

# Experiences & Observations in

## Finding & Hiring Cybersecurity Unicorns



April 17, 2024  
Cincinnati, Ohio



<http://slides.dfir-matt.com>



**Cybersecurity  
Collaboration  
Forum**

A CRA  Resource



# Professional Work

I work for a big well-known organization...



As Vice President (VP) of Computer Security and Incident Response (IR). However, I have many years of hands-on technical experience, including Digital Forensics & Incident Response (DFIR).

I am also a Podcast Host for

**ThreatReel**

<https://threatreel.com>

Connect / Contact / Follow Matt:



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/mattscheurer>



<https://twitter.com/c3rkah>

# Volunteer Work

I am an Official



Advocate

<https://www.hackingisnotacrime.org>



Advisory Board: Information  
Technology and Cybersecurity

<https://www.mywccc.org/>



Women's Security Alliance  
(WomSA) Technical Mentor

<https://www.womsa.org>

# Disclaimer!

Yes, I have a day job.  
However...

Opinions expressed are  
based solely on my own  
independent security  
research and do not  
express or reflect the views  
or opinions of my employer.



# Interview Experience

- 
- Conducted Interviews
    - Peer level candidates
    - One level above mine
    - One to Three levels below mine
  - Helped Others
    - Get job interviews
      - Including some attendees here today!

# Traditional Qualifications



# Where Unicorns Often Live



# Candidate Credentials

- Some possess
  - Fancy Degrees
  - Plethora of Certifications
  - Or Both!





# Show of Hands



*How many of you  
know a CISSP?*

# Job Postings

- Sometimes I see this
  - Requirements
    - Four Year Degree in “X”
    - Four Year Degree in “X”, or a related field
- But I’d rather see this
  - Requirements
    - Degree, or equivalent experience

# Unicorn Self-Learning Activities

- Likely not on LinkedIn
  - Books read
  - Educational videos
  - Documentation read
- Not seen on resumes
  - Home Lab
  - Home Network
  - Hands-on practice

# Work Experience

- Strong indicator of skill level
  - But not always truly representative of actual skill

# Where to Look?



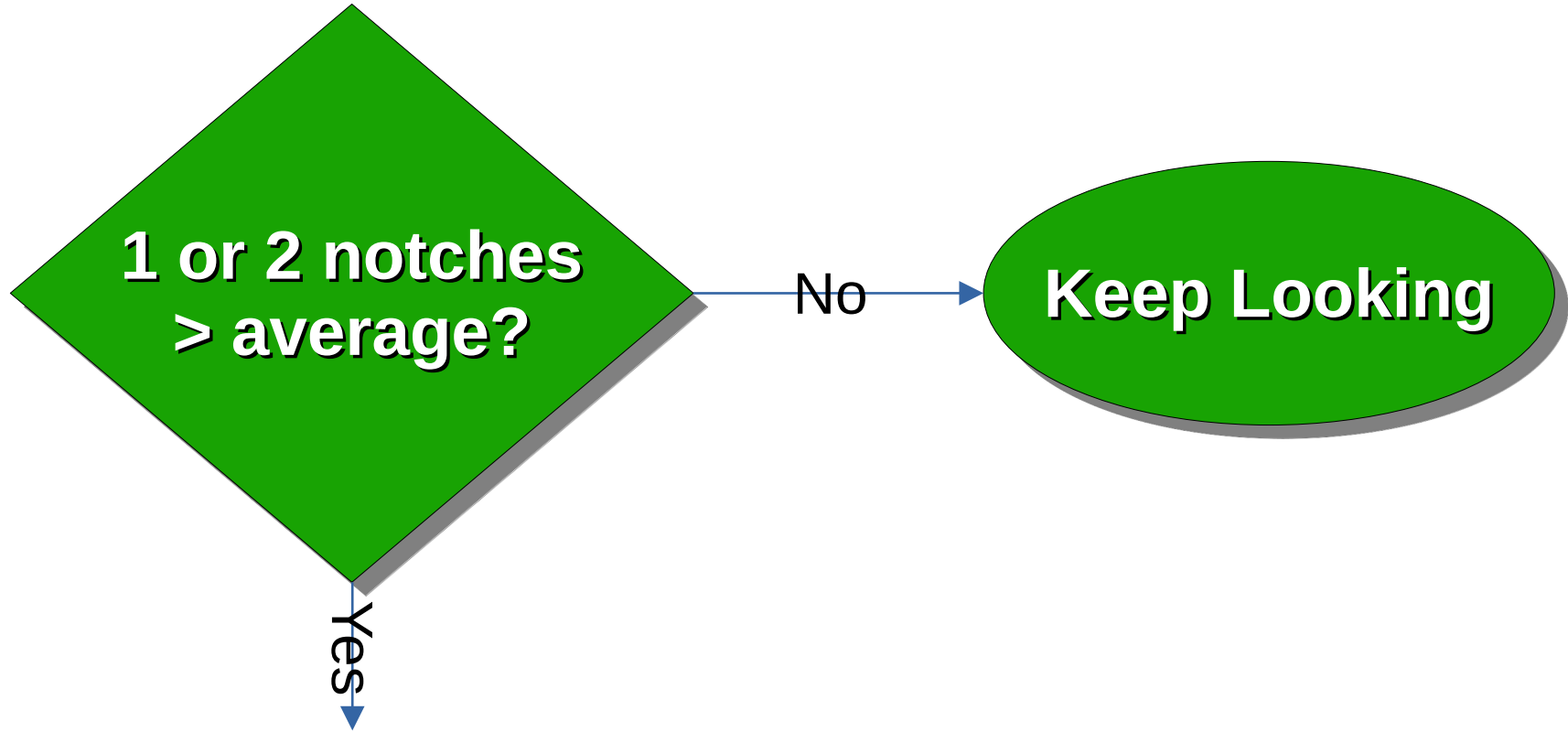
- Ask your current top performers
- Hacker and other Technical Security Conferences
- CTF Events
- Area Meetup groups

