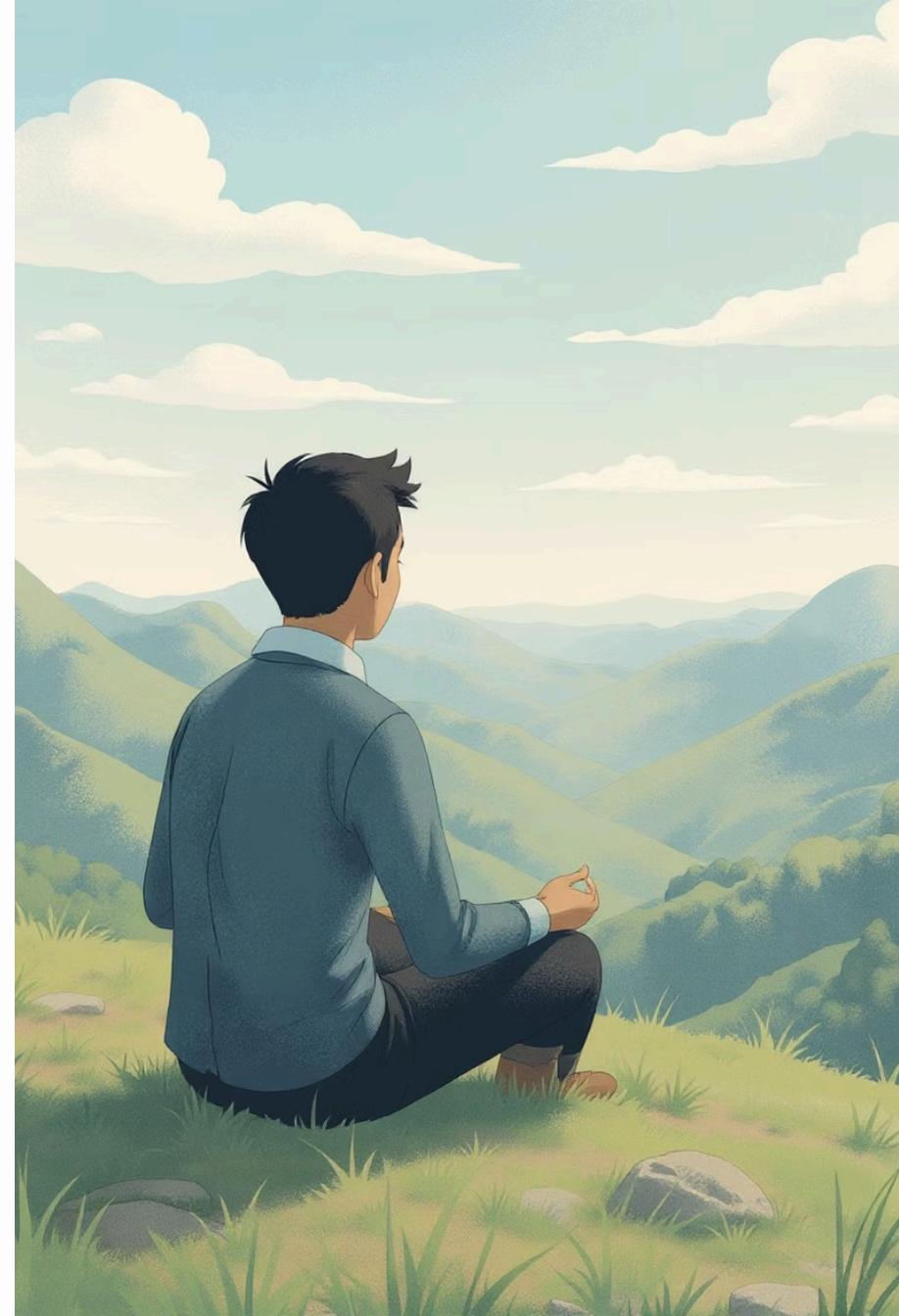# Module 3.4: Who to Hire. What model.

You can work with single developers or agencies, each with distinct advantages for different project needs.

# Individual Developers/PM/QA/Designers

## Where to Find

Platforms like Upwork or personal networks

## Cost & Speed

Cheapest option with fastest iteration cycles

## Your Responsibilities

Management, testing, UI decisions, answering questions

## Best For

Simple projects with limited scope

# Boutique Agencies

### Deep Expertise

C-level executives with experience across dozens of similar projects

### Personal Touch

More personalized customer service and attention to detail

### Domain Focus

Select based on specific domain expertise and industry knowledge

### Affordable

Generally more cost-effective than large agencies

**Best for:** Projects requiring specific expertise and hands-on attention

# Large Agencies

Teams of 100-300+ people with established infrastructure



### Standardized Processes

More consistent baseline quality and established workflows

### Management Layers

Have more overhead and bureaucracy

### Variable Quality

Process quality varies despite company size

**Best for:** Projects requiring established processes and bigger teams

# Fixed-Price Model

## 01

### Agree on Scope

Set scope, timeline, and total cost before starting

## 02

### Locked Pricing

Agency delivers for agreed price, regardless of hours spent

## 03

### Project Delivery

Predictable budget and timeline from start to finish

## ✓ Pros

- Predictable budget and timeline
- Best for small, well-defined projects
- Clear requirements from the start

## ⬜ Cons

- Less flexibility once development starts
- Changes cause delays or extra charges
- Unclear specs create problems

# Time & Material

### Pay for Actual Work

You pay for **actual hours worked** and **resources used**

### Maximum Flexibility

Adjust priorities anytime during development

### Changing Requirements

Best for projects with unclear or evolving scope

Agency manages workload; you manage results and priorities.

# Dedicated Team

## Fixed Monthly Fee

Pay per person (developers, PM, QA, etc.)

## Exclusive Focus

Team works exclusively on your project like remote employees

## Direct Management

You manage daily tasks and priorities directly

**Best for:** Long-term partnerships or continuous development

**First-time founder tip:** Choose fixed price/timeline agreement. It forces realistic estimation, saves money, and agencies complete work even if it takes longer. Add penalties for late delivery.

# Beware the Sales Bait-and-Switch

### During Sales Calls

Agencies present their best technical person who creates impressive prototypes and showcases completed projects in your domain

### During Development

Less experienced developers assigned to day-to-day tasks. Experts may have left or be busy elsewhere. New team without promised expertise.

## How to Protect Yourself

- Ask if the **specific team** (not just company) has relevant experience

- Request part-time involvement from experienced members as advisors

- Negotiate pricing if assigned team lacks promised expertise

- Don't base decisions solely on website polish or impressive sales calls

# Developer Roles: Frontend & Full-Stack

Different projects need different skills. Choose wisely.

## Full-Stack Developer

**Good for:** Simple web apps, MVPs with standard features

**Watch for:** Rarely equally good at frontend and backend. Ask which is their strength.

## Frontend Developer

**Good for:** Complex user interfaces, design-heavy products

**Watch for:** Might not understand backend. May need backend developer too.

# Developer Roles: Backend, Mobile & DevOps

## Backend Developer

**Good for:** API-heavy products, data processing, complex business logic

**Watch for:** Need designer + frontend dev separately.

## Mobile Developer

**Good for:** iOS or Android apps

**Watch for:** Native iOS/Android = two separate developers. React Native/Flutter = one developer for both.

## DevOps/Infrastructure

**Good for:** Products with high traffic, complex deployment needs

**When you need it:** NOT for MVP. Only after you have users.