Hello👋

Mar Bartolomé

Freelance Software Engineer

- 💬 @marbu
- 🌐 coconauts.net
- 🐍 coconauts
Backstory

I HAVE NO IDEA

WHAT I'M DOING
Backstory

Sheolan lives at A. He wants to visit B, C, D, and E before going back to A. Find upper & lower.
Backstory
Backstory
Backstory
Backstory
Backstory

Is tech hiring cargo cult?

Always has been
Backstory
The mystical cult of hiring

If Carpenters Were Hired Like Programmers..

Interviewer: So, you're a carpenter, are you?
Carpenter: That's right, that's what I do.
Interviewer: How long have you been doing it?
Carpenter: Ten years.
Interviewer: Great, that's good. Now, I have a few technical questions to ask you. Would you like to join our team? OK?
Carpenter: Sure, that'd be fine.
Interviewer: First of all, we're working in a subdivision building a lot of brown houses. We've already built a lot of brown houses before?
Carpenter: Well, I'm a carpenter, so I build houses, and people pretty much paint what they want.
Interviewer: Yes, I understand that, but can you give me an idea of how much experience you have building brown? Roughly.
Carpenter: Gosh, I really don't know. Once they're built I don't care what color they are. At least six months?
Interviewer: Six months? Well, we were looking for someone with a lot more brown. Can you imagine me asking you some more questions.
Carpenter: Well, OK, but paint is paint, you know.
Interviewer: Yes, well. What about walnut?
Carpenter: What about it?
Interviewer: Have you worked much with walnut?
“We want to hire the best”
“We want to hire the best”
“We want to hire the best”

I've been twitter following the careers of people we interviewed but passed on at my last gig.

Turns out we were almost always wrong.
“We want to avoid false positives”
“We want to avoid false positives”
“We want to avoid false positives”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills to be the best at interviews:</th>
<th>Skills to be the best at work:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>coding</td>
<td>coding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confidence</td>
<td>teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improvisation</td>
<td>empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persuasion</td>
<td>time-management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>memorization</td>
<td>communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“We want to avoid false positives”
“But... it works for google!”
“But... it works for google!”
“But... it works for google!”
“But... it works for google!”
“But... it works for google!”

Max Howell @mxcl · Jun 10, 2015
Google: 90% of our engineers use the software you wrote (Homebrew), but you can’t invert a binary tree on a whiteboard so fuck off.

💬 521  ↑↓ 7.9K  ❤ 12.9K
So then... what?
Balance
Figure out your company needs

senior & leads

mid-level

juniors

decision-making
mentoring

horsepower

investments

bang for your buck

Supply

tolerance to hiring nonsense
Tailor your testing

One Size Fits All

Size Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Chest</th>
<th>Height</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XS</td>
<td>30&quot;</td>
<td>24&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>33&quot;</td>
<td>25&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>36&quot;</td>
<td>27&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>40&quot;</td>
<td>28&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XL</td>
<td>44&quot;</td>
<td>30&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXL</td>
<td>48&quot;</td>
<td>31&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tailor your testing

- high-level architecture/stack discussion/whiteboarding
- take home projects
- pairing over some real company code
- opinionated tech discussion
- pair programming on algorithms or simple programs
Hiring goes both ways!

You’re selling
(your company, to engineers)

You’re buying
(engineers)
Hiring goes both ways!
Do “agile hiring”

- Individuals and interactions over processes and tools.
- Responding to change over following a plan.
- Candidate collaboration over one-sided approaches.
- Working people over comprehensive testing.
Mar’s tech hiring cookbook
Job postings
Senior Python Ninja

We’re looking for a senior engineer to work with a disruptive unicorn startup. Do you have what it takes to join our top-class engineering team?

- 10+ years of experience with python 3
- Django wizard
- MongoDB, Memcached, ElasticSearch
- Desiderable: AWS, k8s, docker, microservices, react
- Experience building systems at web-scale
- Be a hustler and bustler
- Salary package: industry rates, with stock options
Senior Python Ninja

We’re looking for a senior engineer to work with a disruptive unicorn startup. Do you have what it takes to join our top-class engineering team?

