

2026 EDITION · JOB HUNT KIT

The Forward Deployed Engineer **Job Hunt Kit**

Everything you need to target, land and negotiate a Forward Deployed Engineer role — 16 employer profiles, real 2026 pay bands, interview prep and a profile rebuild you can finish this week.

Salary guide

Career roadmap

AI governance roles

Hiring trends

Inside: 16 employer profiles (Palantir, OpenAI, Anthropic, Databricks & more), L3-L7 and AI-lab compensation bands, Palantir-style interview prep with worked case studies, a resume + LinkedIn rebuild checklist, and FDE job-description templates. Compensation cited from Levels.fyi (May 2026) and Glassdoor (2026).

Published by **GSDC — Global Skill Development Council** | Certified Forward Deployed Engineer (CFDE)

CFDE · CERTIFICATION TRACK

START HERE

What's inside this kit

Five tools, built to be used as a system. Map the market, price the role, prep the loop, rebuild your profile, then apply.

- ◆ **16 employer profiles** — who hires FDEs, what they call the role, and what each screens for.
- ◆ **L3-L7 + AI-lab compensation bands** — cited 2026 pay data to anchor your negotiation.
- ◆ **Palantir-style interview prep** — the loop, stage by stage, with two worked case studies.
- ◆ **Resume + LinkedIn rebuild checklist** — reposition your profile for forward-deployed hiring.
- ◆ **FDE job-description templates** — decode real postings and target the right variant of the role.

HOW TO USE IT

Work it front to back over 30 days. The GSDC Certified Forward Deployed Engineer (CFDE) track, referenced throughout, is the structured way to build the exact skills these employers test for.

HIRING TRENDS

The 2026 FDE job market

Palantir coined the role in the early 2010s (internally, “Deltas”). A decade later, every AI lab selling into the enterprise needs engineers who can own the last mile of deployment — and the postings have exploded.

800%+

Growth in FDE postings, 2024→2025

95%

Enterprise GenAI pilots with no measurable impact (MIT NANDA, 2025)

1,000

FDEs Salesforce has publicly committed to hiring

The gap that creates the role: the models work; the **deployment** breaks — on legacy data, security reviews and skeptical stakeholders. FDEs own that. Demand grows with the volume and complexity of AI rollouts, and supply hasn't caught up.

WHAT EMPLOYERS ACTUALLY BUY

Not more features — engineers who make a platform work inside a fragmented, regulated, politically complex customer. That ownership is what the pay premium rewards.

Sources: MIT NANDA State of AI in Business 2025; Indeed/FT hiring analysis; public 2026 company statements.

HIRING TRENDS

Where the jobs are — and what they want

Same job, many titles. Search all of these to see the real market:

Title you'll see	Who uses it
Forward Deployed (Software) Engineer	Palantir, OpenAI, Adobe
Applied AI Engineer	Anthropic, OpenAI
AI Engineer, FDE	Databricks
Forward Deployed Data Scientist/Engineer	Scale AI
Deployment Strategist / Solutions Engineer	Salesforce, fintechs, SIs

GEOGRAPHY

NYC has overtaken SF as the primary FDE hub — regulated industries (fintech, defense, healthcare) cluster on the East Coast. Many lab roles are 50-70% remote with heavy travel.

CORE SKILLS SCREENED

Python & TypeScript; SQL & Spark; AWS/GCP, Docker, Kubernetes; plus the “T-shaped” bar: decomposition, evals, and customer-facing communication.

[OFFER] 50% OFF

YOUR NATURAL NEXT STEP

You've mapped the market. Now prove you can do the job.

Recruiters screen for evidence, not interest. The GSDC Certified Forward Deployed Engineer (CFDE) credential maps to exactly the skills these employers test — deployment, evals and customer ownership.

[**Explore the CFDE Certification**](#)

<https://www.gsdouncil.org/certification-program/forward-deployed-engineer-jobs>

Tap anywhere on this panel to open the CFDE enrollment page.

