

LET'S TALK TALENT

What are acceptable norms for AI in the hiring process?

What counts as fair use inside the interview, and who decides?

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Solution Room · Path E: Rebuilding Trust in Talent Systems · September 30, 2026

I'm not here to give you the answer. I'm here to give you the context.

WHO I AM

Global talent director, building teams across cultures and continents.

Right now I'm running live engineering and sales hiring pilots:
redesigning how we interview for AI, and testing what actually works
when candidates use it in the room.

WHAT WE'RE DOING

This morning, Jillian took on the whole funnel and the question of signal
quality across it.

This session focuses in on the interview itself. Today you're going to
answer what fair use looks like for your specific scenarios.

Context from me. Definitions from you.

So what is fair use anyway?

**Let's review some
scenarios**

01

A candidate drafts their answer with AI. They understand it completely and can defend every line of it.

They didn't mention it. You never said whether AI was

allowed.

No rule existed. Is silence still a failure?

FAIR USE

NOT FAIR USE

02

A candidate tells you upfront they're using AI. It was permitted. The output is excellent.

You ask them to change one thing, and they can't explain

why it was that way.

They followed every rule. Would you hire them?

FAIR USE

NOT FAIR USE

01

You said AI wasn't allowed at this stage. They used it anyway.

The answer was good. They understood every line of it. And

what was even better, they said it was their idea to use AI.

They broke the rule. But did they misrepresent anything?

FAIR USE

NOT FAIR USE

SO WHAT ACTUALLY SEPARATED THOSE CALLS?

Anyone can produce the answer now.
Not everyone can understand it.
Even fewer can defend it.

AUGMENTATION

AI helps them show a capability they genuinely have, and can explain, extend and defend.

This is the job.

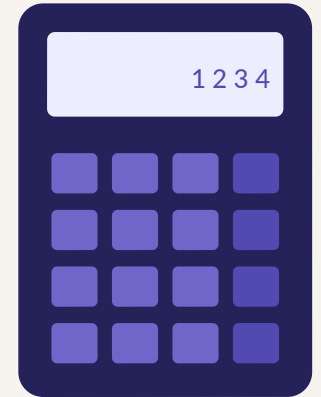
MISREPRESENTATION

AI stands in for a capability they don't have. The moment you push, there's nothing underneath.

This is the risk.

The indicator isn't the tool, and it isn't the output. It's the judgment underneath both.

Remember when this was cheating?



BANNED

You couldn't bring one into the room at all.

ALLOWED, WITH CONDITIONS

Fine, but only if you showed your working.

ASSUMED

By the end, the test was written expecting you had one.

The tool changed. What we were actually measuring never did.

Banned, then allowed with conditions, then assumed. That arc is Define. It took us thirty years to write it down for the calculator, and we don't have thirty years for this one.

The tool is a given. The judgment is the job.

ENGINEERING

Karat A/B pilot · Israel, EMEA, India

“We don't write code manually anymore, but there are a lot of things around it that need strong skills: providing the right context, critical thinking about the outcome, and ultimately the human judgement.”

WHAT WE CHANGED

We're A/B testing agentic coding in the interview. The code isn't the test. We watch how they direct the agent: how they prompt it, how many prompts it takes to get somewhere useful, and what trade-offs they make on the way.

GTM / SALES

APAC pilot · ANZ, Japan, China, SEA

“With AI they're nailing the briefs and everyone's excited. Test them on the spot, where they can't make anything up, and people falter.”

WHAT WE CHANGED

A case study used to tell us how someone would handle the job. Now every brief is excellent. So we let them prep with AI, then move the assessment live: mid-demo the budget drops and the buyer changes. Nothing they prepared survives that.

What AI produces is the starting point. What they do with it is the signal.

We expected our hiring managers to want to ban AI - or say it's cheating. In fact, they want to allow candidates to use it. And they are starting to want to see *how* they utilize it.

So we asked our hiring managers one question.

Where do you want them using AI, and where don't you? Then we labelled every stage of both pilots.

ENGINEERING

AI-EXPECTED

The coding test

Use the agent. That is the job now.

AI-PERMITTED

The walkthrough

Refer back to what it produced, but you are the one explaining it.

AI-EXCLUDED

The trade-offs

Why this approach, what you would change.
No agent, just judgment.

GTM / SALES

AI-EXPECTED

Case and deck prep

Research the account and build the brief with AI.

AI-PERMITTED

The case presentation

Lean on what you built. We are listening for what you understand.

AI-EXCLUDED

The live demo

Budget drops, buyer changes. Nothing they prepared survives it.

The judgment is the job. And the job is what we are assessing.

Context is key.

The same use of AI can be fair in one role and a red flag in another.

Role

Who's being hired.

Task

What they're actually doing.

Stage

Where in the loop we are.

Level

Entry or senior. Judgment needs a baseline.

Region

Where you're hiring.
Norms differ by market.

Recruiting's new job isn't policing the tool. It's owning the context.

Define · Detect · Defend

Define

Label every stage: AI-expected, AI-permitted, Human required.

Then say what has to be disclosed, and to whom.

Detect

Can the interviewer tell, in the room, whether the candidate owns it?

Ownership plus disclosure. Never the tooling.

Defend

Would the hire or no-hire decision stand up to being questioned?

A rule you can't justify is a rule you can't enforce.

The offence was never the tool. It's non-disclosure against a stated policy, and work they can't own.

Three steps. There is a fourth, and I'll come back to it at the end.

Three questions for your table.

1 Define

Where has your team drawn the line so far, and for which roles? What's working, and what's harder than it should be?

2 Detect

What part do your recruiters and hiring managers play today in telling real capability from a good-looking AI output?

3 Defend

What are you doing now to keep hiring fair and defensible, and what will you add next year?

THE LEAVE-BEHIND KIT

- Policy template
- Stage-label worksheet
- Scenario cards
- Tool menu

Now it's your turn.

Starting Monday.

Five questions to keep asking, role by role.

? What task is easy with AI but still separates strong candidates from weak ones?

? Where should AI be allowed in this interview, and where shouldn't it?

? What are we actually trying to measure, and can AI fake it?

? If we removed AI tomorrow, could they still do the work?

? Could they defend their answer under one honest follow-up?

Everything from today
talentwithalex.com/tc26



You didn't detect AI. You discerned judgment.

THE FOURTH D • DISCERNMENT

Define, Detect and Defend were one capability all along: knowing when the output is right.

Define hands you the three labels. Discernment is what makes them enforceable, and building it into your recruiters and hiring managers is the job now.

WHAT WON'T CHANGE

Tools evolve, so your framework has to. Next year it may be agents running your first screens.

But a human owning the judgment? That never changes.

So you leave asking not “is this fair use?” but: what is discernment, and how do we build it into how we hire?