. 29		✓		★★☆☆☆
Unstructured interviews	p. 30	✓			☆☆☆☆☆

Situational interviews

Assessment method: Situational interviews

Situational interviews don't rely on the candidate having had a particular experience; they pose fictional scenarios and ask what the candidate **would** do in that situation. This has a big advantage over a classic interview where the candidate would traditionally be asked to describe a time when they did something.

Questions about previous experiences are a measure of whether the candidate has done something, not whether they can do something. It also unfairly rewards storytellers.

Each candidate is asked the same set of pre-prepared questions which each map to a specific skill. The goal is to give each candidate a consistent and standardised experience so their scores can be equally compared.

Illustrative example

Example of a good structured interview question

	Interviewer rating:	Interviewer notes:
<p>Situation: Imagine one of your clients has a bad experience with your service. How would you approach that situation?</p>		

Example of a bad structured interview question

	Interviewer rating:	Interviewer notes:
<p>Question: Tell me about a time when one of your clients has a bad experience with your service.</p>		
<p>Follow-up question: How did the client feel about that outcome?</p>		

Used for

Good for assessing:

✓ Soft skills

× Hard skills

× Cognitive skills

Continues on next page...

Assessment method: Situational interviews continued...

Pros and cons

Pros:

- Can add a human touch to the selection process.
- Interviews are a good opportunity for the candidate to ask questions back at you about the organisation.
- Can be done in-house.
- Interviewer can add job-relevant context to the questions.
- Interviews are perfect for assessing interpersonal skills.

Cons:

- Interviewer needs thorough training on how to conduct consistent structured interviews and how not to introduce unconscious bias.
- Time consuming.
- Opportunity for inaccuracies in measurement and scoring.
- Difficult to scale with large candidate volumes.
- This can just be a measure of how well candidates are able to tell stories.

Ratings

Popularity: ★★★★★

High volume: ★☆☆☆☆

Recommended: ★★★★★

Consider

Situational interviews could work for me

Soft skills questionnaire

Assessment method : Soft skills questionnaire

 Valid objective assessment

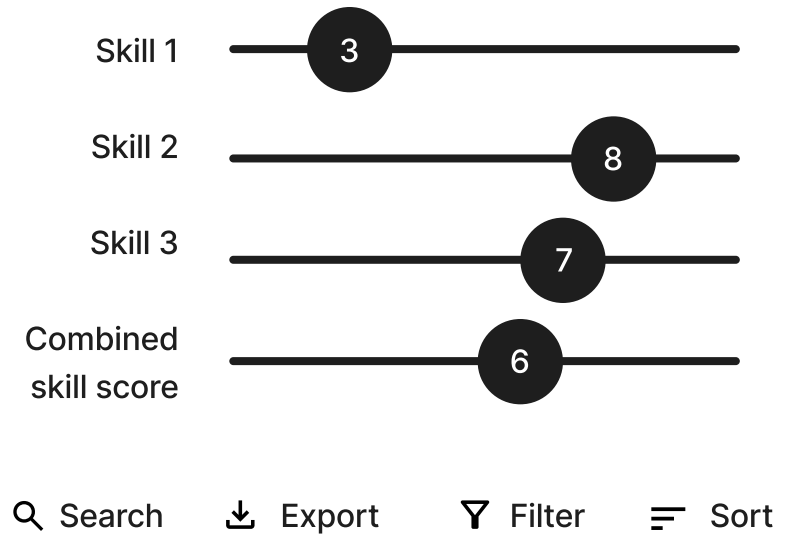
A soft skills questionnaire is a set of multiple-choice questions which have been pre-calibrated to objectively measure a set of skills. One questionnaire will report scores on multiple scales, typically in the form of a PDF report or numerical data for export. Questions are developed to correlate with behavioural characteristics.

Illustrative example

Indicative question format of a soft skills questionnaire

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Statement one example text	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Statement two example text	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Indicative results output from a soft skills questionnaire



Used for

Good for assessing:

Soft skills

Hard skills

Cognitive skills

Continues on next page...

Assessment method: Soft skills questionnaire continued....

