Canditech

3 AI Skills Every Candidate Must Have (And How to Test Them)

White Paper:
Assessing Talent in the Age of AI

Skill-Based Hiring for the AI Era

The workforce has entered a new phase where human capability is amplified by artificial intelligence. AI tools now shape how employees write, analyze, design, research, code, and communicate. As this shift accelerates, the very definition of a top performer across any role has changed.

According to the World Economic Forum, by 2030, nearly 40% of workers' core skills will change dramatically. So what does this mean for the hiring choices we make today?

"Hiring someone today without assessing their AI skills is like hiring someone in the 1990s without checking if they could use the internet," said the CEO of a leading global tech firm.

Companies know they need AI-capable talent, yet most still rely on outdated processes that were already struggling to predict performance.

Skill-based hiring offers the clearest path forward. Organizations must evaluate AI fluency through real work samples and simulations that mirror how people will actually perform on the job.

> *"AI will not replace humans, but those who use AI will replace those who don't."*

Ginni Rometty,
Former CEO of IBM

AI skills matter in every role

AI is transforming how every department operates, far beyond technical or engineering teams. Sales, marketing, product, finance, operations, and support all rely on AI tools to work faster, analyze information, and make better decisions.

This shift means organizations can no longer assume AI proficiency is optional. To hire effectively, they must evaluate how every candidate prompts, interprets, refines, and applies AI as part of their daily workflow. Without this, companies risk hiring employees who will struggle in an AI-driven environment.

Job simulations are the strongest predictor of performance

Traditional hiring methods cannot show how candidates *actually* work with AI. Realistic job simulations provide the most accurate insight into future performance because they reveal how candidates think, problem solve, and collaborate with AI tools in real context. This gives hiring teams a clear, evidence-based understanding of a candidate's capabilities.

As AI reshapes workflows, simulations become essential for predicting whether a candidate can excel in a modern role.

Candidate experience and face validity are critical for AI skill assessment

AI skill assessments should feel fair, relevant, and meaningful to candidates. When assessments mirror real job tasks, candidates can test-drive the role and understand exactly what will be expected of them. This creates strong face validity, which builds trust and reduces drop-off.

Candidates are far more likely to engage positively when they see a clear connection between the AI assessment and the role. A strong candidate experience strengthens your employer brand and ensures top talent stays engaged through the process.

What we'll cover

This white paper outlines the three core AI skills every candidate must have and shows how to measure them using modern assessment tools to hire a workforce prepared for the most important skills of the AI era.

- Skill Set 1: AI Prompt Engineering Skills
- Skill Set 2: AI Critical Evaluation Skills
- Skill Set 3: AI-Human Balance Skills

→

80%

Say their companies set efficiency as an objective of their AI initiatives

62%

Say their organizations are experimenting with AI

→

65%

Report reducing manual or repetitive tasks with AI

45%

Report improving recruiting and HR processes with AI tools

Sources: Mckinsey & PwC

Skill Set 1: AI Prompt Engineering Skills

What the skill is

AI prompt engineering skills refer to a candidate's ability to communicate effectively with AI systems, and this matters across every role, not only technical positions. Strong prompting requires structured thinking, clarity, and critical judgment to guide the model toward meaningful, accurate results. It involves several key behaviors:

- Framing the task with context and intent
- Refining outputs by identifying gaps in early responses
- Providing examples and constraints
- Breaking large tasks into actionable steps

> *"Skills requiring nuanced understanding, complex problem-solving or sensory processing show limited current risk of replacement by GenAI, affirming that human oversight remains crucial even in areas where GenAI can provide assistance."*

World Economic Forum
The Future of Jobs Report 2025

Why it matters

As AI becomes deeply integrated into daily workflows, the ability to prompt effectively has emerged as a foundational skill across roles.

According to a 2025 analysis of U.S. job postings by Lightcast, job listings seeking "prompt engineering" skills surged by 227% year-over-year. Without prompting skills, employees may waste time, lose accuracy, and miss chances to use AI for faster research.

Prompting skills reveal how a candidate thinks through a task, writes their LLM instructions, and improves the AI output step by step. When these abilities are seen inside a job simulation, you gain full visibility into how they operate in context and how quickly they reach strong results with AI.

