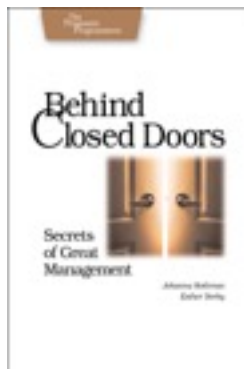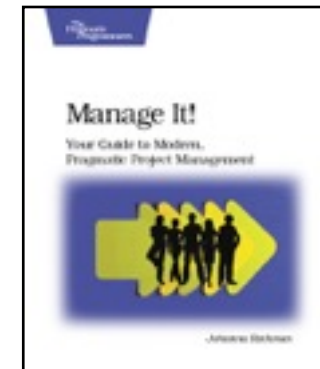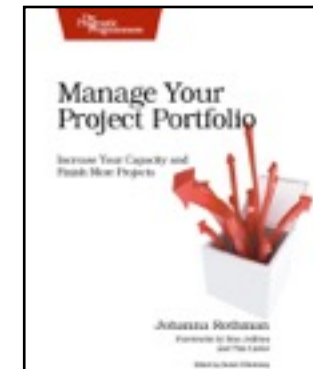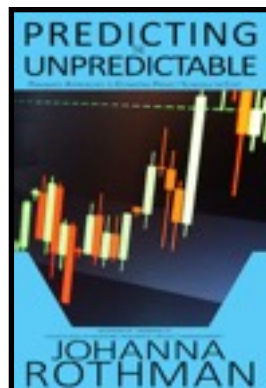# Agile Hiring:
It's a Team Sport

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What do You Normally Do When You Hire?

Process Frustrations

- You receive too many resumes

    - You don't see people you want to talk to

- You don't know if you're asking questions that help you know if a candidate is right

- The entire team doesn't participate

Cultural Fit Frustrations

- "No chemistry"

- "Not such a great fit"