Pros and cons

Pros:

- Low administrative overheads: a link can be emailed to lots of candidates. Scores come back automatically and can be filtered, ranked, and exported.
- Consistent and fair. Each scale has been calibrated to measure a particular soft skill.
- Candidates experience: candidates can complete remotely in their own time.
- Reduced bias compared to interviews.
- Easily scales with any volume of candidates.
- Quick to administer and quick to get scores back.
- No test timer means low attrition and high completion rates.

Cons:

- Need budget for an external supplier.

Ratings

Popularity: ★★★★★☆

High volume: ★★★★★★

Recommended: ★★★★★★

Consider

A soft skills questionnaire could work for me.

Cognitive ability tests

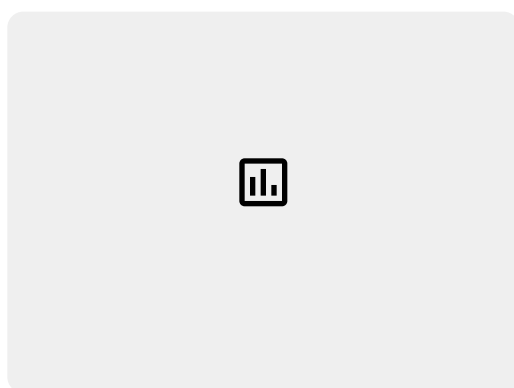
Assessment method: Cognitive ability tests

 Valid objective assessment

Cognitive ability tests, like soft skills questionnaires, have been developed by experts to measure a specific skill, in this case a facet of cognitive ability. You might be familiar with these types of cognitive ability tests: numerical reasoning, verbal reasoning, inductive reasoning, etc. Cognitive ability tests are popular with employers because they require low administration and there is robust research behind to show they predict future job performance.


Illustrative example

Indicative cognitive ability test question

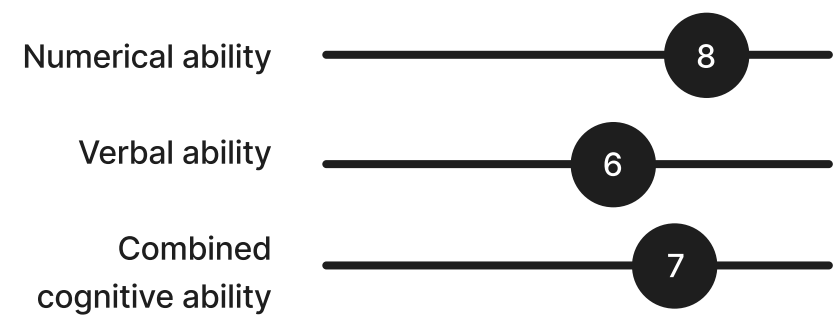


Q1 of 12

By what percentage did annual revenue decrease from 2010 to 2020?

Select - 

Indicative cognitive ability results



 Search  Export  Filter  Sort

Used for

Good for assessing:

 Soft skills

 Hard skills

 Cognitive skills

Continues on next page...

Assessment method: Cognitive ability test continued....

Pros and cons

Pros:

- Low administrative overheads: a link can be emailed to lots of candidates. Scores come back automatically and can be filtered, ranked, and exported.
- Consistent and fair.
- Robust scientific research to demonstrate correlation with job performance.
- Candidates experience: candidates can complete remotely in their own time.
- Reduced bias compared to interviews.
- Easily scales with any volume of candidates.
- Difficult to cheat.

Cons:

- Need budget for an external supplier.

Ratings

Popularity: ★★★★★☆

High volume: ★★★★★

Recommended: ★★★★★

Consider

Cognitive ability tests could work for me

Knowledge tests / coding tests

Assessment method: Knowledge tests / coding tests

Knowledge tests measure how much someone knows about a subject. A common example is coding tests or software knowledge tests. Some tests are multiple choice, while more advanced coding tests ask the candidate to write code to solve a live problem and the software assesses their response. These sorts of tests are assessing how much you know about a subject (hard skills), but are rarely testing your level of intelligence (cognitive skills).

Used for

Good for assessing:

× Soft skills

✓ **Hard skills**

× Cognitive skills

Pros and cons

Pros:

- Low administrative overheads: a link can be emailed to lots of candidates. Scores come back automatically and can be filtered, ranked, and exported.
- Consistent and fair.
- Easily scales with any volume of candidates.