16 EMPLOYER PROFILES

How to read these profiles

Sixteen employers actively hiring FDE-style roles in 2026, grouped into two tiers. Each profile tells you the title to search, the work focus, the compensation signal, and what the loop screens for.

Tier	Who's in it	What it means for you
Frontier & pure-play	Palantir, OpenAI, Anthropic, Databricks, Google, Microsoft	Highest comp, hardest loops, deepest eval focus
Scaleup & platform	Cohere, Scale AI, Salesforce, Ramp, Rippling, Intercom, Harvey, Adobe, Snowflake, Datadog	Faster processes, more equity variance, broader role scope

USE THE PROFILES LIKE THIS

Pick 5-7 targets across both tiers. Tailor your resume to each one's "screens for" line, and prep the loop notes from the interview section later in this kit.

Compensation signals draw on Levels.fyi (May 2026), Glassdoor (2026) and Blind; figures are illustrative ranges, not guarantees, and vary by level, location and equity.

PROFILE · TIER 1

Palantir

Palantir

FRONTIER · PURE-PLAY

ROLE TITLE	Forward Deployed Software Engineer (FDSE); also Forward Deployed Engineer
FOCUS	The original FDE shop — embed with government & enterprise customers to make the platform work in messy, regulated environments.
COMP SIGNAL	TC range ~\$171K-\$415K, median ~\$215K (Levels.fyi, May 2026). Glassdoor avg ~\$167K base. Staff+ clearing \$630K+. Known to negotiate.
SCREENS FOR	Decomposition under ambiguity, ownership, willingness to push back on underspecified problems.

INSIDER NOTE

Palantir's case-study round has a hidden filter: they grade **how you break the problem down**, not whether you reach a tidy answer. This is the single most important loop to practise — covered in depth later.

PROFILE · TIER 1

OpenAI

OpenAI

FRONTIER · AI LAB

ROLE TITLE Forward Deployed Engineer / Applied

FOCUS “The deployment company” push — embed with Fortune 500 and federal customers, heavily weighted to regulated industries.

COMP SIGNAL FDE TC ~\$350K-\$550K mid-to-senior; SWE ladder L2-L6 ~\$251K-\$1.28M, median ~\$555K (Levels.fyi, May 2026). Equity-heavy; negotiates moderately.

SCREENS FOR System design with eval gates and cost-per-query reasoning; structured thinking; communication.

LOOP NOTE

OpenAI compresses a roughly seven-touch process into 3-4 weeks. The most common failure point is a system-design round that ignores **eval gates** and **cost-per-query**.

PROFILE · TIER 1

Anthropic

Anthropic

FRONTIER · AI LAB

ROLE TITLE	Applied AI Engineer (Anthropic's FDE)
FOCUS	Embed with enterprises to make Claude models solve real, high-value problems — scaling enterprise deployments aggressively.
COMP SIGNAL	TC ~\$350K-\$550K mid-to-senior, benchmarked to research engineers; packages equity-heavy via PUs. Widely reported to be firm on offers.
SCREENS FOR	Reliability, safety and reasoning under ambiguity; eval design; judgement.

LOOP NOTE

Anthropic's loop leans hardest on reliability and safety reasoning, and uniquely tests how you reason when the customer can't define "good." Prepare to design for failure: guardrails, evals, monitoring, escalation.

[OFFER] LIMITED TIME

LIMITED ENROLLMENT WINDOW

Tier-1 loops reward proof. Build it before you apply.

Frontier labs benchmark FDEs against research engineers — the bar is high. CFDE gives you a guided, eval-driven project and a credential to put on the application. The current intake is open for a limited time.

Claim Your CFDE Seat

<https://www.gsdouncil.org/certification-program/forward-deployed-engineer-jobs>

Tap anywhere on this panel to open the CFDE enrollment page.

PROFILE · TIER 1

Databricks

Databricks

FRONTIER · DATA & AI

ROLE TITLE AI Engineer, FDE**FOCUS** Help customers build and productionize first-of-their-kind AI applications on the Databricks platform across enterprise verticals.**COMP SIGNAL** AI FDE typical band ~\$250K-\$450K; SWE ladder L3-L7 ~\$246K-\$1.74M, median ~\$398K-\$435K (Levels.fyi/Blind, May 2026).**SCREENS FOR** Data-platform depth (SQL, Spark), production engineering, customer scenarios.