- Candidate doesn't want the offer—and it's not a salary issue

- Wouldn't it be nice if you could apply agile approaches?
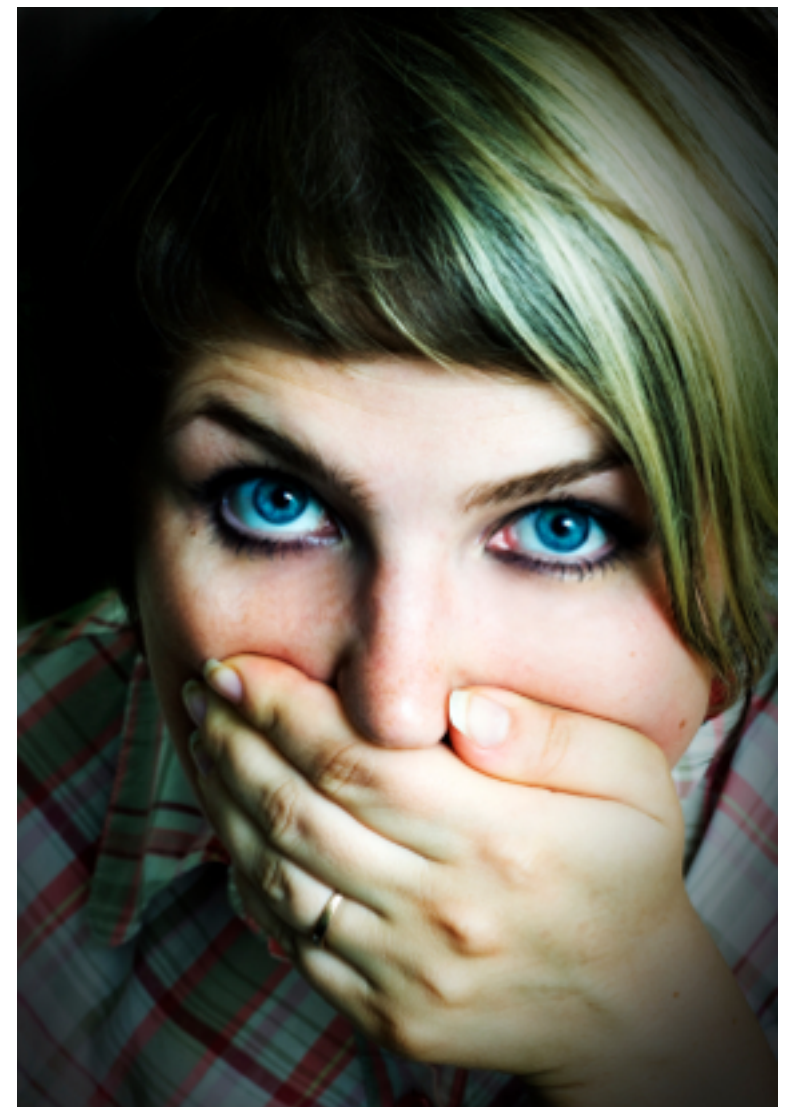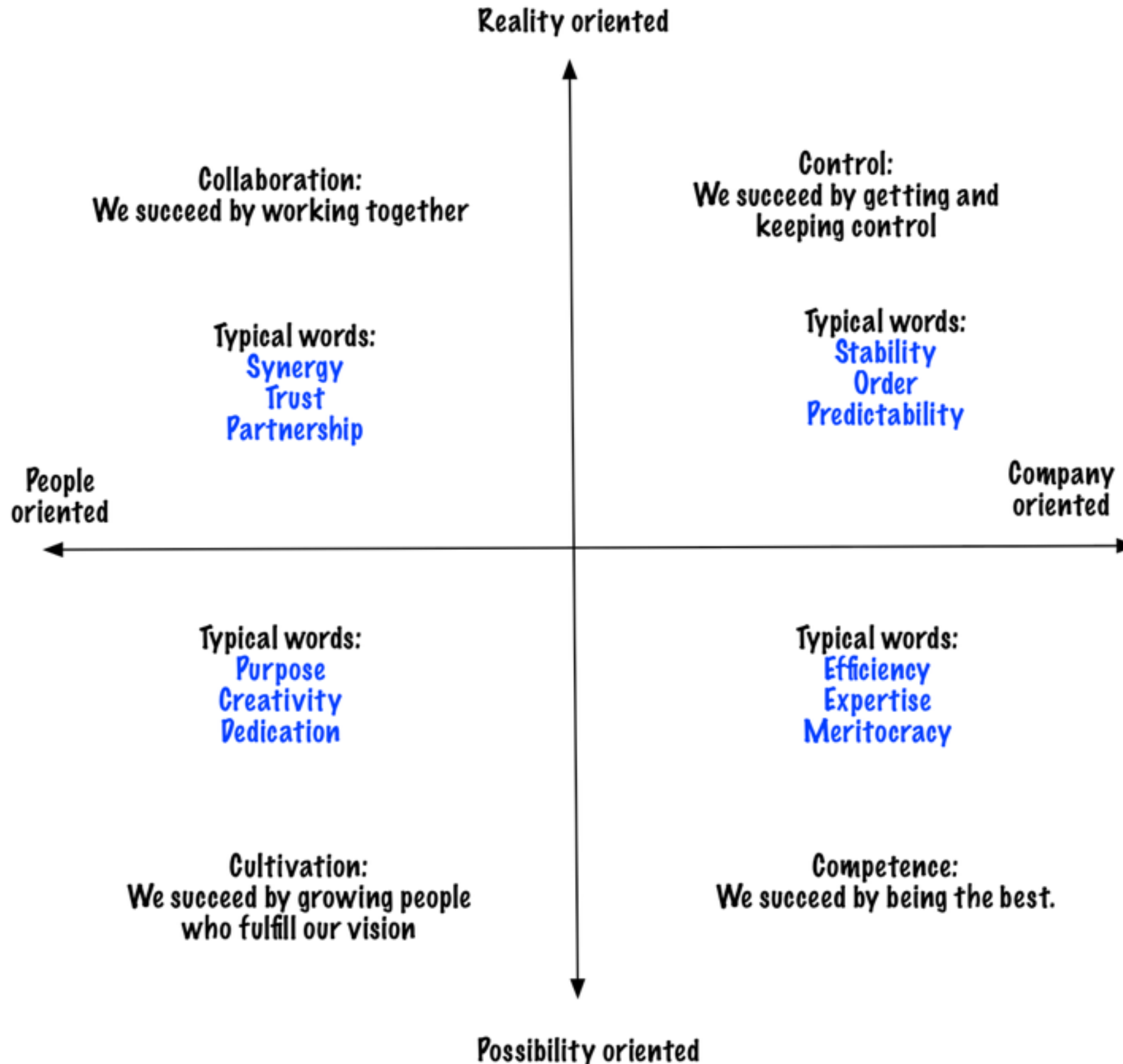
Our Agenda

- **Culture: what it is and how to assess it fast**

- How to analyze a job

- How to use recruiters in an agile way

- How to review resumes

- Questions and how to ask them. Practice

- Agile auditions

- Anything else you have

What Culture Is

- How people treat each other

- What people can discuss

- What you reward

Schneider Model of Culture

Reality oriented

Collaboration:
We succeed by working together

Control:
We succeed by getting and keeping control

Typical words:
Synergy
Trust
Partnership

Typical words:
Stability
Order
Predictability

People oriented

Company oriented

Typical words:
Purpose
Creativity
Dedication

Typical words:
Efficiency
Expertise
Meritocracy

Cultivation:
We succeed by growing people who fulfill our vision

Competence:
We succeed by being the best.