Cons:

- Need budget for an external supplier.
- Can be cheated by AI if using online tests

Ratings

Popularity: ★★★★★

High volume: ★★★★★

Recommended: ★★★★★

Consider

 A knowledge test / coding test could work for me.

Technical interviews

Assessment method: Technical interviews

Technical interviews are carried out by an expert who can probe the candidate's understanding of something. Like all interviews, the trick is to be as consistent and structured as possible. So ask the same questions and try not to allow your unconscious biases to distort ratings.

Used for

Good for assessing:

✓ Soft skills

✓ Hard skills

× Cognitive skills

Pros and cons

Pros:

- Can be used to assess knowledge in almost anything. Particularly useful if you need to assess specialist knowledge in something not widely used.
- Can add a human touch to the selection process.
- Interviews are a good opportunity for the candidate to ask questions back at you about the organisation.
- No chance of cheating, you know for sure you're assessing the candidate's knowledge.
- Can be done in-house.

Cons:

- Time consuming, and takes away resource from your internal team.
- Opportunity for inaccuracies in measurement and scoring.
- Difficult to scale with large candidate volumes.

Ratings

Popularity: ★★★★★

High volume: ★★★★★

Recommended: ★★★★★

Consider

 A technical interview could work for me.

Unstructured interviews

Assessment method: Unstructured interviews

An unstructured interview is basically an informal chat with the candidate. Different candidates might get different questions, so it's impossible to compare like-for-like. It's very old-school, and isn't really measuring much. But it's a good way to have a nice chat with someone. We've included this selection method here for completeness, but we don't recommend its use.

Pros and cons

Pros:

- Can be done in-house.
- Anyone can do it without training.

Cons:

- Inconsistent scoring; unstructured interviews are subjective and scoring is unreliable.
- Opportunity for claims of unfair discrimination.
- Large opportunity to introduce unconscious bias.
- Candidate might get a negative impression of the company, depending on the interviewer.

Ratings

Popularity: ★★★★★

High volume: ★★★★★

Recommended: ★★★★★

Consider

 An unstructured interview could work for me.

SECTION 6:

Decide how to assess skills

Now that you have an understanding of the different ways you can assess various skills, it's time to work out which assessment method is best for you.

6.1 Choosing assessments

Depending on the assessment method you chose, you may want to screen out large numbers of candidates using an automated tool, then use more time-intensive methods (like interviews) for the shortlist that made it through the first stages. The aim here is to consider your current recruitment process and decide what will work for you.

You may already be using an assessment provider, in which case contact them for advice on how to assess your chosen skills. If you don't have an assessment provider, or you'd like to shop around, why not speak to Test Partnership 😊

For small volumes of applicants it might be tempting to try to measure skills in an interview just by asking structured questions, but remember interviews are liable to bias and inaccurate rating scales. And for more than a handful of candidates, the interviewer's equal focus is going to waiver, they will forget exactly what scores they've given to other people, and might make mistakes with rating scales. So even at low volumes of candidates we recommend an objective and consistent assessment method.



Want to know more about assessing skills?
Talk to the skills-based experts at Test Partnership: [book a call](#)

Task 6.1 →

TASK: For the list of skills you've identified, chose a method of assessment.

Considering resources, budget, time, and effectiveness, appraise the different methods of assessing skills listed in Section 5 and choose which will work best for you.

		Method of Assessment		
Soft Skills				
Hard Skills				
Cognitive Skills				

Using the fictional example of an engineering role we've used in previous steps, your list of skills and assessment methods might look something like this:

		Method of Assessment		
		Soft skills questionnaire	Cognitive ability test	Technical interview
Soft Skills	<i>Confident</i>	✓		
	<i>Diligence</i>	✓		
	<i>Drive</i>	✓		
	<i>Initiative</i>	✓		
	<i>Inquisitive</i>	✓		
	<i>Methodical</i>	✓		
	<i>Organised</i>	✓		
	<i>self-directed</i>	✓		
	<i>Teamwork</i>	✓		
Hard Skills	<i>CAD Software</i>			✓
Cognitive Skills	<i>Numerical reasoning</i>		✓	
	<i>Logical reasoning</i>		✓	
	<i>Mechanical reasoning</i>		✓	

6.2 Your selection process

You've chosen the assessments you're going to use to assess each type of skill (soft skills, hard skills, and cognitive skills). So you now have a fair and consistent set of assessments you can use to hire the best candidates for your role; well done 😊

The last thing you need to do is look at the assessments you've chosen and plan how they will fit within your selection process. Which assessment should you use when? Factors to consider here are:

- Is the assessment suitable for high volumes of candidates?
- What's the cost per candidate?
- Is the assessment time-consuming for HR or candidates or both?
- Would the assessment cause a high candidate drop-out rate?
- How much internal resource will the assessment consume?