WHY IT'S A STRONG TARGET

If your background is data engineering or analytics, Databricks is the most natural bridge into FDE work — the platform skills carry over almost directly.

PROFILES · TIER 1

Google Cloud & Microsoft

Google Cloud

FRONTIER · CLOUD

ROLE TITLE Generative AI Forward Deployed Engineer

FOCUS Deploy GenAI solutions inside enterprise cloud customers; roles span New York, Atlanta, London, Paris and Hong Kong.

COMP SIGNAL Benchmarked to L5/L6 engineering with an AI overlay; base reported roughly \$127K-\$183K + equity. Strong total package at senior levels.

SCREENS FOR Cloud architecture, integration, enterprise stakeholder management.

Microsoft

FRONTIER · CLOUD

ROLE TITLE Azure AI / Cloud Solution Engineer (FDE-style)

FOCUS Customer-facing deployment of Azure AI and Copilot solutions for large enterprises and the public sector.

COMP SIGNAL Comparable to senior cloud-engineering bands with AI specialism; large, stable equity + bonus structure.

SCREENS FOR Azure ecosystem depth, solution design, long enterprise sales cycles.

PROFILES · TIER 2

Cohere & Scale AI

Cohere

SCALEUP · AI LAB

ROLE TITLE	Forward Deployed Engineer (Agentic Platform)
FOCUS	Help businesses build and deploy custom AI agents on Cohere's platform; enterprise-focused.
COMP SIGNAL	Lab-adjacent bands, typically ~\$200K-\$450K TC with meaningful equity; varies by stage and level.
SCREENS FOR	Agentic patterns, retrieval, enterprise integration, customer delivery.

Scale AI

SCALEUP · DATA INFRA

ROLE TITLE	Forward Deployed Data Scientist / Engineer
FOCUS	Architect data solutions for top AI labs and enterprises; thrive on ambiguity and first-principles thinking.
COMP SIGNAL	Variable, broadly ~\$180K-\$500K TC with a significant equity component.
SCREENS FOR	First-principles problem solving, data architecture, comfort with ambiguity.

PROFILES · TIER 2

Salesforce & Ramp

Salesforce

SCALEUP · PLATFORM

ROLE TITLE	FDE “pods” (Agentforce)
FOCUS	Pods of one deployment strategist + two FDEs locked onto a single customer for ~3 months. Publicly committed to ~1,000 FDEs.
COMP SIGNAL	Typical band ~\$200K-\$400K TC; lower base, larger professional-services-influenced structure.
SCREENS FOR	Customer delivery, platform configuration, stakeholder management.

Ramp

SCALEUP · FINTECH

ROLE TITLE	Forward Deployed Engineer
FOCUS	Embed with finance teams to deploy AI-driven finance automation; fast-moving, product-adjacent work.
COMP SIGNAL	Competitive scaleup bands with strong equity upside; varies by level.
SCREENS FOR	Pragmatic shipping, customer empathy, fintech data sensitivity.

[OFFER] 50% OFF

BEST VALUE THIS INTAKE

Targeting 5-7 employers? Walk in certified.

A recognised credential is the cheapest way to stand out across this many applications at once. For this intake, the CFDE program is available at half off — the same skills every profile in this kit screens for.

Enroll at 50% Off

<https://www.gsdouncil.org/certification-program/forward-deployed-engineer-jobs>

Tap anywhere on this panel to open the CFDE enrollment page.

PROFILES · TIER 2

Rippling & Intercom

Rippling

SCALEUP · PLATFORM

ROLE TITLE	Forward Deployed / Solutions Engineer
FOCUS	Deploy and customise workforce-platform automations for complex enterprise customers.
COMP SIGNAL	Strong scaleup bands with equity; broad role scope across implementation and engineering.
SCREENS FOR	Integration breadth, customer onboarding, systems thinking.