Possibility oriented
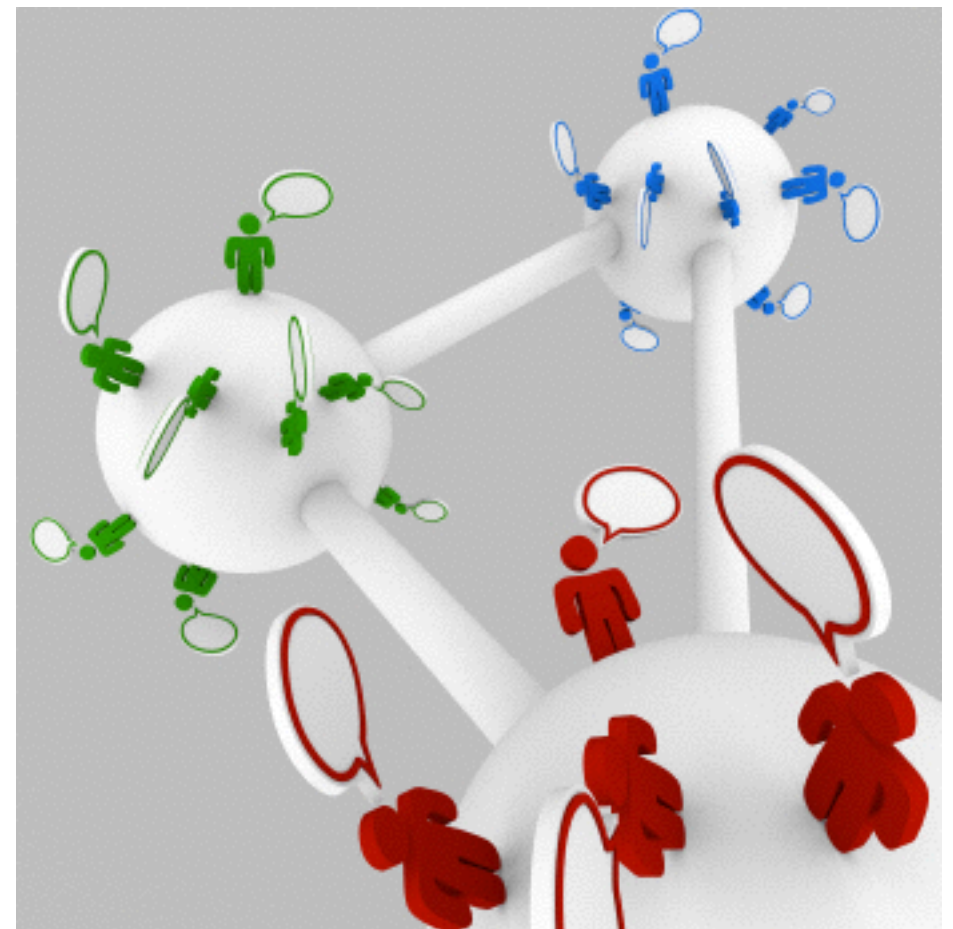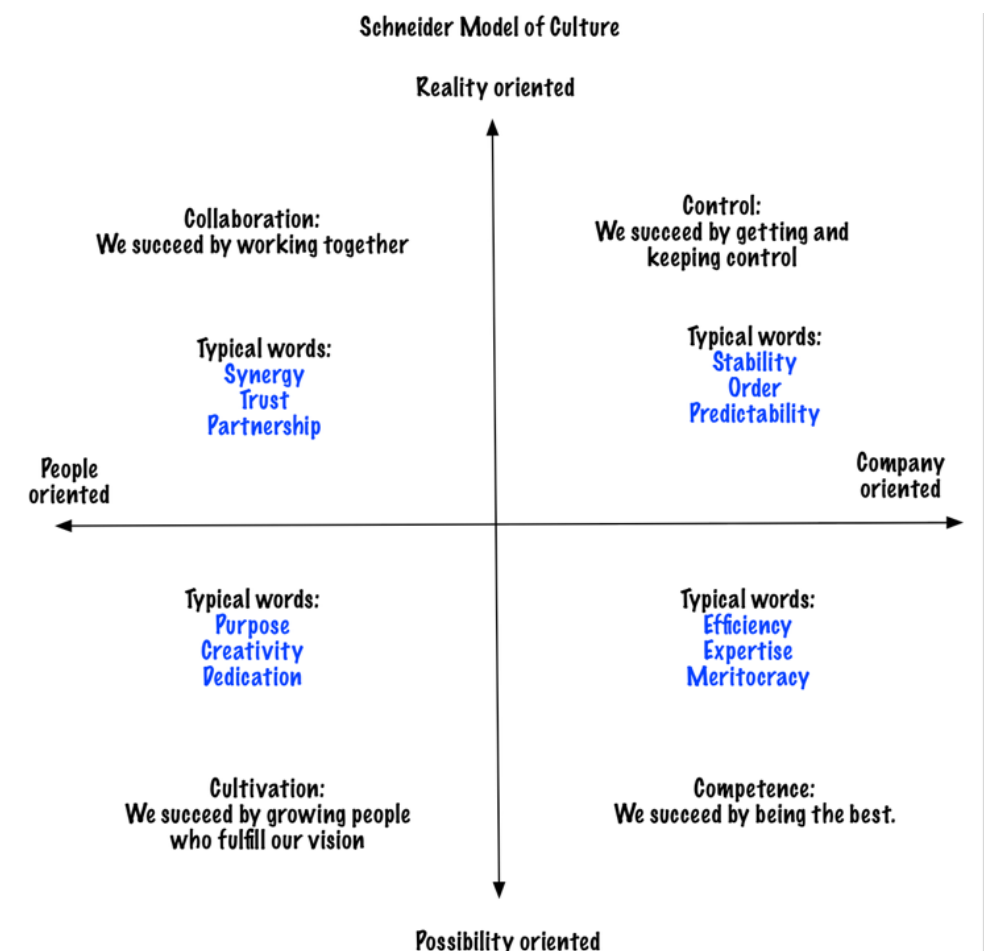
"Corporate" Culture Is Incomplete

- We may talk about "corporate culture"

- Each manager/team puts stamp on top of corporate culture

- Culture is local

Activity: What is Your Culture?