Effective prompting leads to:

- Higher quality work produced at scale
- Overcoming human limitations through enhanced expertise
- Faster turnaround times
- Clearer analysis and insights

How to test for it

The best way to measure this skill is to watch candidates work in a realistic flow. Because AI skills matter in every role, not just technical ones, it's important to evaluate how candidates use AI in the kind of tasks they'd actually perform day to day (you can do this inside Canditech, which embeds ChatGPT directly into skill assessments).

To test AI prompting skills, candidates can receive tasks such as writing messaging, fixing code, summarizing customer issues, or analyzing data. This allows you to see how their prompts were created, refined, and applied.

You can also include steps that require candidates to:

- Create prompts
- Evaluate the AI output
- Improve both the prompt and the result
- Present the final deliverable

What strong performance looks like

Top performers give clear and complete instructions and refine the prompt logically as they go. Their final product is accurate, well-structured, and clearly shaped by both AI support and human judgment.

Strong performers show:

- Logical prompt structure
- Clear language and well-defined instructions
- Purposeful iteration based on early results
- Refinements that elevate the quality of the output
- A final result that reflects both AI assistance and human guidance

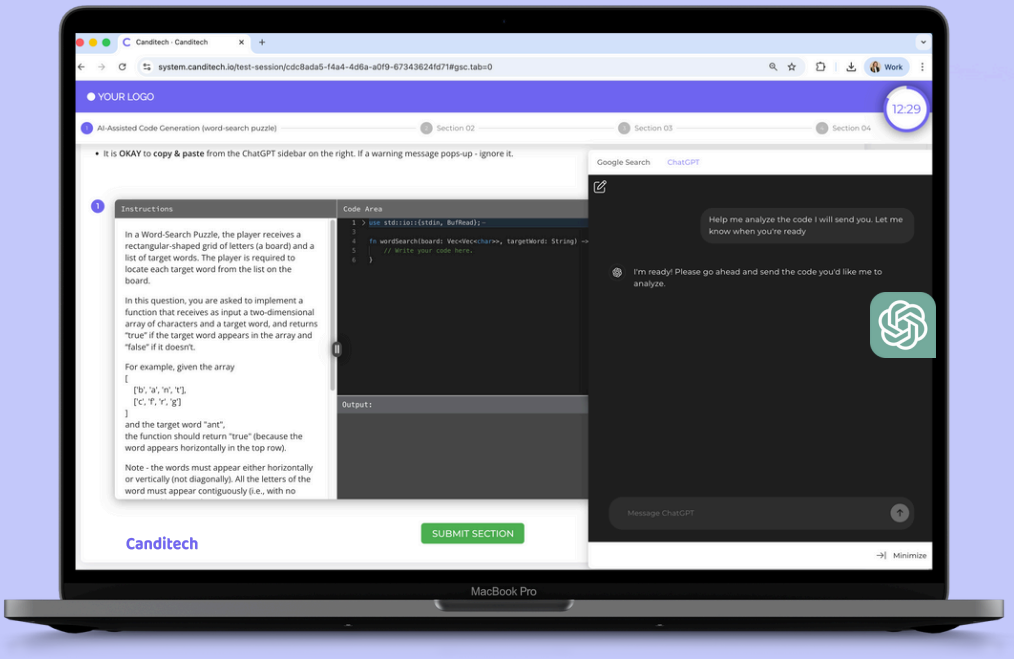


Illustration of Canditech's assessment interface with ChatGPT, showing how candidates apply AI in practical tasks, such as in a coding assessment.

Skill Set 2: AI Critical Evaluation Skills

AI evaluation skills measure a candidate's ability to critique and refine AI-generated content with accuracy and reasoning. This includes the ability to detect errors, identify bias, and apply domain expertise to improve the final result. According to a 2025 report by Exploding Topics, only 8% of users regularly verify the accuracy of AI-generated content, highlighting a critical gap in evaluation discipline that organizations cannot afford to overlook.

As AI becomes embedded in every function, the ability to critically evaluate AI output has shifted from a niche capability to a universal requirement. Job-aligned simulations offer the clearest lens into this skill, exposing how candidates assess accuracy, bias, and reliability in a real context while delivering strong face validity that signals a fair, role-relevant evaluation process.

This skill set involves:

Checking for factual correctness

Balancing AI capabilities with human insight

Identifying missing information

Deciding when AI should not be trusted

Catching bias, inconsistencies, or flawed reasoning

Comparing multiple AI suggestions

How to test for it

A modern AI skills assessment can measure AI readiness by giving candidates practical tasks that mirror real decision-making.

