*Reflecting on your unique relationship with the applicant, please comment on his or her character and abilities. We especially welcome a statement that addresses the applicant's potential success within and contributions to a college community.*

I first meet Iñaki Arango 4 months ago during an online Startup School Program developed by ***Y Combinator***, a well-respected startup accelerator program in Silicon Valley. We were both taking part in the program. I am developing an application to help parents manage and track all documentation of children with special needs. Since I have mainly a business background (25+ years international management experience in many different industries + an MBA at an Ivy League Business School in the US), I was looking to partner with software developers with knowledge about blockchain technologies. This technology, which started with bitcoin, is at a very early stage; the first applications are being developed worldwide and is attracting the best and brightest engineers. These developers are very hard to find and attract, thus very expensive. I’ve spoken with many different software houses and senior engineers but could not find available outstanding candidates. I was looking to attract young engineers who will be enthusiastic about solving this problem, since we have 2 children with special needs at home.

So I looked in the Startup School program platform searching for all company participants developing solutions in blockchain. They were at least 100 blockchain developers, out of 50.000 startups in across many industries from all over the world. I spoke with many of them but decided to focus on those located in Buenos Aires where I’m currently residing. Proximity is key to work together, specially at this early stage, I thought. Nonetheless, I arranged video calls with many of founders with blockchain experience around the world to pick their brain and ask for advice.

I contacted the company Pöhl which appeared on the platform’s filtered short list. Iñaki and 2 other co-founders appeared developing a solution to facilitate the uploading and retrieval of files to the blockchain. Iñaki responded immediately to my message and we arranged to meet at a Starbucks coffee in Buenos Aires.

When I arrived, I could not believe I was meeting with these three 17-year-old high school classmates. My Gosh, I thought, I could be their father. But I must confess I loved it, because these 3 youngsters seemed so articulate and smart I could not believe it. I was extremely impressed. It was clear from the very beginning that Inaki was the team leader. I’ve interviewed and worked with many junior professionals around the world, but frankly it’s rare to find great product managers that young.

After explaining the project, Iñaki understood it very quickly and suggested several ideas. This seemed incredible to me, considering this was his first encounter with the subject and the industry. I requested a proposal to develop the proof of concept and prototype for my application. Would you do it? I asked. A few weeks prior I met with another team who after reviewing my presentation, felt they were not prepared (after 10+ years of tech experience) to develop such a challenging solution.

I have requested several proposals for product development in my business experience, and the best ones are those which provide an overview of the outcome/final product, the prototype/ proof of concept, whatever that is, at least graphically or with a video, etc. This means the developers work at their own risk for a few days to stand out and get the job. In their proposal, it’s not that they say what they will do, but they actually do it in very rustic way. That’s exactly what Iñaki did. He developed the project road map and prepared a proposal for me to review and approve. He presented himself as the project leader and negotiated the fees in a logical way.

I decided to hire Iñaki and he quickly assembled a team. He also suggested a project management and collaboration tool, the technology to use, and allocated resources effectively.

After working with the team, for a month, it’s clear to me that Iñaki is outgoing, responsible, delivers progress according to schedule and knows what he is talking about. It’s obvious he is very confident, and comfortable working under pressure. He explains progress and the technology in a clear and concise way. Iñaki is very resourceful; for him everything seems to have a solution or a way to develop it. I also noticed he is highly respected by his classmates.

I am convinced Iñaki would be a great asset for your school. He is bilingual, he is concerned with real world problems which affect many people and wants to find ways to solve them. He has many different interests and seeks to have a meaningful life contributing positively to society.

On the one hand I’d like that Iñaki stays in Argentina so that we can make progress with our project. Everything is to be done. However, I realize that if he gets high quality education like the one provided at your School, he is an unpolished diamond with tremendous potential and only God knows how far or high he can go. I would not miss the opportunity to have him as a student.

I’d be happy to answer any questions you might have to endorse Iñaki’s candidacy.

Sincerely,

Jose Maria ABERG COBO