- In small teams, discuss

  - Where do you fall in the Schneider model for culture?

  - What can you discuss?

  - What does the organization reward?

  - How do people treat each other?

- We'll debrief together

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We succeed by being the best.

Possibility oriented

If You Want Cultural Fit…

- Develop your awareness of your culture

- Develop questions to detect fit for culture

- Make your hiring process congruent with your culture

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Plan to Iterate

- Hiring strategy

- Job analysis

  - Is the basis for everything:

    - Job description

    - Ad

    - Interview matrix

    - ...

Contextual Questions: Qualities, Preferences, Non-technical Skills

- Able to manage large groups of people (or small groups)

- Able consider several ideas, not jump at the first one

- Analytical abilities

- Negotiation skills

- How people-oriented vs. task-oriented (especially for managers or project managers)

- Sales ability (for not-specifically sales folks)

- …

Perform a Job Analysis

As you analyze the job, make sure you ask these kinds of questions:

1. Who will this person work with on a regular basis? On an irregular basis?
2. What level or responsibility you want this person to take
3. What is this position worth to you?
4. Tell me about the strategic/tactical/operational parts of this job
5. What will this person do/what deliverables do you expect on a daily, weekly, monthly, yearly basis?
6. Tell me how you can see this person working on a daily basis. … Tell me about the interactions you expect to have with this person.
7. What's important for this person to already know to succeed in this position.
8. How do you describe your group/team?

Essential vs. Desirable

- Numerous qualities, preferences and non-technical skills

- Numerous technical skills

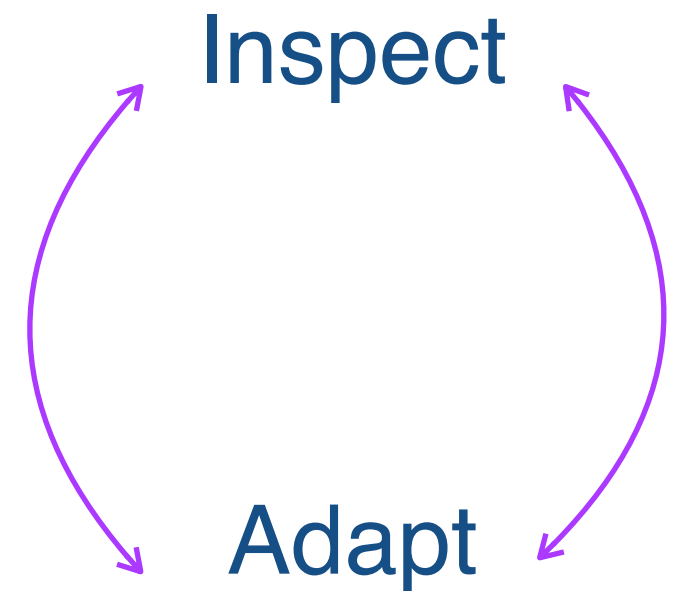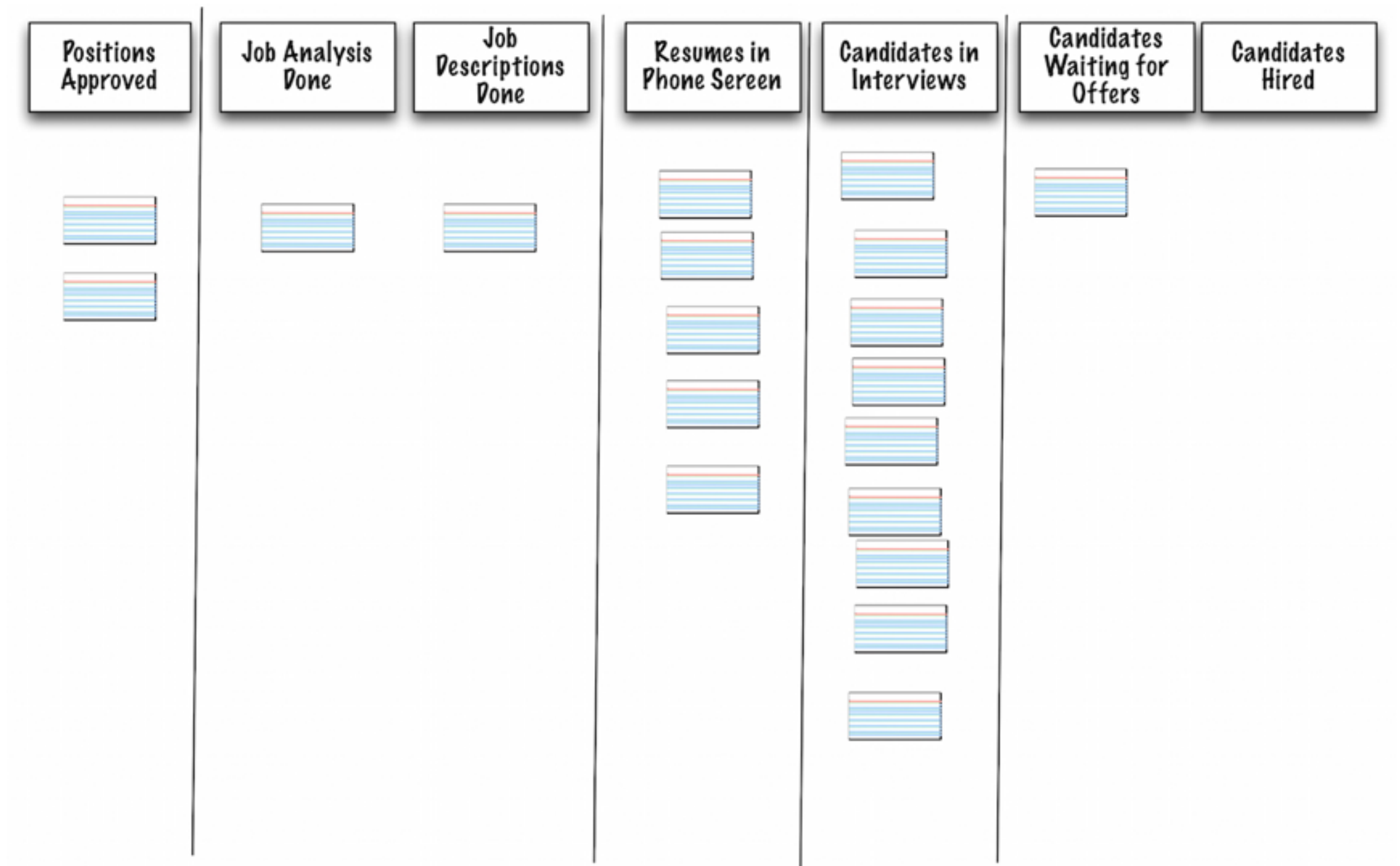- Decide what's essential and filter on that