# Evaluating Talent

- In my experience, the only way to evaluate somebody's skill and suitability for a position is to simply sit down and talk with them

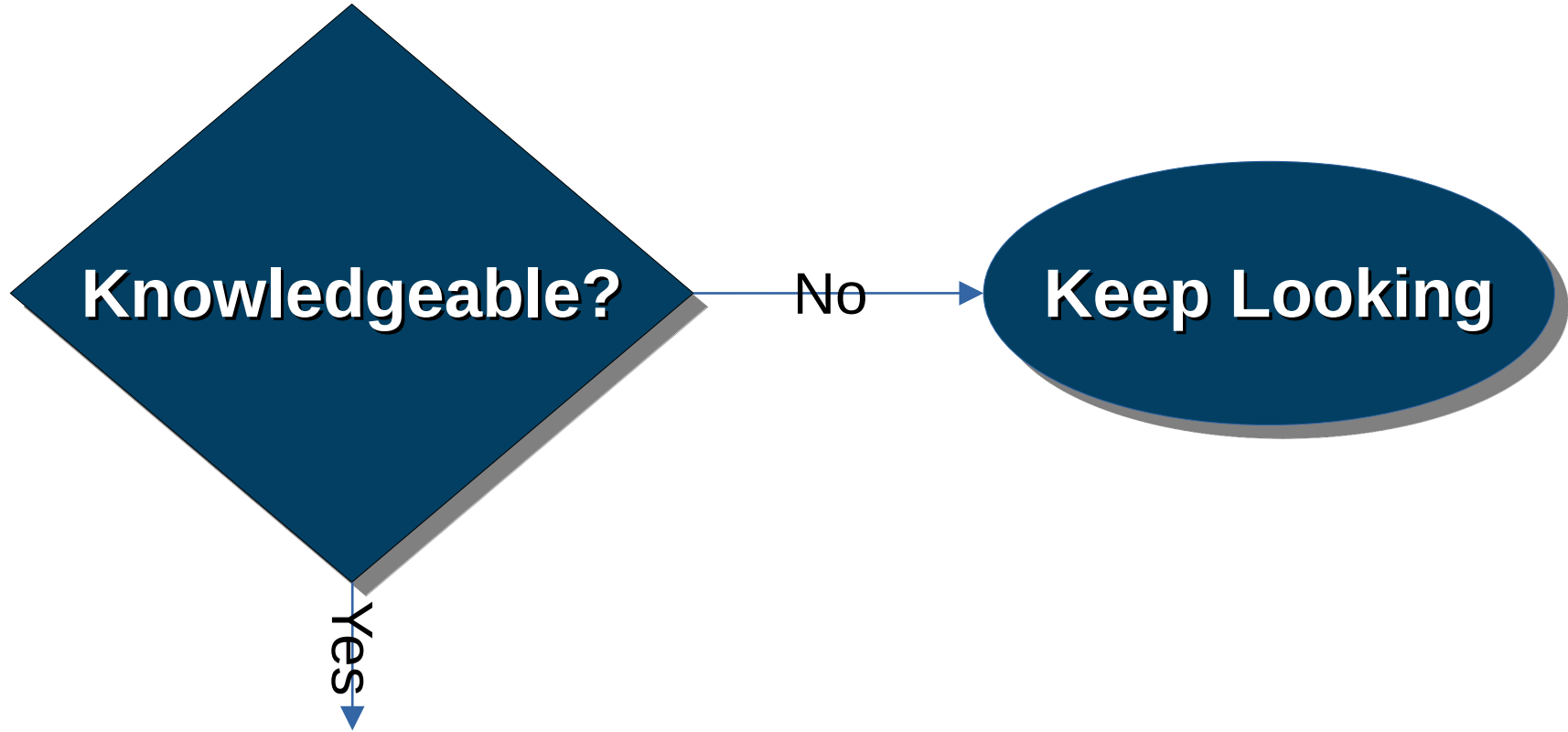
