THE PRESENCE OF MIND ASSESSMENT

Purpose

This worksheet helps you identify the true indicators of learning capacity and adaptability in potential team members, beyond just technical qualifications.

Instructions

For each candidate you're considering, complete the following sections:

Part 1: Learning Signals Inventory

Rate each indicator on a scale of 1-5 (1 = Not observed, 5 = Strongly evident)

Learning Signal	Rating	Evidence/Example
Asks thoughtful questions that reveal thinking process		
Acknowledges knowledge gaps without defensiveness		
Connects new information to existing knowledge		
Shows curiosity about areas outside their expertise		
Describes learning from past mistakes or challenges		
Demonstrates different approaches when initial efforts fail		

Part 2: Story Analysis

Choose one story the candidate shared about solving a problem and analyze:

1. What specific challenge did they face?

_____

2. How did they approach the initial solution?

_____

3. When obstacles arose, how did they adapt?

_____

4. What resources or help did they seek out?

_____

5. How did they describe what they learned?

_____

Part 3: Reflection Questions

1. What evidence did you see of the candidate's learning process, not just their knowledge?

_____

2. How did they handle uncertain or ambiguous aspects of your conversation?

_____

3. What signals of adaptability did you observe in their past experiences?

_____

4. Based on this assessment, what type of onboarding would set them up for success?

_____

Part 4: Overall Learning Capacity Rating

Based on this assessment, rate the candidate's overall learning capacity:

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐ Exceptional learner - Actively seeks growth opportunities
⭐⭐⭐⭐ Strong learner - Adapts well to new situations
⭐⭐⭐ Capable learner - Will succeed with some guidance
⭐⭐ Basic learner - May struggle with significant changes
⭐ Limited learner - Prefers established routines and knowledge

Notes on overall assessment:

_____

_____

Additional Context:

Remember, the goal isn't to find people who already know everything, but those who can and will learn what they need to know. The most expensive hire isn't the person with the wrong skills—it's the person with the right skills but no ability to adapt as those needs change.

Look for candidates who:

- Ask "why" questions, not just "how" questions
- Share stories of overcoming failed approaches
- Express genuine curiosity about your team and organization
- Demonstrate self-awareness about their learning process
- Show enthusiasm about acquiring new knowledge and skills

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