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Recruiters Help You Find Candidates

- Cast a wide net

- Provide feedback to your recruiters

- Plan to iterate

Inspect

Adapt

Possible Recruiting Kanban

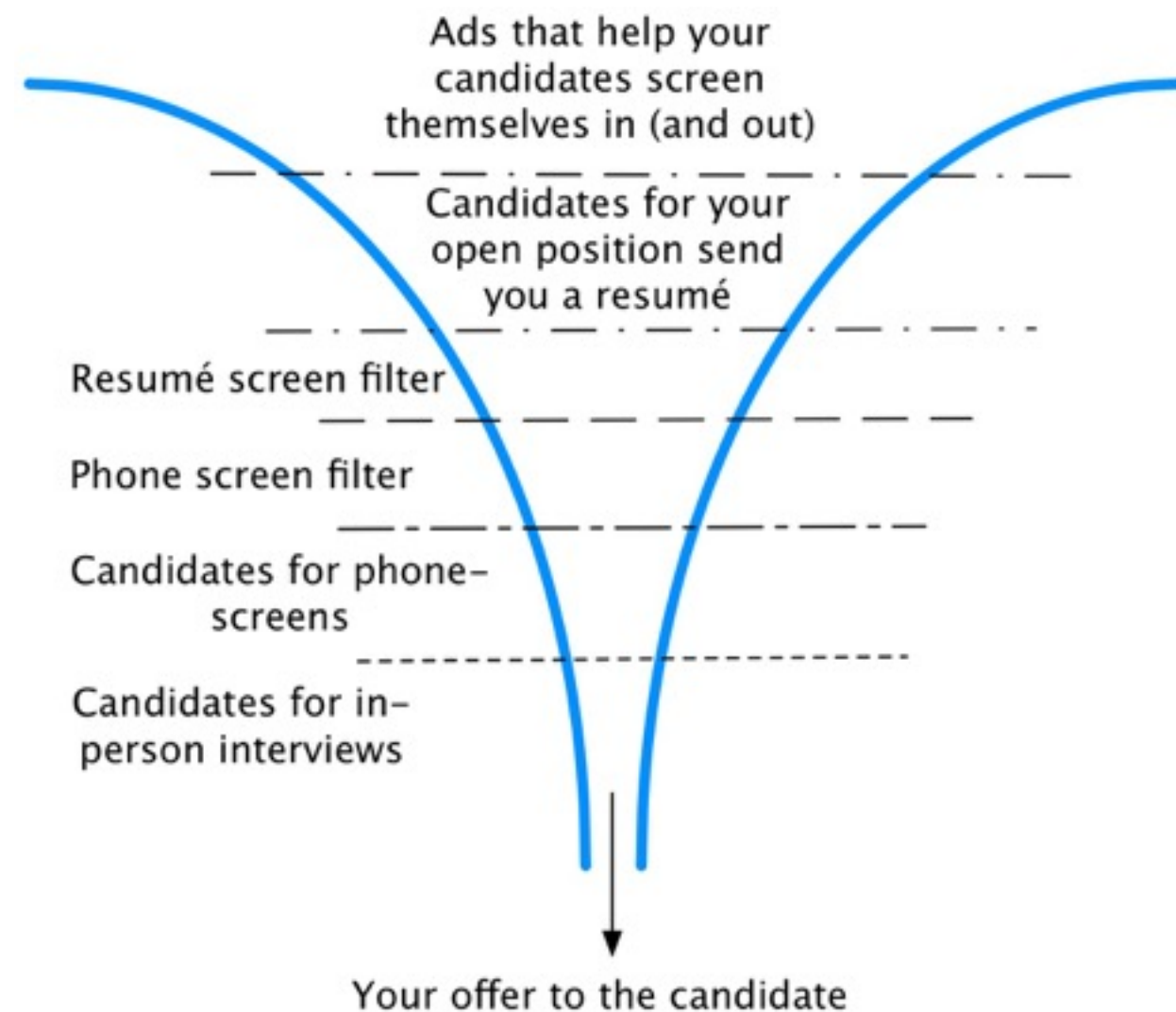| Positions Approved	Job Analysis Done	Job Descriptions Done	Resumes in Phone Screen	Candidates in Interviews	Candidates Waiting for Offers	Candidates Hired

