Pearson Creek Labs Developer Interview & Hiring Plan

📍 Overview

Benson will lead interviews to hire an AWS-based developer to deploy the **Margin Calculator** and **Performance Matrix** within the new **Pearson Creek Labs sandbox environment**. The target deadline for this project is **July 27**.

Ben will make the final hire through Upwork. The selected candidate will report directly to Benson, with Briana available to support the process.

📩 Cold Outreach Interview Request (Benson to Candidate)

Hi [Name],

I came across your profile and was impressed by your AWS and cloud deployment experience. I'm reaching out about a project we're hiring for at Pearson Creek Capital Management.

We're launching **Pearson Creek Labs**, a cloud-based environment to host internal financial tools. Our first two tools a **Margin Calculator** and a **Performance Matrix** are partially built in Python and now need to be securely hosted and deployed as user-facing web apps on AWS.

I'm the lead quant on the project and would be your main point of contact. We're aiming for a go-live date of **July 27**, and we're looking for someone to help set up the AWS sandbox, deploy the tools, and assist with access control and basic UI.

If this sounds like a good fit, I'd love to set up a quick 45-minute interview to learn more about your background and approach. Let me know if you're open to a chat and what your availability looks like. Here's some time slots I'm open:

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Thanks,
Benson

🔨 1. Interview Structure & Agenda

Suggested 30–45 Minute Flow:

1. **Introduction (2–3 min)**
   a. Benson introduces himself and his role at Pearson Creek.
   b. Quick overview of Pearson Creek Capital Management and Pearson Creek Labs
2. **Role & Project Overview (3–5 min)**
   a. Explain the goal: deploying the Margin Calculator and Performance Matrix on a secure AWS sandbox
   b. Mention potential expansion (host more tools, connect to PCCM site, add monetization features)
   c. Timeline: July 27 target go-live
   d. Clarify that this is a contract role for this specific project, reporting directly to Benson
3. **Candidate Introduction (5 min)**
   a. Invite candidate to share a quick background and relevant experience
4. **Technical & Behavioral Questions (20–25 min)**
   a. See suggested questions below
5. **Next Steps & Q&A (5–10 min)**
   a. Ask for their expected rate and how many hours they forecast for this project
      i. Ben was hoping to keep this project at about $1,000 total but if that is too low, Ben defers Benson's expertise in this area to let us know how much we should realistically budget & share that information with us.
   b. Answer their questions
   c. Let them know final decisions will come shortly after all interviews
   d. If Benson wants to proceed, he'll send the profile to Ben to initiate the contract on Upwork

🔬 2. Suggested Interview Questions

Technical Questions:

- Walk me through how you'd set up a secure AWS environment for internal and public-facing tools.
- How would you manage password protection and user access control?
- Have you deployed a Python-based tool (Flask, Django, or FastAPI) to AWS before? What challenges came up?
- How would you structure the sandbox to separate in-development tools from production tools?
- Are you familiar with CI/CD workflows or version control using GitHub?
- What tools would you use for monitoring, logging, and security?
- If we wanted to eventually move our main PCCM website to AWS too, what would that migration entail?

Behavioral / Fit Questions:

- Tell me about a time you worked with a non-technical founder or PM to bring a vision to life.
- How do you typically handle unclear specs or shifting priorities?
- What are you most comfortable doing independently, and where do you prefer support or collaboration?

📄 3. Job Description / Project Scope Summary

You can share the following verbally or in a short doc (see second document I shared):

We're building an AWS-hosted environment called **Pearson Creek Labs** that will:

- Serve as a secure sandbox for financial tools in development
- Host live tools available to internal and potentially public users in the future

The first two tools we'll deploy are:

1. **Margin Calculator**
2. **Performance Matrix**

The scope includes:

- AWS sandbox environment setup
- Hosting and deploying both tools
- Implementing password protection/access control
- Ensuring scalability and basic cost control
- Optional: SEO setup, logging, light front-end work

The goal is to go live by **July 27**.

📬 4. Hiring Process

- After completing all interviews, **Benson will email Ben** the profile of the preferred candidate (via Upwork).
- **Ben will log into Upwork and officially hire the candidate** from his account.
- The hired developer will report directly to Benson. Briana is available to help coordinate, clarify logistics, or jump in as needed.

💰 5. Rate Negotiation Guidance

- Always ask the candidate what their **expected hourly rate** is.
- Don't lead with a number. Gather all rate expectations across the interviews.

- Benson can then make a judgment call based on:
    - Skill vs cost
    - Bandwidth
    - Responsiveness
    - Confidence in execution
- If Benson believes a candidate is a strong fit but slightly over the $1000 budget, he can still recommend them to Ben with justification.

📋 6. Candidate Shortlist & Notes

1. Mehul P. – Top Recommendation

- Highly experienced with AWS
- $50/hr but likely open to negotiation
- Background in finance (IBKR Quant Trading setup)
- Likely has a full-time job — confirm availability

2. Uzair M. – Strong Potential

- $25/hr
- Extensive AWS certification
- Excellent portfolio, appears hard-working
- Multiple jobs in progress — confirm **who** will be doing the work and availability

3. Dev J. – Low Priority

- $30/hr
- 12 jobs in progress — high risk of outsourcing work
- Profile written sloppily (red flag)

Recommendation: Benson interviews Mehul and Uzair, and optionally Dev if needed.