

FICTIONAL DEMONSTRATION

A hiring plan for a founder led team

Example brief: a 35-person robotics company wants to prepare a field pilot. It has approval to hire three people and a founder who currently makes every recruiting decision. The following priorities are illustrative and must be agreed with the actual buyer.

Priority and role	Business reason	Decision owner and evidence
1 Robotics systems engineer	Reduce integration failures that threaten the pilot.	CTO owns technical bar. Evidence: deployed systems, diagnosis of field faults and safe changes.
2 Deployment lead	Prepare customer handoffs and make field work repeatable.	COO owns readiness. Evidence: operating a deployment plan, incident escalation and customer expectations.
3 ML research engineer	Improve a model only after the pilot constraints are clear.	CTO confirms need and timing. Evidence: evaluation choices and measured benefit against the present baseline.

First month of decisions

Week 1: agree on the pilot milestone, hiring order and role scorecard. Name the person who can make each decision.

Week 2: review the first evidence from the search and calibrate against the scorecard. Change the profile if the business requirement was wrong.

Week 3: review interview feedback and stage aging. Resolve contradictory assessment before adding another interview.

Week 4: review decisions made, unresolved risks and what the team should do next.

Weekly review record: priority role; stage counts; candidates awaiting a decision; time in stage; decision owner; next action; due date; and what changed since the previous review. Counts alone do not establish a hiring problem.

Example recommendation: start with the systems engineer and deployment lead. Confirm that the existing team cannot address the ML requirement before approving the third search. This is a recommendation from the fictional brief, not a general rule about robotics hiring.

A role scorecard for a robotics systems engineer

Example role outcome: improve the reliability of the pilot integration and leave the team with a repeatable way to diagnose field faults. Agree the role outcome before assessing candidates.

Criterion	Evidence to seek	Weight
Integration judgment	Explains a shipped system, interfaces, failure mode and how the diagnosis changed the implementation.	30%
Reliability and safety	Describes testing, rollback or safe-state behavior and responsibility during a field incident.	25%
Debugging under uncertainty	Separates evidence from guesses and chooses the next test that reduces uncertainty.	25%
Working with the team	Explains tradeoffs clearly, documents handoffs and asks for missing context.	20%

Rating anchors: 1 means little relevant evidence; 2 means partial evidence with material gaps; 3 means clear relevant evidence for the agreed scope; 4 means repeated evidence of independently handling comparable work. Record the evidence before the rating. Mark missing evidence as unknown rather than filling it with an average score.

A focused interview outline

First 5 minutes: agree which project the candidate will discuss.

Next 15 minutes: ask what failed, how they investigated and which change they made.

Next 15 minutes: introduce one changed operating constraint and explore the tradeoff.

Next 5 minutes: ask how the work was handed over and what the team learned.

Final 5 minutes: candidate questions and next steps.

Debrief example: the candidate gave clear evidence of integration diagnosis but no relevant safety decision. The interviewer records that gap and recommends one focused follow-up. The hiring manager owns the decision. The weighted score supports the discussion; it does not replace judgment or resolve missing evidence.