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Do You Like Reviewing Resumes?

- Make it a game

  - Respond within 24 hours

  - Review as a team

- Yes/No/Maybe for a phone screen

- Discussion is what counts

Ads that help your candidates screen themselves in (and out)

Candidates for your open position send you a resumé

Resumé screen filter

Phone screen filter

Candidates for phone-screens

Candidates for in-person interviews

Your offer to the candidate

What to Look For

- Behaviors, not practices

- Product release

- How people worked as part of a team

Technical Skills

- Functional knowledge:

  - Testing and development techniques

- Product domain expertise:

  - Problem-space expertise

  - Solution space expertise

- Technology:

  - How well the candidate uses the tools

- Industry expertise:

  - What the customers expect, how well the candidate understands the problems solved by the system

Six "Agile" Behaviors

- People who can collaborate

- People who can ask for help

- People who are willing to take small steps and get feedback

- People who are will to do something that is good enough for now

- Adaptable people

- People willing to work outside their expertise

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Types of Questions

- Closed questions establish the facts

- Behavior-description questions: "Tell me about a time when…"

- Auditions

- Hypothetical questions: "What would you do if…"

- Meta-questions: "What else should I ask you?"

Questions That Don't Discover Anything

- Irrelevant questions

  - Puzzles, riddles

  - Questions not about work

  - "Why do you want to work here?"

  - Strengths, weaknesses

Develop Candidate Interview Questions for Cultural Fit

- Adaptability

- Perseverance:

  - Courage, Achievement, Follow-through on long-term goals, Resilience, Release vs. perfection

- Success

- Challenges

- Environment

- Offer
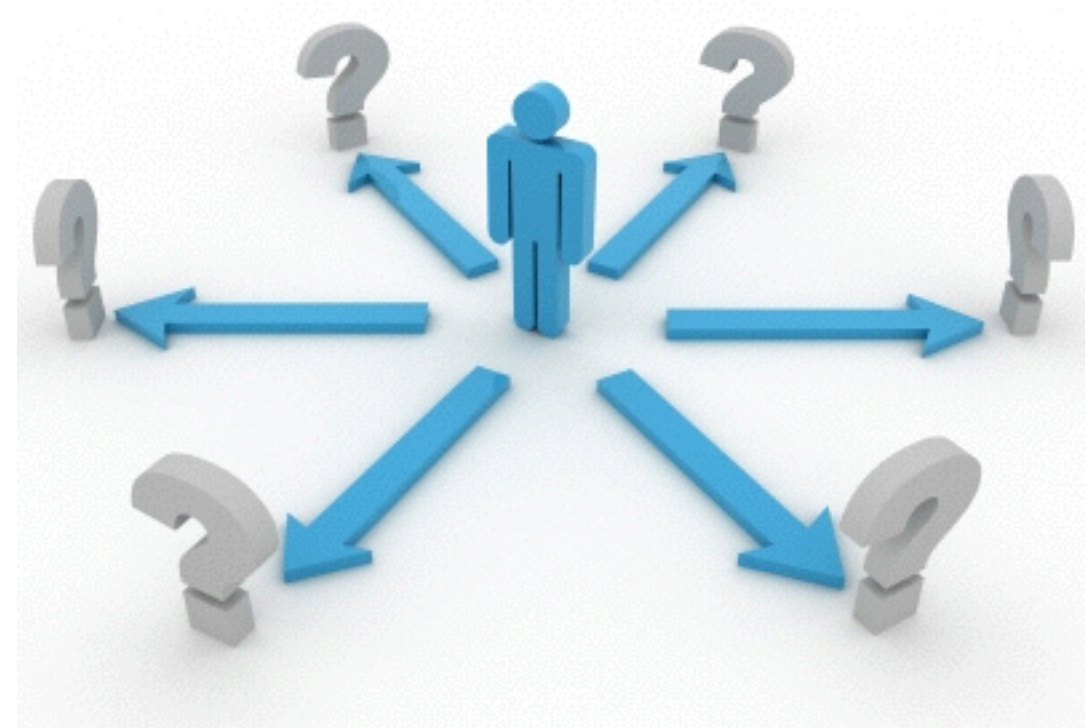
Adaptability

- "Tell me about a time you were surprised. What happened?"