For example, candidates can be asked to:

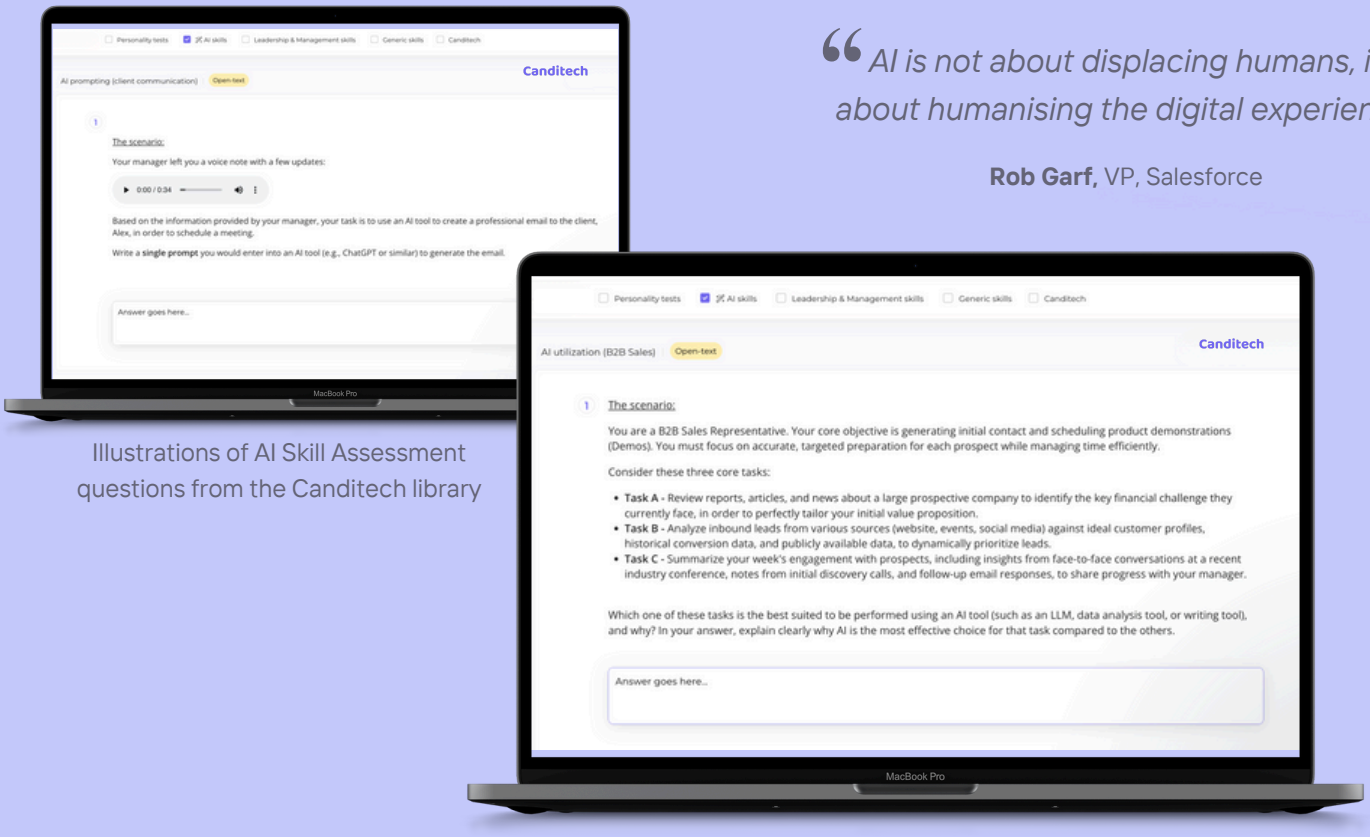
- Review AI-generated content and evaluate its quality or correctness
- Craft effective prompts tailored to a specific goal or scenario
- Compare several AI outputs and justify which one is strongest
- Describe how they would use AI in practice while maintaining oversight

What strong performance looks like

Candidates with strong AI evaluation skills identify weaknesses quickly and explain their corrections with clarity. Their final answer is more precise, more complete, and clearly improved beyond the original AI output.