# *Evaluating Potential Unicorns*

# Candidate Comparisons

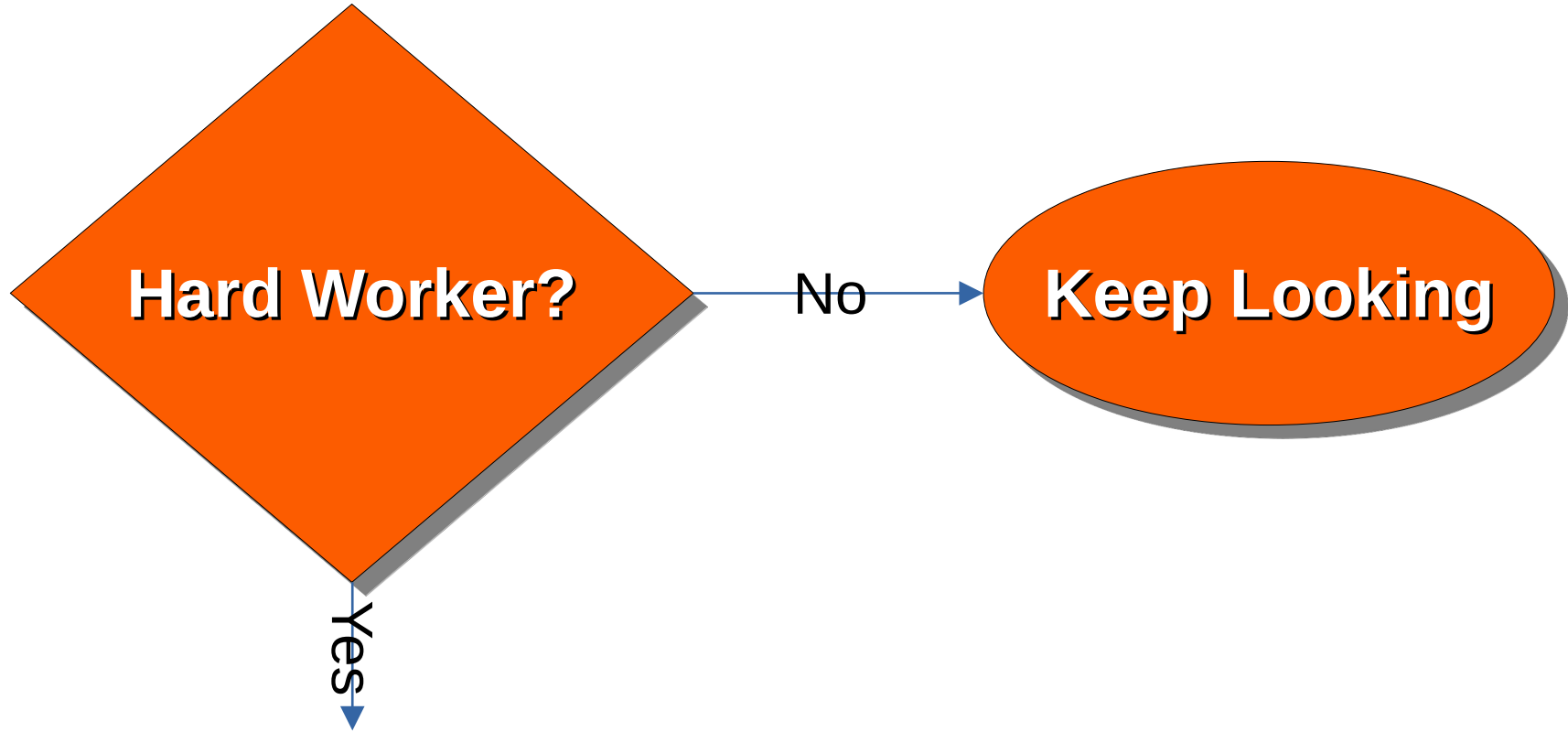




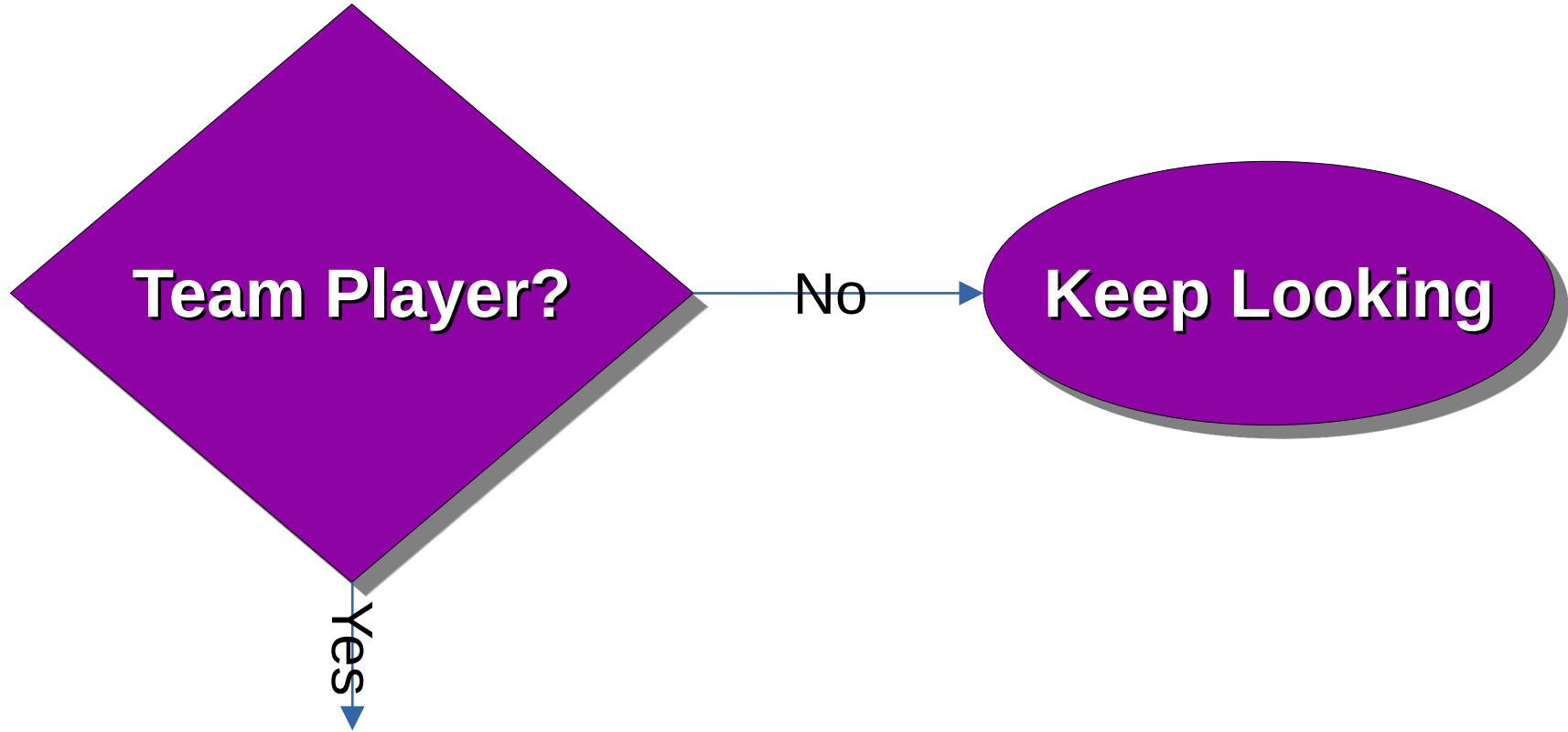
