

Forte 2021

**Charles Feval**

Business title: SDM, Recruiting Technology

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## Performance rating

### **Exceeds**

The performance rating is defined by the results you have delivered, compared to expectations for your role and level. Managers use multiple sources (e.g. goals, regularly collected feedback, metrics, impact on customers, etc.) and consider all Leadership Principles when determining this rating.

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## Employee portion

### **What are you most excited about at work?**

What excites me the most in the this job a) the impact that our team has on the overall technology stack of the organization, which generally helps at a meta-level delivering better results for the customers and b) the great people in my team, and doing my best to help them.

### **When you're at your best, how do you contribute?**

One of my skills is probably that I'm not too bad at prioritizing what actually matters for the customer, and re-evaluate the plan to make it work. I also take a step back and think about underlying root causes of issues we are having. I'm thinking relatively long term and can form a relatively good picture of where to go.

### **Which Leadership Principles do you demonstrate when you're at your best?**

#### **Hire and Develop the Best**

Leaders raise the performance bar with every hire and promotion. They recognize exceptional talent, and willingly move them throughout the organization. Leaders develop leaders and take seriously their role in coaching others. We work on behalf of our people to invent mechanisms for development like Career Choice.

#### **Deliver Results**

Leaders focus on the key inputs for their business and deliver them with the right quality and in a timely fashion. Despite setbacks, they rise to the occasion and never settle.

#### **Think Big**

Thinking small is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Leaders create and communicate a bold direction that inspires results. They think differently and look around corners for ways to serve customers.

## What growth ideas do you have for yourself?

I can improve at rallying other people and teams behind the long-term plan. I'm not great at predicting delivery dates and should pad estimates more to give the team breathing room and increase quality. I need to be stricter with other teams planning dependencies ahead. Sometimes I need to prioritize my personal activities better and drop the unessential

## Are there any Leadership Principles you want to focus on for growth?

### Earn Trust

Leaders listen attentively, speak candidly, and treat others respectfully. They are vocally self-critical, even when doing so is awkward or embarrassing. Leaders do not believe their or their team's body odor smells of perfume. They benchmark themselves and their teams against the best.

### Insist on the Highest Standards

Leaders have relentlessly high standards - many people may think these standards are unreasonably high. Leaders are continually raising the bar and drive their teams to deliver high quality products, services and processes. Leaders ensure that defects do not get sent down the line and that problems are fixed so they stay fixed.

### Have Backbone; Disagree and Commit

Leaders are obligated to respectfully challenge decisions when they disagree, even when doing so is uncomfortable or exhausting. Leaders have conviction and are tenacious. They do not compromise for the sake of social cohesion. Once a decision is determined, they commit wholly.

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## Super powers

### You bring a lot of strengths to your work at Amazon. What stands out for me is:

Charles asks great questions in project review, across team co-work as well as talent discussions. Charles relentlessly challenges the status quo, looking for ways to improve how we're delivering high quality result. Charles discovers talented engineers about their motivation, skills and looks for opportunities to best leverage them. Charles engages with key stakeholders/partners to solve the right problems.

### Here are the super powers your peers provided:

Charles has an incredible ability to make people feel valued even in the face of strong disagreements. He keeps discussions goal-oriented and optimistic, which allows for expedited decision-making. One time when disagreements were getting somewhat intense between our teams Charles helped keep objectives moving forward, and at the same time maintaining trust between teams.

Charles has demonstrated strong ownership to take over ARS and to isolate Recruiting Persons domain from ARS. He also ran the Foundations OPEX meeting and embraced the DayOne members to set new direction for HPS. He actively followed up on COEs in his own team as well as from HPS. He earned trust in supporting Discovery on backfilling RPS data.

Charles is a really great partner to work with. He is genuinely interested in supporting the teams around him and looking at both the interests of his team and the dependent teams. He is familiar with the details and is able to dive deep when required.

Charles is an exceptional good communicator; he is opinionated and frequently hits the mark when providing suggestions and feedbacks. He can move difficult conversations forward with an even tone so the discussion ends with consensus.

Charles is great at stepping up when a shared problem needs a solution. He sees such occasions as opportunities to remove technical debt and advocate for long term solutions.

Charles's super power is his ability to learn new things and helping his team leverage those learnings. He also does not shy away from sharing his bold vision that can help the org in long run. One example for this is HIRE API.

Charles's super powers are to provide visibility to largely back-end only work to partners, and to engage and motivate engineers in the area that experienced attrition in the past. Charles is diligent in promoting the work of his team, and educating partners on the significance of the roadmap.

With a little over a year at Amazon, Charles has been able to ramp up effectively into a very complex space and deliver on a major initiative (RPS) without any downtime or operational impact. His mandate of revamping the underlying architecture that CORE & CMAX teams rely on is hugely ambitious and it takes someone with Charles' attention to detail and high standards to pull it off.

### **Here are the super powers your direct reports provided:**

Charles did a great job at keeping team focused, happy and result oriented despite the last year circumstances. Charles is very supportive and always ready to help, whether it is a requirement gathering from recruiters or orchestrating a Sev2. Charles also provides a lot of ideas on how to improve our day-to-day processes to ensure team comfort and productivity.