We're now ready to order the building blocks of the different stages of your selection process to plan out what your selection process looks like.

Pre-qualification requirements are sometimes called "killer-questions". Examples include a cab driver needing a driving licence. Don't screen-out applicants based on, for example, whether they went to a particular university. That's not skills-based hiring, and you will undo all the good you've done in the previous steps!

Picking pass-marks for assessments is important, and it depends largely on how many people you want to progress to the next step. In a simple example; if you have capacity to interview 20 people, then progress the 20 highest scoring candidates. If you just want to ensure a minimum level of skill, set a pass-mark of something like the 30th percentile.

Where you have multiple assessments, you might want to implement a weighted scoring matrix, 'gate' scores, or a combined score. If you'd like to discuss your particular situation, there's always a friendly consultant at Test Partnership willing to help you with this step: [book a call](#).

As always, there's an example on the next page to see how you might fill in this table.

Task 6.2 →

TASK: Decide the sequence of steps in your selection process

Think about each step of your selection process and decide on the order.

Apply	Notes
Pre-qualification	Notes
Assessment 1	Notes: Pass criteria:
Assessment 2	Notes: Pass criteria:
Assessment 3	Notes: Pass criteria:
Final checks	Notes

When you've filled it in, your table might look something like this:

<p>Apply</p> <p><i>Online application form</i></p>	<p>Notes</p> <p><i>All candidates complete the online application form, which populates our ATS to help keep track of applications. They are then invited to assessments.</i></p>
<p>Pre-qualification</p> <p><i>None</i></p>	<p>Notes</p> <p><i>To get the broadest talent pool we will not exclude applicants here. Everyone gets invited to the first assessment.</i></p>
<p>Assessment 1</p> <p><i>Cognitive ability tests</i></p>	<p>Notes:</p> <p><i>For our role, cognitive ability is more important than soft skills, so we will assess cognitive ability first. We know that smart people learn faster and generally are higher achievers, so we need to assess for this. Online testing can easily handle large volumes of candidates.</i></p> <p>Pass criteria:</p> <p><i>Pass-mark of 50th percentile in each test. We need candidates who have above average cognitive ability.</i></p>
<p>Assessment 2</p> <p><i>Soft skills questionnaire.</i></p>	<p>Notes:</p> <p><i>Can handle any number of candidates. Easy to export results from cognitive ability test and invite those who pass to this step.</i></p> <p>Pass criteria:</p> <p><i>For the nine soft skills we have identified for this role (confident, organised, driven, self-directed, collaborative, inquisitive, methodical, shows initiative, and diligent) we will combine the scores into one aggregate score and rank candidates by that. We will pick the top 20.</i></p>



Selection process continues on next page...

Assessment 2

Technical interview

Notes:

Time consuming; we aim to interview just 20 candidates. We can use scores from the previous assessment to rank the candidates and interview the top 20.

Pass criteria:

Technical interviewer will rate each candidate's answers against the structured questions. We sum the scores from each question to get a total score. This total score will be used to make the final decision.

Final checks

None

Notes

We considered reference checks, but these are inconsistent and unreliable.

So now you have a plan for how you will assess the skills you've identified. You've just built your own skills-based hiring process, congratulations! 🎉

After this checkpoint, there's one final page to review everything and think about next steps, then you're done.

Checkpoint

- I've read about some of the different methods available to assess skills.
- I understand which methods of assessment are more objective and valid than others.
- I've sequenced the assessments and decided where they go in my selection process.
- I've decided on the pass-marks for each assessment.

SECTION 7:

Next steps

Congratulations, you've done the hard work of identifying the skills you need for your role, and you've chosen a systematic and objective way to assess those skills. That's your skills based hiring process now setup. The next step is optional, but to earn your gold star it would be great if you could attach metrics to how beneficial your changes are going to be.

