

Bar Raiser — Cross-Functional

Bar Raiser

Universal

Independent bar-raiser assessment ensuring the candidate raises the team's overall bar.

Evaluation Criteria

Problem-Solving Under Ambiguity

Evaluates how the candidate approaches complex, open-ended problems without clear solutions.

Rating: 1 2 3 4 5

Sample Questions:

- Tell me about a time you had to solve a problem with incomplete information. How did you proceed?
- Describe a situation where the requirements were unclear — how did you bring clarity?
- How do you make decisions when you don't have all the data you'd like?

✓ STRONG SIGNAL

Candidate demonstrates a structured approach to ambiguity: they gather available information, form hypotheses, make reasonable assumptions, and iterate. They're comfortable saying 'I don't know yet' while still moving forward.

× WEAK SIGNAL

Candidate is paralyzed by ambiguity, waits for someone to tell them what to do, or makes reckless decisions without acknowledging uncertainty.

Judgment & Decision Quality

Assesses the candidate's ability to make sound decisions with appropriate consideration of consequences.

Rating: 1 2 3 4 5

Sample Questions:

- Tell me about a difficult trade-off you had to make. How did you decide?
- Describe a decision you made that turned out to be wrong. What happened next?
- How do you balance speed and quality when making technical or product decisions?

✓ STRONG SIGNAL

Candidate describes thoughtful decision-making frameworks, weighs multiple factors, considers second-order effects, and takes responsibility for outcomes. They show good instincts calibrated by experience.

× WEAK SIGNAL

Candidate makes decisions based on gut feel alone without analysis, cannot describe the reasoning behind past decisions, or optimizes for a single dimension while ignoring others.

Breadth of Impact & Scope

Evaluates whether the candidate's impact extends beyond their immediate responsibilities.

Rating: 1 2 3 4 5

Sample Questions:

- What's the largest scope of impact you've had in a role — beyond just your direct deliverables?
- Tell me about a time you improved something that wasn't your direct responsibility.

- How do you identify where you can have the most impact?

✓ **STRONG SIGNAL**

Candidate describes impact at the team or organizational level — improving processes, creating tools others use, mentoring, or driving cross-team initiatives. Their impact multiplies through others.

✗ **WEAK SIGNAL**

Candidate's impact is limited to individual task completion, they've never improved something beyond their assigned work, or they cannot articulate broader impact.

Communication & Influence Across Functions

Assesses the candidate's ability to communicate effectively with diverse stakeholders and influence outcomes.

Rating: 1 2 3 4 5

Sample Questions:

- Tell me about a time you had to convince someone from a different function (PM, design, sales) of your approach.
- How do you explain technical concepts to non-technical stakeholders?
- Describe a cross-functional initiative you led or contributed to.

✓ **STRONG SIGNAL**

Candidate adapts communication to the audience, builds alignment through understanding others' perspectives, and can drive consensus without relying on authority. They navigate cross-functional dynamics effectively.

✗ **WEAK SIGNAL**

Candidate communicates only with their own function, cannot adapt their style for different audiences, or relies on escalation rather than influence.

Bar-Raising Potential

The core bar-raiser question: will this candidate make the team better, not just fill a seat?

Rating: 1 2 3 4 5

Sample Questions:

- What unique perspective or skill would you bring that the team might not already have?
- How have you raised the bar on teams you've joined in the past?
- What would you change or improve about how your current team works?

✓ **STRONG SIGNAL**

Candidate brings something additive — a unique skill, perspective, or way of working that would elevate the team. They have a track record of raising standards and lifting those around them.

✗ **WEAK SIGNAL**

Candidate would be a competent individual contributor but wouldn't elevate the team. They have no track record of improving team practices, mentoring, or driving excellence beyond their own work.

Intellectual Curiosity & Adaptability

Evaluates the candidate's genuine curiosity and ability to learn and adapt in a changing environment.

Rating: 1 2 3 4 5

Sample Questions:

- What's the most interesting thing you've learned recently — inside or outside of work?
- Describe a time you had to quickly learn a new technology or domain. How did you approach it?
- How do you react when a project direction changes significantly midway through?

✓ **STRONG SIGNAL**

Candidate shows genuine enthusiasm for learning, has recent examples of picking up new skills quickly, and embraces change as an opportunity rather than a threat. They ask insightful questions during the interview.

× **WEAK SIGNAL**

Candidate shows no intellectual curiosity, resists learning new things, or becomes frustrated when discussing change and adaptation.

Red Flags

- Candidate meets minimum requirements but would not be in the top half of the current team
- Shows pattern of individual achievement without any evidence of elevating those around them
- Lacks self-awareness — cannot identify any personal development areas or past mistakes

Notes & Overall Recommendation

Strong Hire Hire No Hire Strong No Hire

Notes: _____