Intercom

SCALEUP · SAAS / AI

ROLE TITLE	Forward Deployed Engineer (Fin AI agent)
FOCUS	Deploy AI support agents for customers; tight feedback loop between field work and product.
COMP SIGNAL	Competitive SaaS bands; equity component; level-dependent.
SCREENS FOR	Applied LLM patterns, reliability, customer success orientation.

PROFILES · TIER 2

Harvey & Adobe

Harvey

SCALEUP · LEGAL AI

ROLE TITLE	Forward Deployed Engineer
FOCUS	Embed with law firms and legal teams to deploy domain-specific AI; high-trust, high-accuracy environment.
COMP SIGNAL	Well-funded scaleup bands, equity-heavy; varies by stage and level.
SCREENS FOR	Domain rigor, eval design, discretion with sensitive data.

Adobe

ENTERPRISE · CREATIVE AI

ROLE TITLE	Forward Deployed AI Engineer (Firefly)
FOCUS	Deploy generative-AI creative tooling inside large enterprise customers and brands.
COMP SIGNAL	Large-enterprise bands with stable equity + bonus; senior packages competitive.
SCREENS FOR	Applied GenAI, integration, enterprise stakeholder management.

PROFILES · TIER 2

Snowflake & Datadog

Snowflake

SCALEUP · DATA CLOUD

ROLE TITLE Forward Deployed / Field Engineer**FOCUS** Help enterprise customers build AI & analytics workloads on the data cloud; productionize real use cases.**COMP SIGNAL** Strong data-platform bands with equity; senior field roles well compensated.**SCREENS FOR** Data modelling, SQL depth, customer architecture.

Datadog

SCALEUP · OBSERVABILITY

ROLE TITLE Forward Deployed / Solutions Engineer**FOCUS** Deploy observability and AI-monitoring solutions inside enterprise engineering orgs.**COMP SIGNAL** Competitive bands with equity; level- and location-dependent.**SCREENS FOR** Systems & reliability depth, integration, technical selling.

16 EMPLOYER PROFILES

Employer comparison matrix

Employer	Title	Comp signal (2026 TC)	Edge it screens for
Palantir	FDSE	\$171K-\$415K (med ~\$215K)	Decomposition
OpenAI	FDE/Applied	\$350K-\$550K	Eval gates + cost
Anthropic	Applied AI Eng.	\$350K-\$550K (PPUs)	Reliability + safety
Databricks	AI Engineer, FDE	\$250K-\$450K	Data-platform depth
Google Cloud	GenAI FDE	~L5/L6 + equity	Cloud architecture
Microsoft	Azure AI Eng.	Senior cloud bands	Azure ecosystem
Cohere	FDE (Agentic)	~\$200K-\$450K	Agent patterns
Scale AI	FD Data Sci/Eng	~\$180K-\$500K	First-principles
Salesforce	FDE pods	~\$200K-\$400K	Customer delivery
Ramp	FDE	Scaleup + equity	Pragmatic shipping
Rippling	FDE/Solutions	Scaleup + equity	Integration breadth
Intercom	FDE (Fin)	SaaS + equity	Applied LLM
Harvey	FDE	Funded + equity	Domain rigor
Adobe	FD AI Eng.	Enterprise bands	Applied GenAI
Snowflake	FD/Field Eng.	Data bands + equity	Data modelling
Datadog	FD/Solutions	Comp + equity	Reliability depth

Cited: Levels.fyi (May 2026), Glassdoor (2026), Blind. Illustrative ranges only — not offers or guarantees.

[OFFER] 48 HOURS ONLY

TIME-SENSITIVE

16 employers. One bar they all test: can you deploy?

Every profile in this matrix screens for the same core: deployment, evals and customer ownership. CFDE builds and certifies exactly that. This intake's pricing closes within 48 hours.

Lock In Before It Closes

<https://www.gsdouncil.org/certification-program/forward-deployed-engineer-jobs>

Tap anywhere on this panel to open the CFDE enrollment page.