- "Tell me about a time when you did not have the conditions you would've liked for your project. What did you do?"

Growth Mindset

- "Tell me about a time you had to learn something new. What was it? How did you do it?"

- "Give me an example of a time you had to take courageous action."

- "Tell me about a time you wanted something that seemed far off. What did you do?"

- "Tell me about a time when it felt as if you failed. What did you do?"

- "Tell me how you know something is sufficient for release."

- "Have you ever wanted to postpone release? Why?"

| Fixed Mindset	Growth Mindset
You are born with fixed skills or talents.	Skills arise from hard work. You can improve.
Avoid challenges. In the face of challenge, give up easily.	Challenges are an opportunity. Persist until you get it right.
Coast by, don't bother with effort.	Effort is essential to mastery.
Get defensive with feedback.	Learn from feedback.
With setbacks, blame others. Get discouraged.	Setbacks are something you use to try harder the next time.
Feel threatened by others' success.	Find inspiration in others' success.

Carol Dweck, Mindset

Success

- "Tell me about a recent success. What caused it?"

- You might hear these things:

  - Supportive environment

  - Risk-taking

  - Ability to make my own decisions

  - Decisions by consensus

Challenges

- "Tell me about a recent challenge. What caused it? What did you do?"

  - Candidates will explain problems — especially where the culture interfered
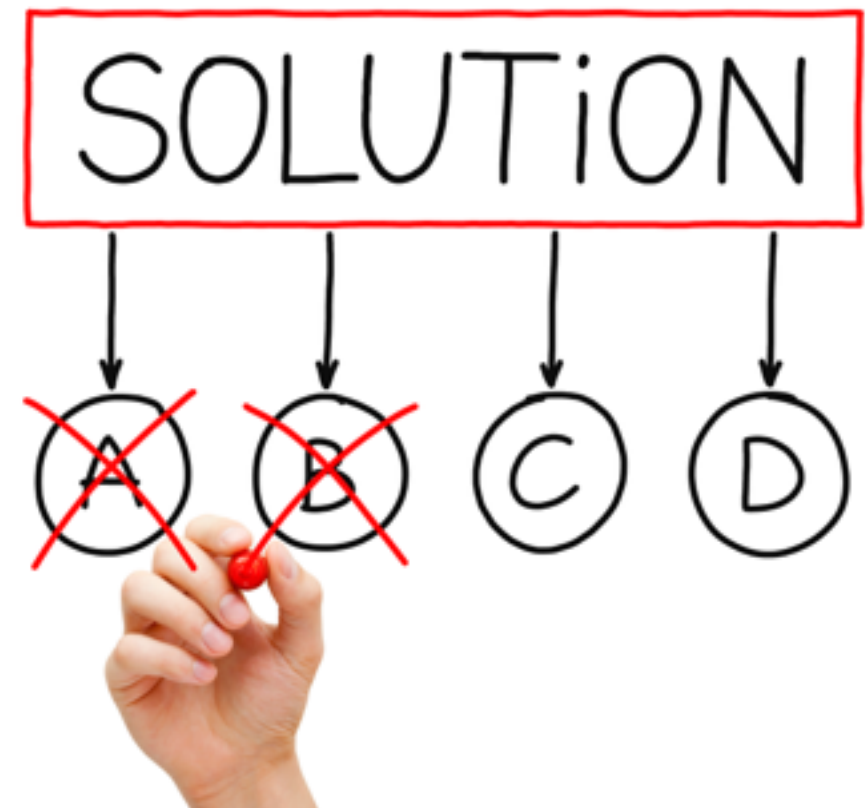
Environment

- "Tell me about your environment now. Does it contribute to your success?"

  - (If not, ask about environments in the past.)

  - Listen to what makes people successful

  - I've met many senior managers who believe they need to be the star technical person.

Collaboration

- "Think back to a recent project. Give me an example of a time you had to work with other people to make sure that you could finish something. What happened?"

Ask for Help

- "Think back to your most recent project. Tell me about a time you did not understand something. What did you do?"

- "Tell me about a recent time you did not think you could finish when you needed to. What were the circumstances? What did you do?"

Small Steps and Ask for Feedback

- "Tell me how you like to work. Think back to the last feature you worked on. When did you ask for feedback?" ... "Why?"

- For people new to/inexperienced with agile:

  - "When you work on your projects outside of work, how do you work? Give me an example."

