

Hiring - insights from the inside

How decisions are made and how to stand out



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→ People & Culture with Fairlo since 5 years

→ 20 years in recruiting roles

→ Passionate about:
→ Great company cultures
→ Building thriving teams



01. How CVs are actually read

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Why good candidates get rejected

- Hiring is human (and yes, biased, although we do our very best to reduce it)
- Time pressure
- Comparison, not perfection
- Clarity beats brilliance

01. How CVs are actually read

Why good candidates get rejected

Rejection usually means:

- Not bad
- Not unskilled
- Unclear
- Too broad
- Oversell on your CV
- Someone else was a better match - at this time to this role

→ Every no is one step closer to a yes

01. How CVs are actually read

Scanning – not reading

→ Reality check

- 10-20 seconds first scan
- Scanning ≠ reading

→ Recruiters look for

- Role fit
- Seniority
- Tech overlap
- Stability
- Impact



If not clear fast,
then skipped

01. How CVs are actually read

Make your CV recruiter-friendly

→ Strong CVs

- Clear professional identity
- Focus on relevant experience
- Concrete outcomes
- Consistency

→ Weak CVs

- Too much text
- Everything you've ever done
- Generic descriptions
- Buzzwords
- No prioritization

01. How CVs are actually read

Make your CV recruiter-friendly

→ Examples

- "Experienced developer with passion for technology"
- "Senior Backend Engineer – Fintech / Payments / AWS"

- "Worked with microservices"
- "Designed microservices handling 1-2M daily transactions"

01. How CVs are actually read

AI, cover letter, photo

→ AI

- Structure & clarity
- Format
- Generic content
- Fluffy language
- Too much text

→ Cover letter?

- Skip it or keep it short and sweet

→ Photo on CV?

- Depends on country & culture
- Adds emotion, not competence
- Professional photo!



When in doubt,
Keep it simple

01. How CVs are actually read

Same story on LinkedIn

→ LinkedIn strategy

- Always reply
- Even when timing is wrong
- Build relationships early
- Same story on CV



02. Competency based recruitment

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Bias is real

→ Bias is part of hiring – whether we like it or not

- Bias is human
- Mostly unconscious
- Stronger under time pressure
- Often called “gut feeling”

Good intentions
don't remove bias

02. Competency based recruitment

Where bias can show up

→ Can influence perception

- Name
- Age
- Gender
- Accent / language
- Photo
- Career gaps
- Similarities with the interviewer
- "Feels like me"

Bias influences who
feels safe to hire

02. Competency based recruitment

Why competency based hiring?

- Reduce bias
- Increase fairness
- Improve hiring quality
- Make decisions explainable

**Shift from : "I like this person"
to "Can this person do the job"**

02. Competency based recruitment

So what is competency based hiring?

- Hiring based on demonstrated skills, behaviors, and experience - not impressions or assumptions.
- Make it easy for the recruiter to see your competence.

Opinion-based

- Unstructured interviews
- Different questions for different people
- "I just liked them"
- Vague feedback
- Hard to explain decisions

Competency-based

- Clear role requirements
- Same core questions
- Evidence-based evaluation
- Documented reasoning
- Comparable candidates



03. How interviews are evaluated

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How candidates are evaluated in interviews

→ Behind the scenes

- Notes are taken
- Candidates are scored
- Candidates are compared
- Decisions are collective

→ Things evaluated

- Technical depth
- Communication
- Ownership
- Culture fit
- Motivation
- Seniority
- Passion!

03. How interviews are evaluated

Passion is key – shows potential

→ Passion ≠ loud

→ Curiosity

→ Ownership

→ Pride in quality

→ Shows in

→ How you talk

→ What you care about

→ What you want to improve



Skill gets interviews,
passion gets offers

03. How interviews are evaluated

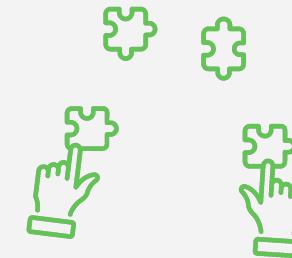
Interview ≠ exam, it's a dialogue

Exam mode

- Only answering
- Passive
- Short-term thinking

Dialogue mode

- Asking questions
- Collaborative
- Long-term thinking



Shift from "prove myself"
to "is this right for me?"

03. How interviews are evaluated

Questions that signal seniority

→ Strong candidate questions

- Show confidence
- Show maturity
- Show long-term thinking



→ Examples

- Why was this role opened?
- What problem should this role solve?
- What does success look like after 6 months?
- What usually makes people struggle here?
- How are technical decisions made?

03. How interviews are evaluated

Red flags

→ Increase uncertainty

- Unclear career story
- Only negative past experiences
- No curiosity about the company
- Extreme money focus
- No ownership ("they decided")

Uncertainty = risk
Risk kills offers



04. Choosing the right company

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You = the interviewer!

→ Culture is revealed by

- Leadership
- Conflict handling
- Decision-making
- Trust
- Feedback
- Mistakes

→ Remember

- Culture ≠ perks
- Culture = the sum of what everyone does, all the time, and behavior under pressure

04. Choosing the right company

Company size

→ Startup
→ Impact
→ Chaos
→ Risk

→ Scaleup
→ Growth
→ Structure-forming
→ Learning

→ Big company
→ Stability
→ Process
→ Predictability

No general best choice - only best for you and now

04. Choosing the right company

Salary and / or career capital

The job that grows you often wins long-term

→ Compensation package - not just salary

- Equity
- Pension
- Insurances
- Vacation days
- Perks for parents
- Ticket restaurant card
- Possibility for extra sick days

→ Career capital

- Skills
- Network
- Brand
- Ownership

→ LinkedIn strategy

- Always reply
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- Build relationships early
- Same story on CV

Salary transparency in EU from June 2026!

**You are not a candidate
in front of a judge.**



**You are a professional
choosing a
partnership.**