Charles has been leading a team of very talented engineers, and he led the team to deliver RPS and DocumentService very successfully. You are very good at writing and organizing complex project and planning. You are also very technical and approachable. You also help promoting your SDEs actively.

Charles is a good leader without a doubt. He always try to find potential improvements that can help engineers to work/coordinate more efficiently (Ex: Kanban Board/Bi-weekly retro/Bi-weekly planning). He always help us to control the scope of the project and deliver results efficiently.

Charles is forthcoming in technical discussions and often provides excellent thought-provoking technical insights and feedback that is rare for managers. Despite his busy schedule, Charles has an excellent response time for questions. His team (Bedrock) is also one of the most professional teams I have worked with, and all my interactions with them have been excellent.

Charles is great on asking the right questions to challenge the team's pre-conceptions and discover hidden assumptions and flaws in technical designs.

Charles is one of the best manager I ever had. He is well organized, structured and keeps focusing on a good outcome. He involves the team well and also keeps it motivated with his charming personality. Furthermore, he has a very good technical understanding and is able to confidently discuss and challenge all topics the team is involved in.

Charles often able to give constructive suggestions and ideas during design reviews and discussions regarding feature implementation. He is working against the clock in order to

improve processes not only inside of our team, but also inside of the whole org. One of the is our prioritization framework. In my opinion it might actually be used across the org. Now with an updated team and increased team responsibility he will need to protect team from all of the requests that materialize at the last minute even more often.

Charles shows great ownership when he took over DayOne team. He devoted himself immediately to the ongoing and planning projects of DayOne. He setup knowledge transfer sessions and made everyone feel involved for projects from both teams. When he saw risks in the projects, he communicated with stakeholders proactively and assured the issues could be resolved in time.

It is incredibly difficult to be in Charles' position with constant-urgent-requests coming from external teams with the limited resources to work with, but Charles was able to do so with high standards and organized steps to simplify things. I admire his effort and management skills for organizing all the retrospective/new sprint board rules/client onboarding and feature request steps/better code review tool; while somehow managed to submit cr on his own.

**The Leadership Principles are a key component of Amazon culture. Your peers, direct reports (if applicable), and I think you best demonstrate the following Leadership Principles:**

### **Earn Trust**

9 responses (5 peers, 4 directs)

Leaders listen attentively, speak candidly, and treat others respectfully. They are vocally self-critical, even when doing so is awkward or embarrassing. Leaders do not believe their or their team's body odor smells of perfume. They benchmark themselves and their teams against the best.

### **Ownership**

8 responses (4 peers, 4 directs)

Leaders are owners. They think long term and don't sacrifice long-term value for short-term results. They act on behalf of the entire company, beyond just their own team. They never say "that's not my job."

### **Think Big**

6 responses (3 peers, 3 directs)

Thinking small is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Leaders create and communicate a bold direction that inspires results. They think differently and look around corners for ways to serve customers.

### **Insist on the Highest Standards**

5 responses (1 manager, 1 peer, 3 directs)

Leaders have relentlessly high standards - many people may think these standards are unreasonably high. Leaders are continually raising the bar and drive their teams to deliver high quality products, services and processes. Leaders ensure that defects do not get sent down the line and that problems are fixed so they stay fixed.

### **Are Right, A Lot**

4 responses (1 peer, 3 directs)

Leaders are right a lot. They have strong judgment and good instincts. They seek diverse perspectives and work to disconfirm their beliefs.

### **Deliver Results**

4 responses (1 manager, 1 peer, 2 directs)

Leaders focus on the key inputs for their business and deliver them with the right quality and in a timely fashion. Despite setbacks, they rise to the occasion and never settle.

### **Have Backbone; Disagree and Commit**

4 responses (1 peer, 3 directs)

Leaders are obligated to respectfully challenge decisions when they disagree, even when doing so is uncomfortable or exhausting. Leaders have conviction and are tenacious. They do not compromise for the sake of social cohesion. Once a decision is determined, they commit wholly.

### **Bias for Action**

3 responses (1 peer, 2 directs)

Speed matters in business. Many decisions and actions are reversible and do not need extensive study. We value calculated risk taking.

### **Dive Deep**

3 responses (2 peers, 1 direct)

Leaders operate at all levels, stay connected to the details, audit frequently, and are skeptical when metrics and anecdote differ. No task is beneath them.

### **Learn and Be Curious**

3 responses (1 manager, 2 peers)

Leaders are never done learning and always seek to improve themselves. They are curious about new possibilities and act to explore them.

### **Customer Obsession**

2 responses (1 peer, 1 direct)

Leaders start with the customer and work backwards. They work vigorously to earn and keep customer trust. Although leaders pay attention to competitors, they obsess over customers.

### **Hire and Develop the Best**

2 responses (1 peer, 1 direct)

Leaders raise the performance bar with every hire and promotion. They recognize exceptional talent, and willingly move them throughout the organization. Leaders develop leaders and take seriously their role in coaching others. We work on behalf of our people to invent mechanisms for development like Career Choice.