Strong performers consistently show:

- Fast detection of inaccuracies
- Clear, evidence-based corrections
- Awareness of risk factors and bias
- Logical reasoning for each decision



Illustrations of AI Skill Assessment questions from the Canditech library

> *"AI is not about displacing humans, it's about humanising the digital experience."*
>
> **Rob Garf,** VP, Salesforce

Skill Set 3: AI-Human Balance Skills

What the skill is

AI-human balance skills, also known as human-in-the-loop skills, measure how well candidates combine AI output with human judgment, communication, and contextual understanding. This shows whether a candidate can use AI responsibly while still making thoughtful, human-led decisions.

These skills often require someone to:

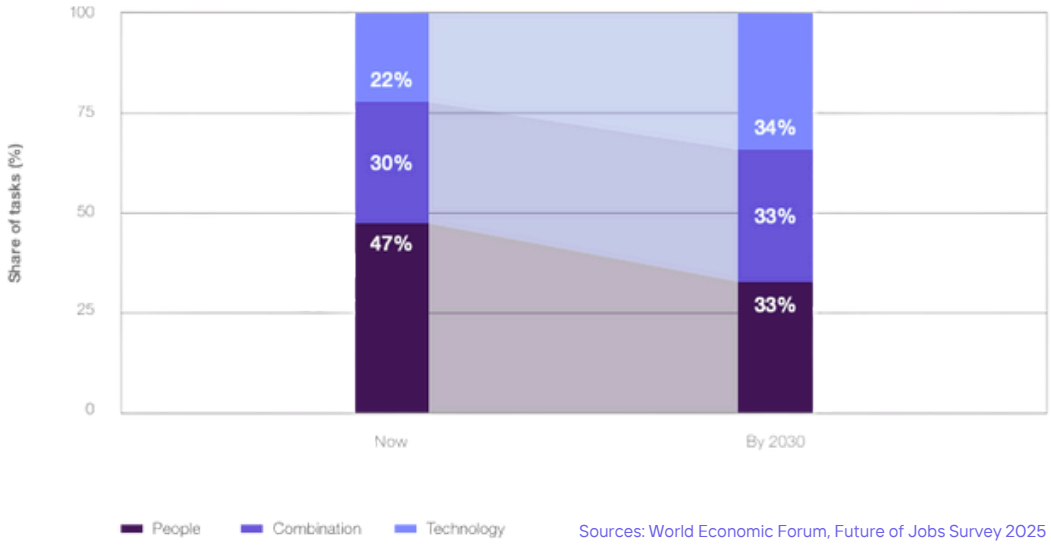
- Decide when to use AI and when not to
- Interpret AI suggestions in context
- Communicate decisions to colleagues and stakeholders
- Bring nuance, emotional intelligence, and human reasoning
- Maintain responsibility for outcomes
- Build trust through transparency and clarity of how AI was used in one's work

Why it matters

The biggest risk in an AI-driven workplace isn't using AI, it's trusting it at the wrong moment. As AI becomes embedded across every function, employees must know when to rely on machine-generated input and when human judgment must lead.

According to the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs 2025 report, the balance of work is rapidly shifting as automation expands and human-machine collaboration grows, with tasks expected to be nearly evenly split between humans, machines, and hybrid workflows by 2030, making this balance a core requirement for effective decision-making.

The shifting human-machine frontier: automation versus augmentation, 2025-2030



Sources: World Economic Forum, Future of Jobs Survey 2025

How to test for it

AI human balance skills can be measured in several ways, but within a pre-employment assessment, one of the strongest methods is to pair an AI task with a short video follow-up question. After candidates complete an AI-based assignment, adding a video response helps you see how they interpret the AI output, refine it, and explain the reasoning behind their decisions. This gives you a clearer view of their judgment, communication, and real-world decision-making.

For example:

- Ask candidates to refine flawed AI analysis and record a brief rationale.
- Let them use an AI tool in a task, then describe how they balanced AI input with their own reasoning.
- Share conflicting AI outputs and ask candidates to reconcile them and explain their final decision.

What strong performance looks like

High-scoring candidates refine AI outputs with precision and communicate their reasoning in clear, professional language. Their decisions demonstrate efficiency paired with responsible human oversight.