COMPENSATION

How FDE leveling works (L3-L7)

Most FDE employers map to a common engineering ladder. Knowing your level is the single biggest lever in a negotiation — comp roughly doubles every couple of levels.

Level	Typical title	Experience	What changes
L3	Entry / New-grad FDE	0-2 yrs	Executes scoped deployments with support
L4	FDE (mid)	~2-5 yrs	Owens a deployment end-to-end
L5	Senior FDE	~5-8 yrs	Owens a customer; mentors; sets approach
L6	Staff FDE	~8-12 yrs	Owens a portfolio; influences product
L7	Principal / Distinguished	12+ yrs	Owens strategy across customers

NEGOTIATION LEVER

Industry hires usually land at L3/L4 unless there's a strong signal of L5+. Your job in the loop is to **signal the next level up** — show ownership and judgement, not just execution.

COMPENSATION

L3-L7 compensation bands

Blended total compensation (base + equity + bonus), USD, across FDE employers. Pure-play shops (e.g. Palantir) sit toward the low end; frontier labs (OpenAI, Databricks) toward the high end.

Level	Low	Typical	High
L3 — Entry	\$170K	\$210K	\$260K
L4 — Mid	\$230K	\$330K	\$415K
L5 — Senior	\$350K	\$480K	\$660K
L6 — Staff	\$550K	\$750K	\$1.05M
L7 — Principal+	\$900K	\$1.2M	\$1.75M

~\$215K

Palantir FDSE median (Levels.fyi, May 2026)

~\$435K

Databricks SWE median TC

~\$555K

OpenAI SWE median TC

Cited: Levels.fyi (May 2026), Glassdoor (2026), Blind. Bands blend multiple employers and are illustrative, not guarantees; frontier-lab packages are equity-heavy (RSUs; PPU at Anthropic).

COMPENSATION

AI-lab & 6-role bands

By employer (mid-to-senior TC):

Employer	Role	TC band
Palantir	FDSE	\$171K-\$415K
OpenAI	FDE / Applied	\$350K-\$550K
Anthropic	Applied AI Engineer	\$350K-\$550K
Databricks	AI Engineer, FDE	\$250K-\$450K

By role (six FDE-family titles, blended TC — est.):

Role	Typical TC band
Forward Deployed Software Engineer	\$171K-\$415K
Forward Deployed Engineer (lab)	\$300K-\$600K
Applied AI Engineer	\$350K-\$550K
Deployment Strategist	\$150K-\$300K
Solutions / Field Engineer	\$160K-\$320K
FDE Manager / Lead	\$400K-\$900K+

Cited: Levels.fyi (May 2026), Glassdoor (2026). Role-level figures are blended estimates; treat headline frontier numbers as a ceiling until you understand vesting and liquidity.

COMPENSATION

Equity & negotiation notes

- ◆ **Negotiate total comp, not base.** At frontier labs the headline is mostly equity — RSUs, or PPU at Anthropic.
- ◆ **Know the house style.** Palantir is known to negotiate for strong candidates; Anthropic is widely reported firm; OpenAI sits in between.
- ◆ **Anchor on the band.** Cite the level and the public range, then ask for a specific number with one reason attached.
- ◆ **Treat the headline as a ceiling.** Equity-heavy offers depend on vesting schedule and liquidity — ask about both.
- ◆ **Signal the next level.** The fastest comp gain is being slotted one level higher, not squeezing 5% within a level.

A CLEAN ASK

“Based on public 2026 bands for a Senior FDE, I’m targeting **[specific TC]**. Given my deployment and eval experience, can we close the gap on base or weight it through equity?” — then stop talking.

Negotiation behaviour per public recruiter benchmarks (Levels.fyi, Exponent, May 2026). Not financial advice.

[OFFER] 50% OFF

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

One level higher pays for the program many times over.

With Senior-FDE bands around \$350K-\$660K and Staff above \$1M, being slotted one level up dwarfs any course cost. CFDE helps you signal that level — deployment, evals, ownership — in the loop.