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## **Growth ideas**

We know that leaders are never done learning and always seek to improve themselves. Below are the growth ideas your co-workers and I provided. We hope you find these ideas useful.

### **Growth ideas from me:**

Charles is great at identifying talents, developing their skills and looking for the best ways to help the team to grow. He's capable to work in the future driving more impact without risks of burning out the teams by building mechanisms of prioritization, risks

management/assumption validation, and tracking across teams on dependencies especially.

### Growth ideas from your peers:

As expansion activity, I'd like to see Charles share more of his practical experience, opinions, and best practices to a larger audience. A Tech talks or our "Recruiting Tech Weekly" sessions are great forum for Charles to share and develop others.

Balancing operational constraints with an ambitious (and recently expanded) mandate will be the key for the success of Charles' team and for the Recruiting Engine ones that depend on the foundation he's laying.

Charles could help his members raise the bar to make sure potentially high impacting cases would be included in the test cases as it was one of the root causes in his team's COE. Also, as RPS launch was delayed multiple times to ensure completeness of data backfill, Charles could improve his planning to take into account potential obstacles.

Charles could work on improving how he report the status of the goals his team is working on. It will benefit him to clarify risks and delays he might be exposed to and the impact caused to his team's projects.

Charles exemplifies customer obsession. In multiple Operations-related issue dives Charles has brought the focus back to our customers/users, and what the needs of users are. As Bedrock also owns systems that are dependencies for other systems within CORE, this has allowed other teams to confidently rely on these systems and the functionality they support.

Charles has been in the org for over a year now. Given his amazing ramp up and the fact that his team is so fundamental to the growth of the org, I would like to see Charles increasing his influence on the infrastructure of our services and having a stronger opinion on what should be above/below the line.

Growth ideas for Charles is to challenge his team with more robust mechanisms for releases of downstream services that may have unintended consequences for the rest of the systems. One of the teams had to perform investigation and troubleshooting of customers' tickets only to learn that there was a release of a downstream service without a process to socialize and investigate a full impact on upstream services.

Sometimes org unreasonable priorities deviates Charles from focusing on things that matters. One of the example in duplicates created within RPS, something thats still happening. I would like Charles to figure out way to work with leaders, have backbone and push for whats right thing to do otherwise it will bite us in long run, candidate consent is one example.

### Growth ideas from your direct reports:

Charles can take more chances to identify potential growth areas for individual engineers and help them grow. Ex: help the engineers to discover their interests, motivate engineers with concrete advices and suggestions.

Charles is a very good manager with a good technical understanding. His capability of diving deep is already a strength of him, and I would encourage him to put even more focus on this topic. If he wants this, he could be a manager that is not only admired for his good managerial skills but also his code contributions.

Disconnection from the customer it is our org wide problem. More over we are working on back-end services, so reaching out to customers is even more difficult, since they are indirectly using our services. Maybe we can introduce some suggestion boards or feedback questionnaires for teams that use our services

Given the experience that Charles has, it would be great to have some sort of knowledge sharing sessions (lunch & learn or maybe during team socials?) whether it is a career development / cloud architectures / team / project management advices.

I haven't known Charles long enough to suggest any

I really can't think of a growth idea for Charles. He is a well-rounded manager with strong technical skills and good people skills.

I would like to see Charles take more opportunities to share his ideas with the team even for the domains that he is not familiar with. He took ownership of several domains that he was not familiar with at all. However, he earned trust very quickly and I believe that once he has a better understanding of these services, he can lead the team towards the right direction.

I'm not sure if it's possible (given the complexity of our legacy services and the org), the team could benefit from a bit less meetings.

So far all the experience that I have with Charles is very positive.

**Here are the Leadership Principles your peers, direct reports (if applicable), and I suggest you focus on for growth:**

#### **Hire and Develop the Best**

4 responses (1 manager, 1 peer, 2 directs)

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#### **Insist on the Highest Standards**

4 responses (3 peers, 1 direct)

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#### **Have Backbone; Disagree and Commit**

3 responses (1 peer, 2 directs)

Leaders are obligated to respectfully challenge decisions when they disagree, even when doing so is uncomfortable or exhausting. Leaders have conviction and are tenacious. They do not compromise for the sake of social cohesion. Once a decision is determined, they commit wholly.

#### **Invent and Simplify**

3 responses (1 manager, 1 peer, 1 direct)

Leaders expect and require innovation and invention from their teams and always find ways to simplify. They are externally aware, look for new ideas from everywhere, and are not limited by "not invented here." As we do new things, we accept that we may be misunderstood for long periods of time.

**Ownership**

3 responses (3 peers)

Leaders are owners. They think long term and don't sacrifice long-term value for short-term results. They act on behalf of the entire company, beyond just their own team. They never say "that's not my job."

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**Think Big**

2 responses (2 peers)

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**Dive Deep**

1 response (1 direct)

Leaders operate at all levels, stay connected to the details, audit frequently, and are skeptical when metrics and anecdote differ. No task is beneath them.

**Frugality**

1 response (1 direct)

Accomplish more with less. Constraints breed resourcefulness, self-sufficiency and invention. There are no extra points for growing headcount, budget size or fixed expense.

Thank you!

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