

A Practical Guide for Technical Recruiting

# A CTO's Hiring Framework: AI & Data Engineers

How to identify, assess, and confidently hire top engineers in high-stakes roles.

## What do you get in this guide?

- ✓ **Role Breakdown Sheets:** what defines great talent across AI, Data, No-Code & more
- ✓ **How to Spot Senior AI & Data Engineers** even without a traditional background
- ✓ **The 7 Screening Questions** that reveal depth, not just buzzwords
- ✓ **The Tech Stack Decoder:** what tools matter in today's market
- ✓ **Fast-Filter Frameworks:** make the right shortlists in half the time

Let's get started →

From the Desk of a CTO Who's Hired Hundreds of Engineers

# Executive Summary

Over the last decade, I've hired hundreds of engineers—across AI, data, automation, and emerging no-code platforms. Some of those hires built foundational systems that scaled globally. Others... taught me painful (and expensive) lessons about what to look for—and what to avoid.

At Cloud Employee, we've turned that hard-earned experience into repeatable systems. We've worked with companies scaling their first engineering teams, and with CTOs in fast-growth environments who simply couldn't afford a bad hire. In both cases, we've helped them move fast without sacrificing depth.

This framework is the result of that work.

It's not a generic hiring guide. It's a practical, proven toolkit built from real-world experience—used by technical leaders to confidently identify, assess, and retain exceptional talent in today's most competitive engineering roles.

Whether you're hiring your first AI engineer or scaling a data function, this guide will give you the clarity, shortcuts, and confidence you need to get it right.

Let's dive in.



**Anto Cabraja**  
Chief Technology Officer @ Cloud Employee

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