Top candidates demonstrate:

- A balanced perspective on AI strengths and limitations
- Strong explanations in plain language
- Confidence in refining or overriding AI output
- Clear, thoughtful reasoning
- Professional communication

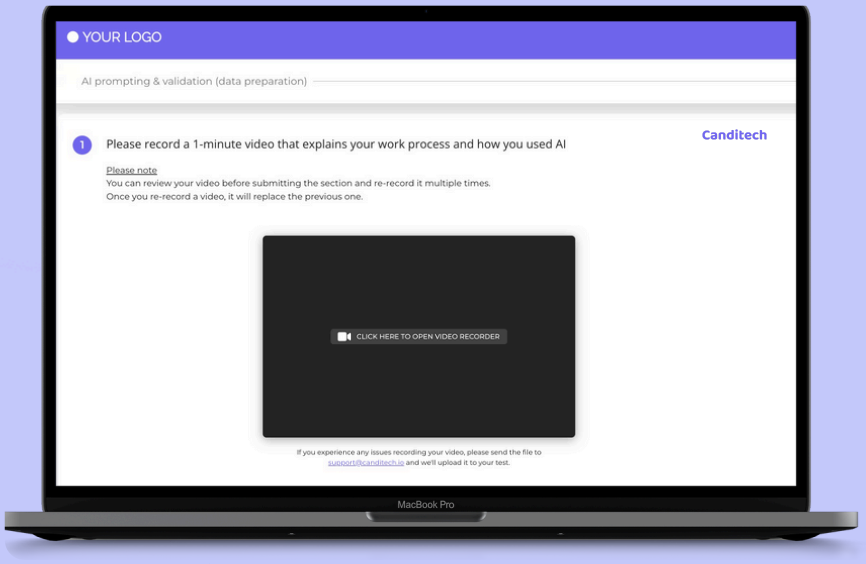


Illustration of a Canditech AI skills assessment featuring a video follow-up question that asks how candidates leveraged AI to reach their answer.

> *"The future of work isn't about being replaced by AI, but about integrating it into your workflow. The strongest performers will be those who pair AI proficiency with human strengths like creativity, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence."*

Guy Barel
CEO, Canditech

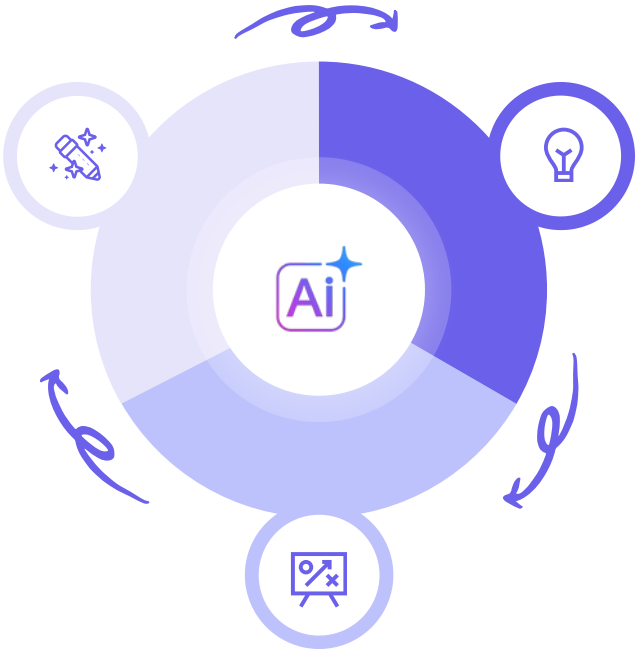
Hire AI-Proficient Talent With Canditech's Skill Assessment Platform

See who can *actually* perform in an AI-driven workforce

01 AI-Powered Test Builder

Build a Custom Assessment in Minutes

- Turn any job description into a tailor-made skill assessment.
- Write, refine, and perfect your assessments with AI.



02 Test AI Skills

AI Readiness Across Every Role

- Ready-made AI proficiency tests for technical and non-technical roles.
- Embedded ChatGPT in assessments.
- Prompting tests for tech roles.

03 AI Scoring

Instant, Objective Scoring at Scale

- Auto-score open text and video responses with rubric-based AI agents.
- Reduce manual review and ensure consistent, fair scoring.

Why Companies Choose Canditech?

- AI skill evaluations for technical and non-technical roles
- One platform to assess every role
- Realistic job simulations proven to reflect real performance
- Strong face validity that strengthens the candidate experience
- AI-powered scoring
- 100% customizable assessments
- Available in any language
- Advanced anti-cheating features

Book a free demo to explore Canditech's skill assessment platform for the AI-age.

Appendix

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