

Data Engineering Hiring Checklist

Use this pre-search checklist to sharpen requirements, reduce wasted interviews, and keep the process competitive.

1. Define the business outcome

- What problem must this hire solve in the first 6-12 months?
- What products, platforms, pipelines, or stakeholders will they own?
- What would successful first 90 days look like?

2. Calibrate the role

- Confirm the correct title and seniority.
- Separate must-have experience from trainable or nice-to-have skills.
- Identify the two or three non-negotiable technical capabilities.
- Check that compensation, location, and workplace expectations match the market.

3. Clarify the environment

- Document cloud, warehouse/lakehouse, orchestration, transformation, streaming, and BI dependencies.
- Define data scale, reliability expectations, governance constraints, and on-call needs.
- Explain whether the work is primarily build, migration, optimization, platform, or stakeholder-facing.

4. Evaluate candidates consistently

- Assess project depth and the candidate's personal contribution.
- Ask about scale, architecture decisions, tradeoffs, failures, and measurable outcomes.
- Evaluate SQL/Python/Spark/cloud depth only where relevant.
- Score communication, ownership, debugging, and stakeholder management.

5. Protect interview speed

- Use only the stages needed for a sound decision.
- Assign a clear owner for feedback and next steps.
- Provide feedback within 24-48 hours whenever possible.
- Avoid repeating the same evaluation in multiple interviews.

6. Prepare a competitive offer

- Confirm compensation flexibility before final interviews.
- Understand motivation, competing processes, and counteroffer risk.
- Sell the work, team, leadership, career path, and flexibility - not just pay.
- Move quickly once the hiring team reaches conviction.

Need help? Godlr recruits Data Engineers for U.S. companies on a contingency basis. Visit godlr.com to schedule a hiring strategy call.