

# Nick Kostalas

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## Technical writing sample: candidate profiles for software engineers

Writing prompt:

This company provides job placement for software engineers based on an interview and scored performance assessment. Once candidates pass our interview, our writers create a short summary, typically around 200 words, to be displayed with the candidate's scores. Our goal is to create a picture of a candidate that will interest potential employers: positive, interesting, true, and not too 'salesy'.

Use our informal-but-professional house style as demonstrated in the example profiles. Informal doesn't mean incorrect, and you should be precise with grammar and mechanics. Err on the side of not saying anything actively incorrect on the technical side: it's better to leave out some detail than to include an incorrect claim or term. That said, you want to include supporting details when you can reasonably do so. Ultimately, your profile should make someone want to hire the candidate for whom it's written, without misrepresenting them or their skills, and should feel like a credible technical summary of their abilities.

Example profiles:

 John interview and profile.pdf  John resume.pdf  
 Summer interview and profile.pdf  Summer resume.pdf

Writing exercise subjects:

 Dmitri interview.pdf  Dmitri resume.pdf  
 Jessica interview.pdf  Jessica resume.pdf

My submission begins on the next page.

**Candidate profile: Dmitri Polybrat**

Dmitri is a seasoned back-end engineer with two years at Google and six at Apple, where he currently holds a senior position. He has significant experience in web development, data pipelines, and distributed machine learning. In our technical interview, he displayed an incredible level of proficiency in his short answers on web and systems design, giving both textbook definitions and real-world use cases. We could easily see him teaching a course on databases.

Dmitri's recent work has consisted mostly of higher-level architecture and team-lead responsibilities, leaving him a bit rusty with hands-on coding and low-level systems. Still, he showed a high level of fluency in API design, and displayed excellent and speedy debugging skills. He has a thorough understanding of different systems design technologies, including both their technical and business trade-offs. Dmitri is perfectly suited for the role of a senior architect, and would be particularly valuable in a position where his deep knowledge and masterful technical communication skills can elevate the work of his team.

**Candidate profile: Jessica Leifsdottir**

Jessica is a talented but inexperienced programmer who is ready to make great advances with a little bit of guidance. She combines a solid foundation in coding and API design with good habits and instincts: she is thoughtful, methodical, and observant. In person, she also came off as exceedingly friendly. During the coding performance portion of our technical interview, she was quite productive, and did good work despite some apparent nervousness. In the debugging portion, she showed a high degree of familiarity with Visual Studio Code, and impressed us by quickly identifying the sources of the bugs, noticing important details, and fixing the last bug with time to spare.

Jessica's debugging performance shows what she's capable of when given the right tools and a degree of confidence: she not only did a great job, but she had fun doing it, becoming visibly excited when she had a breakthrough moment with one of the bugs. There are some gaps in her knowledge, particularly around algorithms and low-level systems, so she would do better in a role where she's able to fill those gaps before doing any heavy lifting in those areas. Jessica has a lot of potential, and is a prime candidate for a junior back-end development role that can provide the support she needs to flourish.