Do Something Good Enough For Now

- "Tell me about a recent time you did not know everything at the beginning of the project. What did you do?"
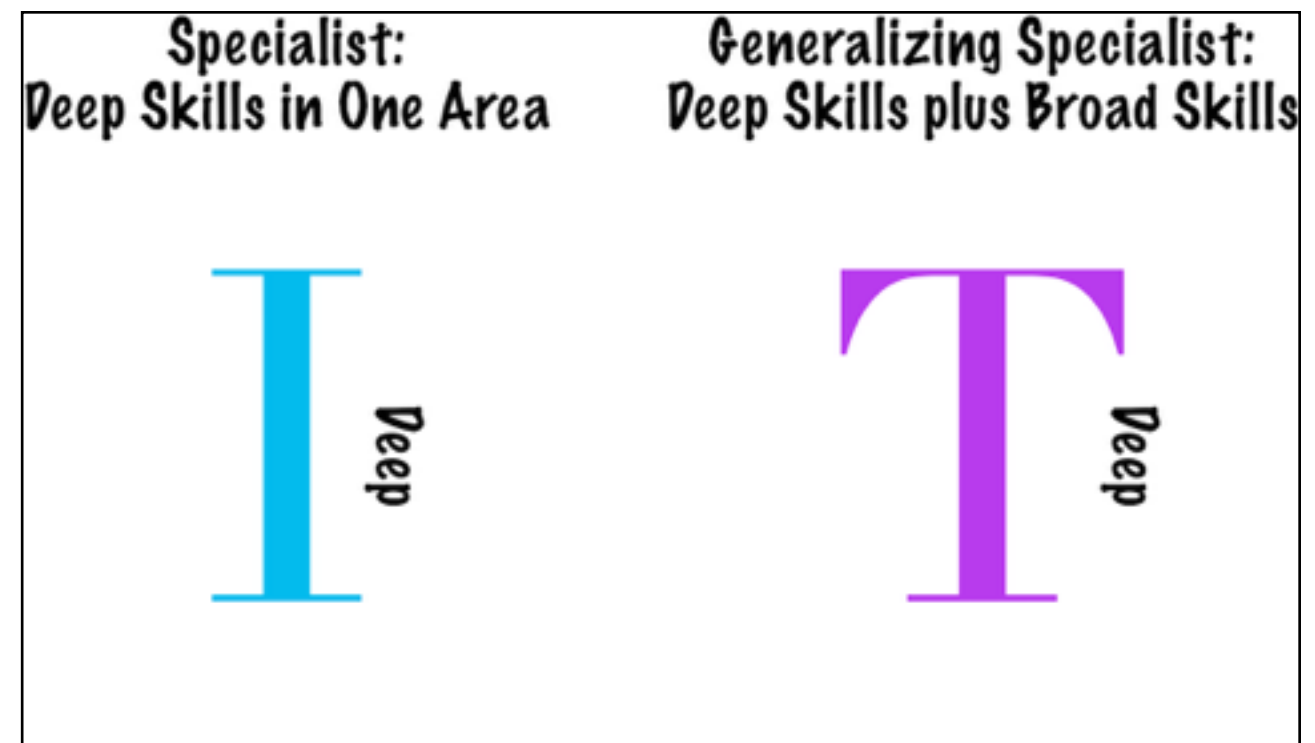
Adaptable

- "Tell me about a time when you did not have the conditions you would've liked for your project. What did you do?"

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Willing to Work Outside Their Expertise

- "Tell me about a time you took on work to help the team. What was that like?"

- "We work on things we may not be comfortable with in order to finish a feature for an iteration. Have you ever been in that position?"

- "Tell me about a time you did something you thought was not in your job description. What did you do?"

Specialist: Deep Skills in One Area — I (Deep)

Generalizing Specialist: Deep Skills plus Broad Skills — T (Deep)

Activity: Question Practice

- Organize yourselves into teams of 3:

  - One candidate, one interviewer, one observer

  - Interviewer: Select a question

  - Observer: take notes so you can provide feedback

  - Candidate: answer as if you want the job.

- We'll debrief together.

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Auditions Help You See a Person Work

- Keep auditions congruent to the way you work

  - If you pair, pair. Otherwise, don't.

Organize the Interview to Hire as a Team

	Interviewer One	Interviewer Two	Interviewer Three	Interviewer Four	Interviewer Five	Everyone
Time	8:00–8:45	8:45–9:30	9:30–10:15	10:20–11:05	11:05–11:50	11:50–12:05
Location	Conference Room A	Interviewer Two's Office	Conference Room A	Conference Room A	Interviewer Five's Office	Conference Room A
Question Areas						Meet to evaluate the candidate
Planning Skills	x				x	
Project Management Skills		x	x			
General Problem-Solving Skills		x			x	
Multitasking Skills		x		x		
Technical Process & Methodologies	x			x		

Make Decisions as a Team

- Use limited Roman consensus to make decisions after the interview

- Manager has final say

  - Do not overrule your team unless you have an extremely good reason

What Questions Do You Have?

Let's Stay in Touch...

- *Hiring Geeks That Fit* and *Manage Your Job Search*

- Much more on www.jrothman.com/blog/htp

- Pragmatic Manager:

  - www.jrothman.com/pragmaticmanager

- Please link with me on LinkedIn