- 10+ years of experience with python 3
- Django wizard
- MongoDB, Memcached, ElasticSearch
- Desiderable: AWS, k8s, docker, microservices, react
- Experience building systems at web-scale
- Be a hustler and bustler
- Salary package: industry rates, with stock options
Python developer

We’re a startup with recent funding looking to grow our engineering team. Our stack consists of majorly a Django app written on Python3, deployed on AWS with K8s, and using React on the frontend. Stack also includes some bits of other technologies, such as Elasticsearch, Memcached, or MongoDB.

We’re looking for someone with at least a few years of web development experience, comfortable with Python, and willing to work in a fast-paced startup environment.

Salary range: 40-80K€, depending on experience, plus stock options.
Algorithms

Sheldon lives at A. He wants to visit B, C, D & E before returning to A. Find upper & lower bounds.
Algorithms
Algorithms
Algorithms
Algorithms
Algorithms

Like

Google

Codility

HackerRank
Algorithms
Algorithms
Take-home projects
Take-home projects
Take-home projects
Take-home projects
Take-home projects
Take-home projects
Take-home projects

I'M SORRY.

WE HAVE A LIFE.
Take-home projects

1-2 hours max

I'M SORRY.

WE HAVE A LIFE.
Take-home projects

1-2 hours max
Take-home projects

1- 2 hours max
Take-home projects
Take-home projects
Take-home projects
Take-home projects
“A real-world problem”
“A real-world problem”
“A real-world problem”
“A real-world problem”
“A real-world problem”

When a user takes a photo, the app should check whether they’re in a national park...

Sure, easy GIS lookup, gimme a few hours.

... and check whether the photo is of a bird.

I’ll need a research team and five years.

In CS, it can be hard to explain the difference between the easy and the virtually impossible.
Face to face interviewing

Minimum Viable Interview!
Face to face interviewing

Minimum Viable Interview!

WORKS FOR ME
Face to face interviewing

Minimum Viable Interview!
Face to face interviewing

Open ended discussion
- Compare tech stacks
- Ask opinions on tech (python, ecosystem tools, dev process)
- Discuss/review prior test challenge or side projects

Quizz questions
- What’s the difference between str and unicode
- What happens when you enter a url on a browser
- How does a garbage collector work
Face to face interviewing
Face to face interviewing
Face to face interviewing
Face to face interviewing

- Reassure: no right or wrong answers
- Dialogue, not interview
- Ice breakers
Testing on the job

good at interviews  good at the job
Testing on the job
Testing on the job
Testing on the job
Testing on the job

“Working people over comprehensive testing”
Testing on the job

Probation period
Testing on the job

- Probation period
- Paid short contract
Testing on the job

- Probation period
- Paid short contract
- One day at the office
Testing on the job
When the candidate has a portfolio
When the candidate has a portfolio
When the candidate has a portfolio
What if I get a bad hire?
What if I get a bad hire?
What if I get a bad hire?
What if I get a bad hire?
What if I get a bad hire?

ASAP

LET IT GO
What if I get a bad hire?
What if I get a bad hire?
What if I get a bad hire?
What if I get a bad hire?
What if I get a bad hire?
What if I get a bad hire?

Bad hire (for a short time)
- salary
- time invested onboarding
- exit compensation

Looking for the perfect hire
- time invested in hiring
- recruiters
- temporary contractors
- features piling in your backlog
What if I get a bad hire?

Looking for the perfect hire
- time invested in hiring
- recruiters
- temporary contractors
- features piling in your backlog

Bad hire (for a short time)
- salary
- time invested onboarding
- exit compensation
Holistic tips
Holistic tips

Few steps
Holistic tips

Few steps

Flexible
Holistic tips

- Few steps
- Flexible
- Collaborative
Holistic tips

Few steps  Flexible  Collaborative  Fault-tolerant
Holistic tips

- Few steps
- Flexible
- Collaborative
- Fault-tolerant

Make it agile!
Closing remarks

- Hiring is hard, and we make it worse
- Agile hiring: communication, collaboration, adapting, results
- Different tactics work for different cases
- Hiring goes both ways
Thank you!

Followup online:

- @marbu
- coconauts.net
- coconauts