

The Partner-Fit Scorecard

Part One — The Nine Universal Non-Negotiables (Pass / Fail)

How to use it: Part One is a gate. Score each item Pass or Fail. Any Fail ends the process — you are not allowed to average your way past a Fail. Part Two is a fit assessment scored 1–5. There is no passing score in Part Two. A low score doesn't disqualify the candidate; it tells you what you'd have to change about yourself, or what you'd need to write into the agreement, for this to work.

1. Integrity under financial pressure

- ☐ **FAIL looks like:** money stories with soft edges; billing decisions they describe with euphemisms; no example of ever absorbing a loss to keep a promise.
- ☐ **PASS looks like:** a specific instance of losing money on purpose to honor a commitment, with the number attached, told without self-congratulation.

2. Aligned time horizon and exit expectations

- ☐ **FAIL:** vague about when they want to stop; a stated horizon more than five years different from yours with no plan for the gap.
- ☐ **PASS:** a written year and a written target outcome that either matches yours or has an explicit, documented bridge.

3. Aligned risk tolerance

- ☐ **FAIL:** makes a real financial decision in under a minute with no information or cannot make one at all.
- ☐ **PASS:** reasons through a real decision at roughly your speed and with roughly your appetite for exposure.

4. Capacity for direct conflict

- ☐ **FAIL:** goes agreeable in the room and escalates afterward in writing or sideways.
- ☐ **PASS:** says the hard thing to your face, once, clearly, and can absorb one aimed at them.

5. Willingness to be told no

- ☐ **FAIL:** relitigates decided matters with the team.
- ☐ **PASS:** argues hard, loses, and then supports the decision publicly without a footnote.

6. Financial literacy

- ☐ **FAIL:** can't distinguish revenue from AGI, or profit from cash.
- ☐ **PASS:** reads your P&L cold and identifies your real problem within ten minutes.

7. Shared definition of “enough”

- ☐ **FAIL:** can't name a number, or names one that requires a different company than the one you want to own.
- ☐ **PASS:** specific about enough income, enough size, and what they'd never sell for.

8. Track record of finishing

- ☐ **FAIL:** a career of launches; nothing that outlasted their attention.
- ☐ **PASS:** built something still running or developed a person who's now genuinely good.

9. No hidden entanglements

- ☐ **FAIL:** anything you learn later that you should have learned now.
- ☐ **PASS:** full disclosure of other businesses, agreements, debts, health, and household financial reality — volunteered.