

# Engineering Manager

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Responsible for the performance, growth, and delivery of an engineering team. Balances people leadership with technical direction, ensuring teams deliver quality solutions while developing individual engineers.

Candidates should use the **STAR method** (Situation, Task, Action, Result). This assessment is about demonstrated experience, not theoretical understanding.

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## A - Performance Management & Team Development

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**00:10** - SFIA PEMT / PDSV Level 5-6

The ability to form, lead, and develop engineering teams. This includes setting objectives, providing feedback, managing underperformance, and creating growth opportunities for team members.

### What to look for:

- Sets clear, measurable objectives aligned to organisational goals
  - Conducts regular 1:1s with actionable feedback
  - Uses career frameworks or structured development plans
  - Has managed underperformance through formal processes (PIPs, performance reviews)
  - Evidence of growing engineers-promotions, skill development, expanded scope
  - Builds psychologically safe environments where feedback flows both ways
  - Handles difficult conversations directly and with empathy
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## B - Technical Direction & Architecture Input

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**00:15** - SFIA ARCH Level 4-5

The ability to provide technical leadership without being hands-on. This includes contributing to architectural decisions, understanding trade-offs, and ensuring technical quality and direction within the team.

### What to look for:

- Participates meaningfully in design reviews, ADRs, or RFCs
  - Understands system architecture across application, data, and infrastructure
  - Can articulate technical trade-offs (cost, performance, scalability, maintainability)
  - Ensures appropriate technical standards-code review, testing, CI/CD practices
  - Balances technical debt against delivery pressure
  - Maintains technical credibility with engineers without micromanaging
  - Champions reliability, security, and observability practices
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## C - Delivery & Accountability

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**00:20** - SFIA DLMG Level 5-6

The ability to own delivery outcomes for the team. This includes planning, prioritisation, managing dependencies, and ensuring the team meets commitments while maintaining a sustainable pace.

### What to look for:

- Owns delivery outcomes-takes accountability, not just responsibility
  - Uses metrics to track and improve delivery (cycle time, throughput, quality)
  - Manages dependencies across teams and stakeholders proactively
  - Balances competing priorities and negotiates scope effectively
  - Identifies and mitigates delivery risks before they escalate
  - Shields team from unnecessary disruption without creating information silos
  - Evidence of delivering significant projects or programmes on time
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## D - Stakeholder Communication & Influence

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**00:25** - SFIA RLMT Level 5-6

The ability to communicate effectively with diverse audiences-engineers, product, executives, and external stakeholders. This includes influencing decisions, managing expectations, and representing the team.

**What to look for:**

- Tailors communication to audience (exec summaries vs. technical deep-dives)
- Builds trust with Product, Design, and other functions
- Manages upward effectively-keeps leadership informed without noise
- Represents the team’s work, constraints, and needs to stakeholders
- Influences cross-functional decisions using data and structured arguments
- Navigates disagreement constructively-seeks alignment, escalates appropriately
- Evidence of changing minds or course-correcting through influence, not authority

**E - Hiring & Team Composition**

**00:30** - SFIA RESC Level 5-6

The ability to build and shape the team through hiring, org design, and workforce planning. This includes defining roles, running effective hiring processes, and making difficult decisions about team composition.

**What to look for:**

- Defines roles clearly with appropriate levelling and expectations
- Runs structured, fair hiring processes (rubrics, calibrated interviewers)
- Assesses candidates rigorously - avoids “gut feel” hiring
- Builds diverse teams-evidence of intentional inclusion efforts
- Makes difficult calls on team composition (exiting poor performers, restructuring)
- Plans for succession and reduces single points of failure
- Balances hiring velocity with quality - doesn’t lower the bar under pressure

**Scoring Matrix**

**Thresholds:** 15+ is a pass, 20+ is a pass at senior level

Competency	1	2	3	4	5
A - Performance Management & Team Development					
B - Technical Direction & Architecture Input					
C - Delivery & Accountability					
D - Stakeholder Communication & Influence					
E - Hiring & Team Composition					