7.1 Tracking metrics

We recommend tracking the 'before' and 'after' of implementing a skills-based hiring approach. You may already have some of these numbers, but if you don't, now would be a good time to see if you can collect some stats on the following metrics.

7.1 Action →

Record and track some metrics

If you can collect any of these metrics that will be great, because you will be able to see the benefits of skills-based hiring. Here are some examples of what to collect and track:

- Percent of applicants without a university degree / without a 2:1
- Quality of hire (this could be in the form of manager appraisals or performance reviews)
- Job satisfaction or engagement (can be recorded through an engagement questionnaire like the one we have)
- Employee retention; how long do they stay.
- Percent of applicants who are from minority backgrounds.
- Number of applications per opening.
- Time to hire.
- Percentage of reneged offers.
- Speed of employee progression / promotion.

7.2 Recap

As a final step, let's recap on the important steps to achieving a skills-based hiring approach.

Checkpoint

This is the skills-based hiring process you have just completed

Let's recap the process to check you're happy with everything.

- You've understood the difference between skills-based hiring and experience-based hiring.
- You've identified the skills needed for your job. You've really thought deeply about what skills are required for a candidate to be successful in the role.
- You've broken down the skills requirement into three categories: soft skills; hard skills; and cognitive skills.
- You've considered the different methods available to assess skills, and you've identified which methods you will use and when.
- You've updated your job specification to include your list of skills and you've removed redundant outdated requirements.
- You've started to record metrics on your hiring process so that you can compare before and after benefits of adopting a skills-based approach.

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APPENDIX A: List of Soft Skills

Here we list 66 soft skills for reference. This list is not exhaustive, indeed you could come up with hundreds of soft skills if you care to define them, but this list covers a broad spectrum of personality traits typically reported in the academic literature. We have **grouped** the soft skills into similar families of behavioural qualities, with the parent skill approximately being a combined measure of the associated focused skills.

Soft skill group: agreeableness

Agreeableness	Agreeableness relates to an individual's general level of cooperation in social contexts and whether they are likely to place their trust in others, demonstrate sympathy for those less fortunate, and generally to see the best in people.
Altruistic	An individual's genuine and selfless concern for others, without expecting benefit or reciprocation.
Co-operative	An individual's propensity to avoid confrontation, cause upset or offence to other people.
Principled	An individual's commitment to moral ideals, even when this inhibits the likelihood of achieving a goal.
Sympathetic	An individual's attitude towards those in need, feeling a sense of responsibility for the well-being of others.
Trusting	An individual's likelihood to trust others, see the best in people and rarely question their intentions.

Soft skill group: conscientiousness

Conscientiousness	Conscientiousness relates to an individual's sense of self-discipline, remaining diligent when following rules and procedures, often demonstrating strong attention to detail.
Diligence	An individual's propensity to follow the rules, uphold procedure and fulfil their obligations.
Discipline	An individual's likelihood to remain productive and maintain focus during necessary day-to-day tasks.
Methodical	An individual's attention to detail and their propensity to conduct tasks in a meticulous way.
Self-Confidence	An individual's perceived competence and their sense of confidence in their own abilities.
Vigilance	An individual's consideration of consequences and avoidance of impulsive decision-making.

Appendix A continued...

Soft skill group: emotional intelligence

Emotional Intelligence	Emotional Intelligence refers to an individual's awareness, recognition, and understanding of their own emotions, as well as those of others. This can determine the likelihood of empathising with others, identifying causes of emotions, and whether they make decisions based on emotional intuition.
Emotional Awareness	An individual's level of emotional awareness, recognition and understanding of what they feel and why.
Empathetic	An individual's concern for others' well-being, readily empathising with their situations, challenges and feelings.
Intuitive	An individual's propensity to use feeling, emotions, and intuition as a guide when making decisions.
Negative Expression	An individual's healthy expression of negative emotion, attending to negative feelings and not suppressing them.
Positive Expression	An individual's awareness and recognition of positive emotion, feeling able to express this to others.