Invest in the CFDE

<https://www.gsdouncil.org/certification-program/forward-deployed-engineer-jobs>

Tap anywhere on this panel to open the CFDE enrollment page.

INTERVIEW PREP

The FDE loop, across companies

The loop rhymes everywhere: a fit screen, technical deep dives, and the decomposition case study. The emphasis differs.

Company	Shape	What it really tests
Palantir	~5 stages	Decomposition; pushback on underspecified problems
OpenAI	~7 touches / 3-4 wks	System design with eval gates & cost-per-query
Anthropic	Applied AI loop	Reliability, safety, reasoning under ambiguity
Databricks	Field/FDE loop	Data-platform depth + customer scenarios

THE SHARED FILTER

All of them share one stage that filters most candidates: how you think about **eval design**. Master that and you clear the wall the majority hit.

INTERVIEW PREP · DEEP DIVE

The Palantir-style loop, stage by stage

1 · Recruiter / fit

COMMUNICATION & OWNERSHIP

Tell a crisp story about something you owned end-to-end. Signal outcomes, not activity.

2 · Technical deep dive

DEPTH & JUDGEMENT

A real project, interrogated — did you make the decisions, or just sit nearby?

3 · Coding

PRACTICAL, NOT PUZZLE

Closer to “wrangle this data / build this small thing” than abstract algorithms.

4 · Decomposition case study

THE HIDDEN FILTER

They grade **how you break the problem down** — clarify, chunk, MVP, iterate — not the tidy answer.**5 · Values / leadership**

WILL YOU THRIVE EMBEDDED?

Ownership, ambiguity tolerance, handling a customer who disagrees.

WORKED CASE STUDY · 1 OF 2

“Help this bank cut manual document review.”

The prompt is deliberately vague. Don't design yet. Here's the four-move structure interviewers want to see:

- ◆ **Clarify** — “What documents, what volume, what's 'reviewed' today, who acts on the output, and what's the cost ceiling?”
- ◆ **Decompose** — ingestion → extraction → classification → human-in-the-loop review → audit trail.
- ◆ **MVP** — “Start with the single highest-volume document type, extract 3 fields, route low-confidence cases to a human.”
- ◆ **Iterate** — add an **eval harness** (precision/recall gates), a **cost-per-document** model, then widen scope.

WHAT SCORES POINTS

Naming the **riskiest assumption** out loud (“the legacy system has no clean API”) and proposing how you'd de-risk it — before the interviewer asks.

What fails: jumping straight to “I'd use an LLM with RAG” without scoping success, data reality, or cost.

WORKED CASE STUDY · 2 OF 2

“Design an AI assistant for a F500 support team.”

A system-design round. Lead with metrics and constraints; bake in evals and cost from the start.

- ◆ **Success metrics first** — deflection rate, CSAT, time-to-resolution, and an accuracy floor.
- ◆ **Architecture** — retrieval over the knowledge base → guarded generation → tool calls → human handoff on low confidence.
- ◆ **Eval gates** — offline eval set + online monitoring; block deploys that regress accuracy or safety.
- ◆ **Cost-per-query** — cache, route easy queries to a smaller model, reserve the frontier model for hard cases.
- ◆ **Failure design** — escalation paths, fallbacks, and an audit log for every answer.

THE DIFFERENTIATOR

Volunteer where it breaks at 100x and how you'd iterate. FDE interviewers reward engineers who design for reality, not the happy path.

[OFFER] SEATS FILLING

COHORT SCARCITY

Reading case studies \neq drilling them with feedback.

CFDE includes mentored mock loops and decomposition practice on exactly these case types, with feedback on how you scope, eval and cost. Seats in the mentored cohort are limited and filling for this intake.

Reserve a Cohort Seat

<https://www.gsdCouncil.org/certification-program/forward-deployed-engineer-jobs>

Tap anywhere on this panel to open the CFDE enrollment page.

INTERVIEW PREP

Sample question bank

FIT “Walk me through a complex project you owned.”