# Candidate Aptitude



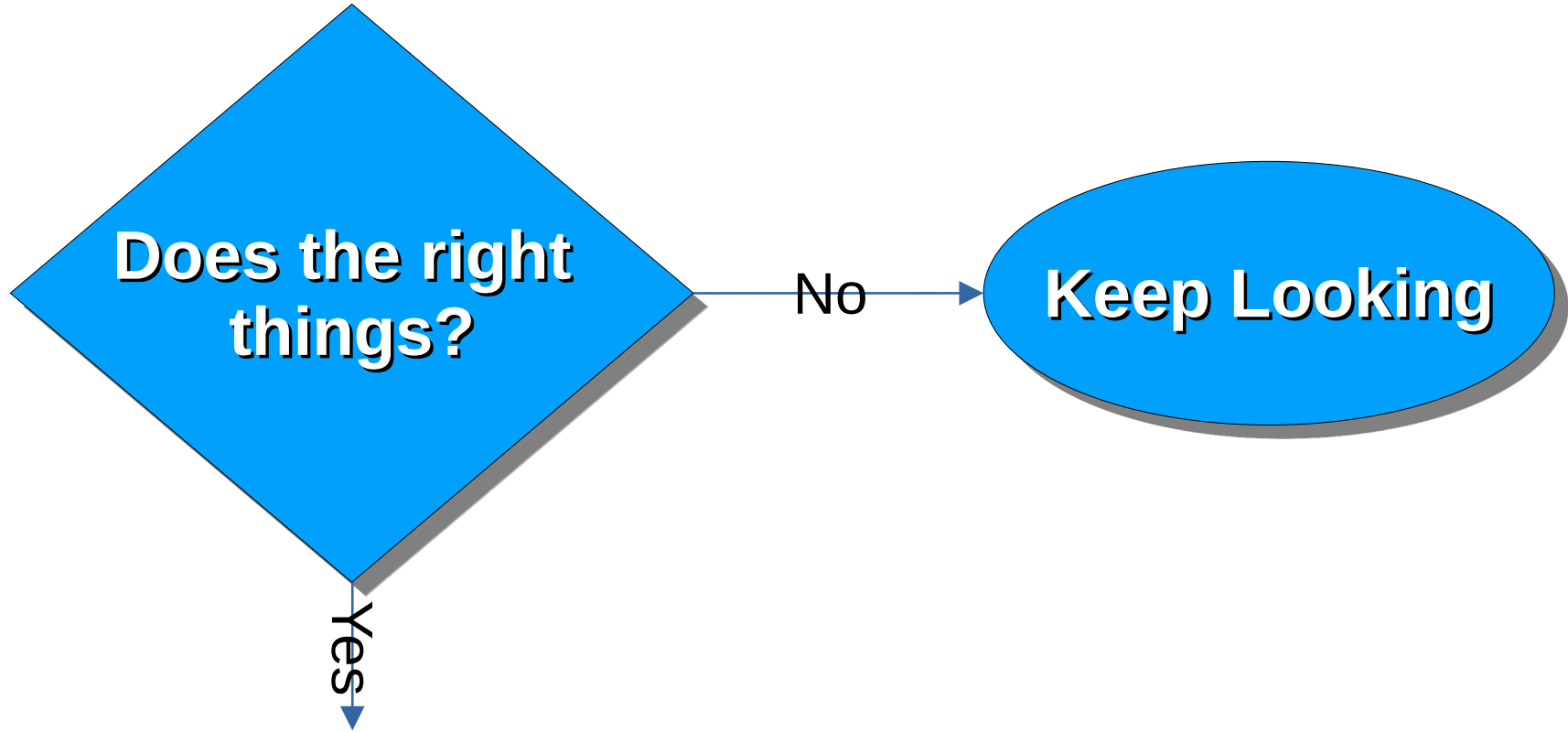
# Candidate Output



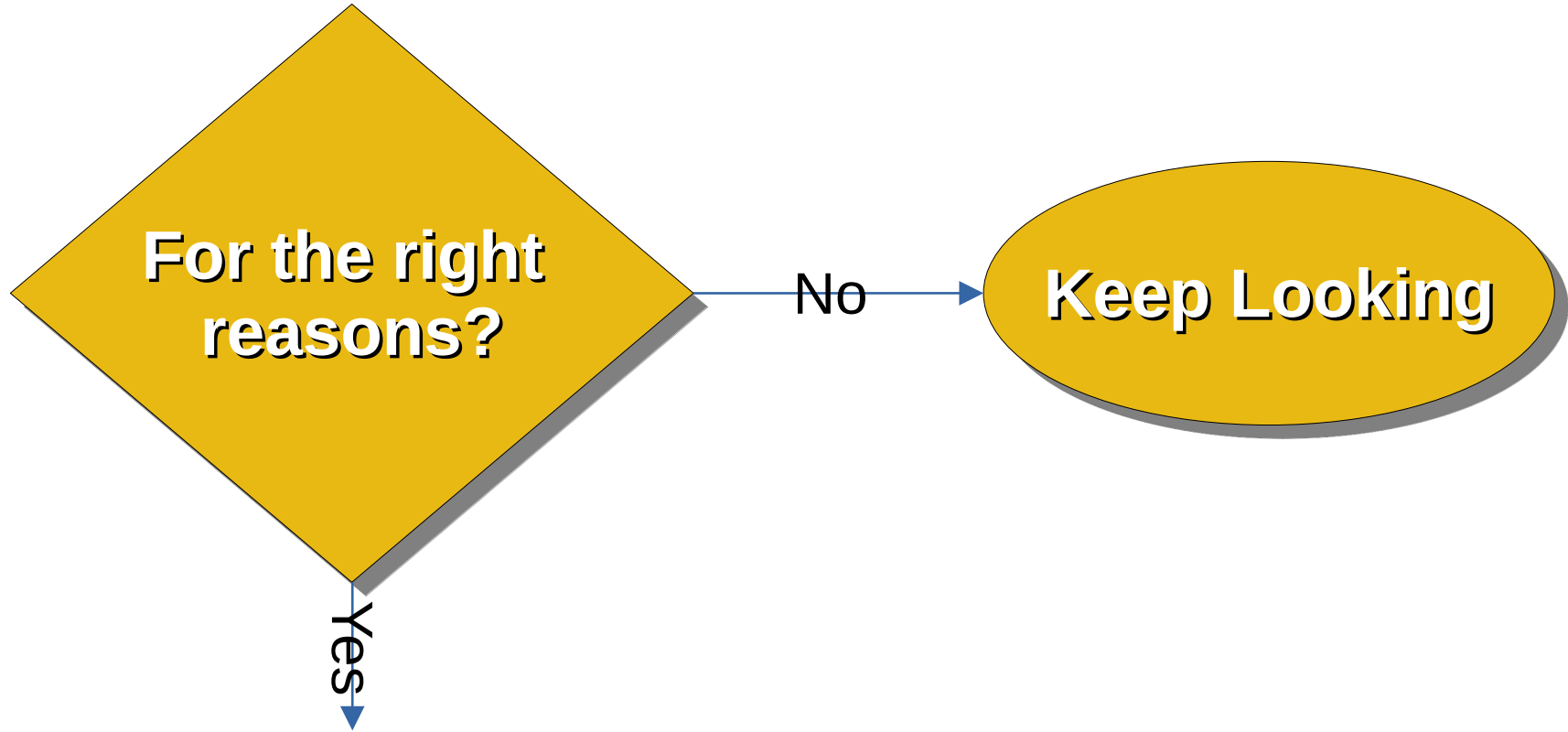
# Candidate Participation



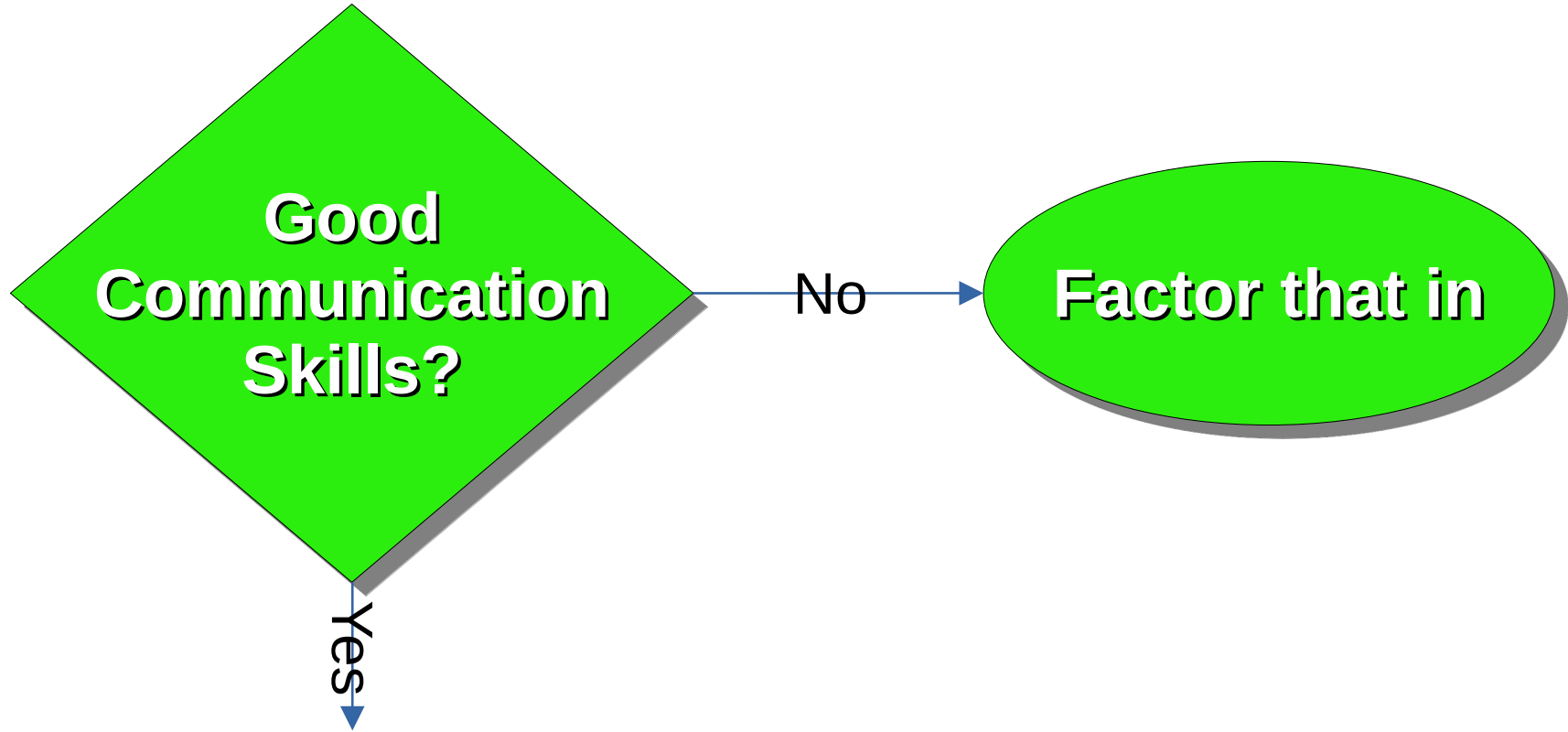
# Candidate Ethics



# Candidate Morals



# Candidate Collaboration



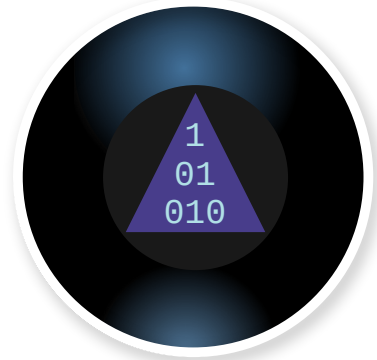
# Unicorn Candidate or not?

```
if (thoseAnswers == "What you hoped for") {  
    var Candidate = "Cybersecurity Unicorn";  
}  
else {  
    var Candidate = "Debatable";  
}
```

# Questions



Who?  
What?  
When?  
Where?  
Why?  
How?





# Thank you for attending!

## Finding & Hiring Cybersecurity Unicorns



April 17, 2024  
Cincinnati, Ohio



<http://slides.dfir.matt.com>



# Cybersecurity Collaboration Forum

A CRA  Resource