Soft skill group: emotional stability

Emotional stability	Emotional Stability relates to an individual's tendency to demonstrate a consistent temperament, the frequency and intensity of emotional highs and lows, and overall emotional reactivity to everyday events.
Assurance	An individual's level of comfort in social settings, rarely concerned with how others perceive them.
Calm	An individual's propensity to take things in their stride, rather than becoming angry or frustrated.
Composure	An individual's attitude towards encountering obstacles, feeling emotionally equipped to overcome stressors.
Positivity	An individual's propensity to feel at ease with themselves and maintain a positive outlook.
Relaxed	An individual's likelihood to feel at ease during stressful periods, rarely feeling overwhelmed.
Restraint	An individual's likelihood to resist urges or act on impulse, often exhibiting self-control in their actions.

Appendix A continued...

Soft skill group: extraversion

Extraversion	Extraversion relates to an individual's need for social interaction, engagement, and confidence in social settings, and a general preference towards high levels of activity.
Adventurous	An individual's appetite for new experiences, need for excitement and engagement in thrill-seeking activities.
Assertive	An individual's propensity to take control of social situations and feel comfortable speaking their mind.
Cheerful	An individual's propensity towards optimism, positive thinking and an enthusiastic outlook on life.
Energetic	An individual's likelihood to remain highly active, keep busy and live their life at a fast pace.
Outgoing	An individual's affinity with others, warmth towards strangers and interest in interpersonal communication.
Sociable	An individual's preference for group membership, participation in crowds and taking centre stage.

Soft skill group: industriousness

Industriousness	Industriousness relates to an individual's personal drive, achievement motivation, and attitude towards set goals. This trait can determine a person's likelihood to take ownership of necessary tasks without procrastination, and to see long-term projects through to completion.
Drive	An individual's desire to succeed or excel in everything they do, often seeking to outperform others.
Goal Focus	An individual's preference for setting and achieving goals, gaining satisfaction from reaching targets.
Initiative	An individual's propensity towards proactivity, starting tasks autonomously without procrastination.
Persistence	An individual's propensity to see long-term projects through to completion, even in the face of adversity.
	An individual's likelihood of seeing short-term tasks through to completion, despite challenges, setbacks and obstacles.

Appendix A continued...

Soft skill group: integrity

Integrity	Integrity relates to an individual's propensity for honesty, fairness, and transparency in relation to both their actions and motives. It can determine the extent to which someone may follow their principles and their willingness to compromise them for personal gain.
Fairness	An individual's propensity to play by the rules, even if breaking the rules increases the chance of success.
Greed Aversion	An individual's disinterest in the pursuit of wealth, status or power, finding motivation elsewhere.
Honesty	An individual's propensity to act sincerely, displaying honesty regardless of whether it is counterproductive.
Modesty	An individual's disinterest in seeking recognition, praise or attention, not requiring external validation.

Soft skill group: competencies

Achievement/Effort	Establishing and maintaining personally challenging achievement goals and exerting effort toward mastering tasks.
Adaptability/Flexibility	Being open to change (positive or negative) and to considerable variety in the workplace.
Analytical Thinking	Analysing information and using logic to address work-related issues and problems.
Attention to Detail	Being careful about detail and thorough in completing work tasks.
Concern for Others	Being sensitive to others' needs and feelings and being understanding and helpful on the job.
Dependability	Being reliable, responsible, and dependable, and fulfilling obligations.
Innovation	Creativity and alternative thinking to develop new ideas for and answers to work-related problems.
Leadership	A willingness to lead, take charge, and offer opinions and direction.
Self Control	Maintaining composure, keeping emotions in check, controlling anger, and avoiding aggressive behaviour, even in very difficult situations.
Social Orientation	Preferring to work with others rather than alone, and being personally connected with others on the job.
Stress Tolerance	Accepting criticism and dealing calmly and effectively with high stress situations.

Appendix A continued...

Soft skill group: resilience

Resilience	Resilience relates to an individual's propensity to overcome stress, particularly in times of difficulty or adversity, maintaining a positive outlook and remaining confident in their own capability to overcome obstacles.
Collected	An individual's emotional consistency, rarely experiencing mood swings or negative emotional reactions.
Confidence	An individual's level of belief concerning their capability to overcome obstacles, setbacks and deterrents.
Self-Directed	An individual's likelihood to feel in control, rarely feeling powerless over their life's direction.
Self-Esteem	An individual's perceived self-worth, concerning positive self-image and recognition of their own worth.