STAR+ : add the decision you personally made and the trade-off you accepted. Centre the customer outcome.

TECH “Integrate with this flaky, half-documented API.”

Retries, idempotency, schema validation, graceful degradation. Show how you behave when reality is messy.

DESIGN “Where does this design break at 100x?”

Volunteer the bottleneck — throughput, cost or a single point of failure — and propose the next iteration.

VALUES “How do you reason about reliability and safety?”

Design for failure: guardrails, evals, monitoring, escalation. (Anthropic leans hard here.)

AMBIG “The customer can’t define ‘good’. What now?”

Propose a definition of success, validate it, make trade-offs explicit. Structured reasoning under ambiguity.

FIT “Tell me about a deployment that went wrong.”

Pick a real failure; land on what you changed in your process. Ownership, not blame.

UNIVERSAL HABIT

Think out loud, always. A narrated, slightly imperfect answer beats a silent perfect one in FDE loops.

REBUILD · 1 OF 2

Resume rebuild checklist

- ✓ **Lead with outcomes.** Every bullet = action → measurable business result, not a tool list.
- ✓ **Surface customer-facing work.** Name every time you handled stakeholders, clients or cross-functional partners.
- ✓ **Show deployment, not just building.** “Shipped to production for X users” > “built a model.”
- ✓ **Headline a flagship project.** An end-to-end deployment with evals + a cost story goes up top.
- ✓ **Mirror the “screens for” line.** Match each target employer’s edge from the profiles section.
- ✓ **Quantify scale & constraint.** Data volumes, latency, legacy systems navigated, sign-offs secured.
- ✓ **Cut leetcode trivia.** Replace with judgement and impact — what this role screens for.
- ✓ **One page if <8 yrs.** Dense, scannable, outcome-first.

THE 7-SECOND TEST

A recruiter skimming should think “owns customer outcomes,” not “writes code.”

REBUILD · 2 OF 2

LinkedIn rebuild checklist

- ✓ **Headline = positioning.** e.g. “Engineer deploying production AI inside enterprise customers.”
- ✓ **About tells the arc.** The deployment gap, what you own, and the proof (your flagship project).
- ✓ **Feature the project.** Pin it: problem → system → evals → outcome.
- ✓ **Skills match the loop.** Decomposition, eval design, integration, stakeholder management.
- ✓ **Add the CFDE credential.** A verifiable certification signals you’ve trained the horizontal bar.
- ✓ **Set “Open to work” — targeted.** Role: Forward Deployed / Applied AI Engineer; right locations (NYC weighting helps).
- ✓ **Post your reps.** A few decomposition or eval write-ups make you discoverable and credible.
- ✓ **Engage where they are.** Comment substantively on FDE / applied-AI threads recruiters watch.

WHY IT WORKS

FDE hiring is signal-driven. A profile that *shows* the work beats one that lists jobs.

APPLICATION TOOLKIT

Outreach & application templates

RECRUITER / HIRING MANAGER DM

Hi **[Name]** — I saw **[Company]** is hiring a Forward Deployed Engineer. I've spent **[X years]** shipping **[domain]** systems into production, including **[one outcome with a number]**. I'd love to bring that deployment ownership to your **[team/customer]**. Open to a quick chat?

REFERRAL ASK (TO A CONTACT)

Hi **[Name]** — I'm targeting FDE roles and **[Company]** is near the top of my list. Given my **[deployment/eval]** background, would you be comfortable referring me or pointing me to the right person? Happy to send a one-pager.

APPLICATION NOTE / COVER LINE

FDE work is the last mile I already live in: I take **[messy real-world problem]**, decompose it, ship a working system with evals, and own the customer relationship. My flagship project, **[name]**, is the clearest proof.

[OFFER] BONUS BUNDLE

EVERYTHING INCLUDED

Profiles, prep and templates — plus the credential.

This kit is the map. CFDE is the expedition: the roadmap, mentored mock interviews, an eval-driven capstone and the verifiable certificate recruiters recognise — one enrollment.

