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**Candidate Skills and Expertise Requirements**

1. **Dimensional Modeling & Data Warehousing**
   * Proven experience designing robust star or snowflake schemas and transforming raw data into clean, analysis-ready models.
2. **Performance Optimization & Memory Management**
   * **Import Table Optimization:** Expertise in optimizing import tables to maximize in-memory capacity. This includes selecting efficient data types, reducing column cardinality, eliminating unnecessary columns, and applying data compression techniques. Familiarity with partitioning and incremental refresh methodologies is a plus.
   * **DirectQuery vs. Import Trade-offs:**  Ability to assess when to use DirectQuery versus Import modes, ensuring optimal performance while balancing data freshness and responsiveness.
3. **Experience with Big Models & High-Volume Data**
   * Demonstrated expertise in managing and optimizing very large models (e.g., 50GB or more) and handling huge volumes of data. This includes strategies such as efficient data partitioning, incremental data refresh, and advanced performance tuning to ensure stability and responsiveness at scale.
4. **Advanced DAX Proficiency**
   * Deep knowledge of crafting, debugging, and optimizing complex DAX expressions. Experience with tools like DAX Studio for performance tuning is highly valuable.
5. **Aggregation Strategies & Aggregation Awareness**
   * **Aggregation Table Design:**  Proficient in creating and managing aggregation tables to reduce query load by summarizing detailed data.
   * **Aggregation Awareness:**  Thorough understanding of Power BI’s aggregation awareness feature, enabling the model to automatically select the best aggregated data source to improve performance.
6. **Power Query & M Language**
   * Solid grasp of data transformation and cleaning using Power Query, ensuring that data is efficiently shaped and prepped before loading into the model.
7. **Databricks Integration & DirectQuery Experience**
   * Experience connecting Power BI to Databricks as a data source, managing refresh cycles, and running queries in DirectQuery mode. Proficiency in optimizing query performance and understanding SQL folding in the context of Databricks is essential.
8. **Analytical & Troubleshooting Skills**
   * Strong diagnostic abilities to troubleshoot complex data model issues, with a proactive approach to identifying and resolving performance bottlenecks.

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