Soft skill group: openness to experience

Openness to Experience	Openness to Experience relates to an individual's readiness to acquire new information, demonstrate acceptance of unconventional ideas, and pursue new experiences.
Artistic	An individual's pursuit of artistic interests, appreciation of aesthetics and the recognition of beauty.
Free Thinking	An individual's propensity to question convention and tradition, in favour of alternative approaches.
Imaginative	An individual's propensity to engage their imagination, reflecting and expanding upon their ideas.
Inquisitive	An individual's propensity towards curiosity, acquiring new information and further understanding.
Spontaneity	An Individual's preference for spontaneous activity, seeking new experiences and acceptance of change.

APPENDIX B: List of Hard Skills

The number of hard skills someone can have is pretty much endless. Knowledge in any particular software package or industry specialism counts as a hard skill. This list is just to give you examples of hard skills.

Remember a hard skill is knowledge someone has acquired. Unless you have an urgent talent need, think carefully before you mandate a hard skill because if you find someone with the right soft skills they will learn hard skills in time.

Hard skill group: accounting & financial

Accounting and Bookkeeping Principles	Intuit QuickBooks
Anti-Money Laundering	MS Dynamics
Financial Accounting	NetSuite
Financial Statements	Sage Simply Accounting
International Financial Reporting Standards	Tax Accounting

Hard skill group: databases & business intelligence

AWS Data Lake	Oracle Database
Amazon Redshift	Oracle Developer
Blockchain	Oracle PL/SQL
Data Science	Oracle SQL
MS Office Access	PostgreSQL
MS Power BI	Predictive Analytics
MS SQL Server	R Programming
MS Visual FoxPro	R for Data Visualization
Machine Learning	Relational Databases
MongoDB	SQL Server Management Studio
MySQL	Tableau
Natural Language Processing	

Appendix B continued...

Hard skill group: application & web development

.NET Core	MS .NET Framework
Active Server Pages	MS Dynamics
ActiveX	MS FrontPage
Adobe Dreamweaver	MS SharePoint
Adobe ColdFusion	MS Visual Basic
Adobe Flash	MS Visual Studio
Ajax Frameworks	Macromedia Dreamweaver
Ajax Programming	Magento
Amazon Web Services	Node.js
Android Programming	Node.js 7
Angular	OOP Concepts
AngularJS	Objective-C Programming
Bootstrap	PHP
Borland Delphi	Perl
C	Programming Design Patterns
C #	Python
C++	React
Cascading Style Sheets	Redux
Cypress	RubyOnRails
Docker	SCSS
Drupal	Salesforce Commerce Cloud
Git	Salesforce Spring
HTML 5	Selenium
Java Enterprise	Software Testing
Java Frameworks	Swift
Java GUI	TypeScript
Java Standard	Visual Basic.NET
Java Technologies: Hibernate, Spring, and Struts	Vue.js
JavaScript	WordPress
Jira	XHTML
jQuery	XML
Joomla	YAML
Kubernetes	

Hard skill group: desktop publishing software

Adobe Acrobat	Adobe PageMaker
Adobe After Effects	Adobe Photoshop
Adobe Creative Cloud	Adobe Premiere
Adobe Fireworks	Corel WordPerfect
Adobe Illustrator	MS Office Publisher
Adobe InDesign	

Appendix B continued...

Hard skill group: engineering, industrial & design

Assembly Skills	Geographic Information System (GIS)
AutoCAD	HVAC Skills
Automotive Mechanic Knowledge	MicroStation
CNC Skills	Operations Management
Carpentry Skills	Oracle Primavera
Civil Engineering Skills	Plumbing Skills
Design Engineering	SolidWorks
Diesel Mechanic Knowledge	Telecommunications
Electrical Engineering Skills	Units and Conversions Skills
Forklift Skills	Welding Knowledge

Hard skill group: hardware & networking

Application Security	Microsoft Azure
Bash	Mobile Device Management
ITIL	Networking
Jenkins	Routing Fundamentals
LAN Switching and Wireless Fundamentals	TCP/IP
MS Exchange Server	VMware
MS System Center Configuration Manager	

Hard skill group: healthcare

Child Care	Medication Safety
Clinical Research	Nursing Skills
Dentistry	Pharmaceutical Knowledge
Emergency Medical Care	Phlebotomy
First Aid	Narcotics
HIPAA	Radiology
Infection and Prevention Control	Veterinary Medicine
Medication Decisions	Wellness and Health Coaching

Appendix B continued...