[See What's Included](#)

<https://www.gsdouncil.org/certification-program/forward-deployed-engineer-jobs>

Tap anywhere on this panel to open the CFDE enrollment page.

JOB-DESCRIPTION TEMPLATES · 1 OF 2

Decode a Forward Deployed Engineer posting

Real FDE postings repeat the same blocks. Use this template to decode any listing — and to mirror its language in your application.

STANDARD FDE JOB DESCRIPTION (ANNOTATED)

Mission: Embed with [customer type] to deploy [product] into production. → *They want ownership of outcomes.*

Responsibilities: Scope problems, build & ship solutions, integrate with customer systems, drive adoption. → *Decomposition + integration + delivery.*

Requirements: Python/TypeScript, SQL/Spark, cloud (AWS/GCP), Docker/K8s; strong communication; comfort with ambiguity and travel. → *The T-shaped bar.*

Nice to have: Eval design, applied LLM/agent experience, enterprise/regulated exposure. → *This is where you differentiate.*

HOW TO USE IT

For each target, copy its exact phrasing for “responsibilities” into your resume bullets — matched language clears keyword screens and signals fit.

JOB-DESCRIPTION TEMPLATES · 2 OF 2

Role variants & what they signal

APPLIED AI ENGINEER (LAB VARIANT)

Heavier weight on **applied LLM/agent** work, evals, reliability and safety. Signal: design-for-failure thinking and research-adjacent rigor.

DEPLOYMENT STRATEGIST (POD VARIANT)

More customer-facing and delivery-oriented, less hands-on code. Signal: stakeholder management, scoping and project ownership.

SOLUTIONS / FIELD ENGINEER (PLATFORM VARIANT)

Pre/post-sales technical depth on a specific platform. Signal: product mastery and the ability to translate between sales and engineering.

PICK YOUR LANE

Same family, different emphasis. Aim your resume and stories at the one variant that matches your strengths — don't blur all three into one generic profile.

ACTION PLAN

Your 30-day job-hunt sprint

1-7
DAYS**Position**

Rebuild resume + LinkedIn around outcomes. Pick 5-7 target employers from the profiles.

8-14
DAYS**Prove**

Ship/polish one flagship deployment with an eval harness and a cost story — your interview centrepiece.

15-21
DAYS**Prep**

Drill decomposition and the two case studies; run mock loops; build your question bank answers.

22-30
DAYS**Apply & negotiate**

Send tailored applications + outreach in volume; track the loops; negotiate offers against the bands.

THE ONE RULE

Never skip the flagship project. It's the difference between "interested in FDE" and "can clearly do it."

WRAP-UP

Your next 7 days

- ◆ **Day 1-2:** Shortlist 5-7 employers from the profiles and matrix.
- ◆ **Day 3-4:** Rebuild resume + LinkedIn headline around forward-deployed work.
- ◆ **Day 5-6:** Draft your flagship-project write-up (problem → system → evals → outcome).
- ◆ **Day 7:** Send your first 5 tailored applications using the templates.

ABOUT GSDC

The Global Skill Development Council (GSDC) is a professional certification body. The Certified Forward Deployed Engineer (CFDE) program is the structured way to build and certify the exact skills this kit's employers screen for — roadmap, mentored practice, a capstone and a verifiable credential.

Disclaimer: Educational resource. Compensation figures are aggregated public estimates cited from Levels.fyi (May 2026), Glassdoor (2026) and Blind; they vary by level, location and equity and are not guarantees of any outcome or pay. Company names are referenced for market context only and do not imply endorsement or affiliation. Data attribution: Levels.fyi (<https://www.levels.fyi>).

[OFFER] 48-HOUR FLASH

FINAL CALL · THIS INTAKE

You have the kit. Now get the credential that opens the loop.

Turn this job-hunt kit into a guided, mentored, certified path — with the capstone and credential that get you shortlisted. Enrollment for this intake closes within 48 hours.

Start the CFDE Now

<https://www.gsdccouncil.org/certification-program/forward-deployed-engineer-jobs>

Tap anywhere on this panel to open the CFDE enrollment page.