Hard skill group: human resources

Gender, Diversity and Inclusion	Recruitment
Interview Technique	SAP Success Factors
Employee Negotiations	Taleo
Mental Health	TUPE knowledge
Payroll	Unconscious Bias
Professional Development	Workday
Psychometrics	Workplace Safety

Hard skill group: hardware & networking

Dutch Language	Japanese Language
English Language	Korean Language
English Spelling and Vocabulary	Modern Arabic Language
French Language	Polish Language
German Language	Portuguese Language
Greek Language	Russian Language
Hindi Language	Spanish Language
Italian Language	Urdu Language

Hard skill group: MS Office and operating systems

Firefox	MS Office Visio
Google Chrome OS	MS Office 365
Google Workspace	MS Project
Internet Explorer	MS Teams
Linux	MS Windows
Macintosh OS	MS Windows Server
Microsoft Edge	Slack
MS Office Excel	Unix
MS Office Outlook	Windows Vista
MS Office PowerPoint	Zoom
MS Office Word	

Yes we've put these in alphabetical order...presumably the person who wrote it has the soft skill of attention to detail, and maybe so do you for noticing it 😊.

APPENDIX C: List of Cognitive Skills

Cognitive skills are the areas in which someone has a natural aptitude for. This list of cognitive skills is not exhaustive but covers the most common.

Cognitive skills

Numerical Reasoning
Verbal reasoning
Inductive/Abstract Reasoning
Critical Thinking
Data Interpretation
Mechanical Reasoning

Error Checking
Reading Comprehension
Spatial Reasoning
Logical Thinking
Multitasking

TIP: When the scores from several of these individual cognitive skills are combined, you get a measure of 'general cognitive ability', which has a high correlation with job performance in most roles. So assess general cognitive ability and you already have a fairly good indicator of whether they will be successful in your role.

APPENDIX D: Sample Job Specification

This sample job specification adopts the skills-first methodology. We have used a fictional example of a marketing manager role to illustrate how your job advert could look when you adopt a skills-based hiring approach.

Marketing Manager

at Company

Hybrid | London, UK

Salary: £30,000-40,000

Description:

Company started in 2018 when Bob and Barbara discovered their shared passion for dog food. From that moment the company's vision has been clear: to make the best dog food in the world.

Off the back of strong growth, we are seeking a marketing manager who can help us continue promoting to the world why our dog food is better than any one else's.

The team at Company enjoy great perks like: bring your dog to work; free dog food; free pet insurance....

Responsibilities:

Whilst no two days are the same, your key responsibilities will typically involve:

- Creating marketing assets for web and print.
- Managing a team of designers and freelancers to create marketing assets.
- Building targeted messaging on social media platforms.
- Creating engaging email marketing campaigns.
-etc

What we're looking for:

- A strategic thinker who can see the bigger picture and communicate it clearly to others.
- Creative, with strong attention to detail - you care about the quality of the work, not just getting it out the door.
- Analytically minded and comfortable working with data to inform decisions.
- A strong communicator, both written and verbal, who can present ideas confidently.
- Familiarity with analytics tools (GA4, Ahrefs, SEMrush or similar) and CRM or marketing automation platforms (HubSpot, Pipedrive or similar).

The typical "requirements" section becomes a friendly and inviting list of what you're looking for. You don't need to list every singular skill you will be assessing them on, as this is a candidate-facing document. Keep your internal list of skills, but repackage them in a more conversational manner in your job spec.

Appendix D continued...

⚠ Consider whether experience is actually necessary

- Experience with setting up and optimising Google Analytics campaigns.

⊗ Avoid

- Minimum 2 years experience at a marketing agency or in-house marketer role
- BSc/MSc degree in Marketing or related field

Benefits:

✓ Give salary based on skills

Salary: £30,000 - £40,000 p.a.

⊗ Avoid salary based on experience

Salary: £30,000 - £40,000 p.a. dependent on experience.

TIP: When you see “dependent on experience” salary ranges, it’s there as a proxy for ability. But as we’re not prioritising experience, there’s no need to base their pay on years in the field. Instead offer a salary that reflects how strong their skill ratings are, as that is a better measure of their future performance.

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Skills Based Hiring Toolkit

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