

Senior Backend Engineer

Senior Level · 8.9 Years Experience



This ceiling is what your existing payments and platform work supports once the skills padding is removed and the few soft claims are quantified.

HOW TO REACH 86

Prune the global skills list to what the bullets prove (or add evidencing bullets for Terraform/GitHub Actions if the work is real), trim the two oldest roles to fit two pages, and replace 'roughly a third' and the passive on-call bullets with hard numbers via the brainstorm prompts.

WHY NOT 100?

You have no formal people-management or multi-team organisational scope on record — leadership evidence tops out at mentoring three engineers — and your depth is concentrated in one domain (payments) and one stack (.NET/AWS), which caps you against staff and principal-level expectations.

You read as a genuinely strong senior .NET/payments engineer: a screener sees 'core payments API handling ~1.4M transactions/day' with 'p99 latency... from 850ms to 210ms'-grade quantification in almost every bullet, which is rare. The liability is a bloated skills list — Terraform, Python, TypeScript, Elasticsearch, Grafana and Lambda appear nowhere in any bullet, which makes an otherwise credible resume look padded. Prune or evidence those skills and tighten the older roles, and this becomes a top-decile senior resume.

Advanced analysis

Your path to 86

Do these to move from 78 to 86. All CV edits — rewrites, metrics, positioning. No new experience needed.

1

Cut the global skills list to technologies demonstrated in your bullets — remove or defend Terraform, Python, TypeScript, Elasticsearch, Grafana, Prometheus, Lambda and GitHub Actions, adding one evidencing bullet at Bytegrove for any you genuinely use in production.

High impact About an hour Content

Addresses: Weakness: 'At least eight listed skills... never appear in any bullet'

Why it helps: Lifts resume_craft by removing the padding signal that makes screeners discount everything else on the page.

- 2 Trim PixelForge to two bullets and Northlight to three, keeping only the quantified wins, so the resume fits two pages with Bytegrove carrying the weight.

Medium impact Minutes Quick fix

Addresses: Weakness: 'Your resume likely exceeds two pages' (ats_readiness appropriate_length warn)

Why it helps: Lifts resume_craft by resolving the length warning and concentrating screener attention on your strongest, most recent evidence.

- 3 Replace 'roughly a third' in the Fenwick API-design bullet with the exact defect reduction figure, using the rewrite provided.

Medium impact About an hour Evidence

Addresses: Rewrite: 'Led the API-design working group...'

Why it helps: Lifts evidence_of_impact by hardening the one vague number on your strongest cross-team leadership claim.

- 4 Rewrite the two passive on-call bullets at Fenwick and Northlight to open with the ownership verbs ('Led', 'Diagnosed and fixed'), per the rewrites provided.

Medium impact Minutes Content

Addresses: Rewrites: 'Led post-incident reviews...' and 'Diagnosed and permanently fixed...'

Why it helps: Lifts evidence_of_impact by converting duty statements into achievement statements a screener credits.

- 5 Add one line to the Bytegrove technical-lead bullet clarifying your decision scope — e.g. how many engineers build against your API designs and what you own end-to-end — using facts surfaced by the brainstorm prompts.

Medium impact About an hour Evidence

Addresses: Weakness: 'Leadership evidence is mentoring and technical leadership only'

Why it helps: Lifts scale_and_scope by making your actual span of influence explicit rather than implied by the word 'lead'.

- 6 Reframe your professional summary to lead with the junior-to-payments-technical-lead arc and the £38M/day scale, positioning you for lead-level applications.

Low impact Minutes Strategy

Addresses: Strength: 'Your progression is clean and gapless from junior to technical lead'

Why it helps: Lifts career_trajectory perception by making the progression story explicit in the first ninety seconds.

Beyond your CV

These raise your ceiling. Career moves, not CV edits.

- 1 Take formal responsibility for direct reports or become the named tech lead of record at Bytegrove — even for two engineers — so leadership moves from mentoring to accountable scope.

Months

Closes the gap_to_100 finding that leadership evidence tops out at mentoring three engineers, which blocks staff and EM positioning.

- 2 Lead a cross-team or cross-office initiative (e.g. an architecture standard adopted beyond the payments team, building on your Lisbon follow-the-sun coordination) that you can cite as multi-team scope.

Months

Addresses the single-team scope ceiling that caps scale_and_scope against staff-level expectations.

- 3 Build genuine production experience with infrastructure-as-code (Terraform) on the Bytegrove EKS estate, or publicly drop the claim.

Months

Converts your weakest listed skill into defensible evidence, closing the padding gap permanently rather than by deletion.

Score Breakdown

Evidence of impact

84

Against market expectations for a senior backend engineer, quantification density is exceptional — 'cutting the nightly run from 6.5 hours to 40 minutes' and 'reducing duplicate-charge support tickets by 90%' are exactly what screeners want. A few softer claims ('reducing cross-team integration defects by roughly a third') keep it just below the top band.

Scale & scope

76

Scale is well-evidenced for the senior level: '~1.4M transactions/day (~£38M in daily volume)' and 'paying out £9M+ daily to 12,000 merchants'. Scope is technical-lead level, not organisational — mentoring 'three engineers' and one team's estate, so it doesn't yet read staff/principal.

Career trajectory

82

Clean, gapless progression from 'Junior Developer' (2017) to 'Senior Backend Developer' with 40 months and counting at Bytegrove; the most relevant work (payments, .NET 8, EKS) is your current role, so recency is perfect. Tenures of 20/27/18/40 months show healthy momentum with no hopping signal.

CV craft

68

Bullets are well-structured verb+scale+outcome, but the ATS check flags 'content likely exceeds two pages', and the global skills list contains at least eight technologies (Terraform, Python, TypeScript, Elasticsearch, Grafana, Prometheus, Lambda, GitHub Actions) never demonstrated in any bullet — a padding signal experienced screeners discount.

Where You're Strongest

Senior Backend Engineer (.NET)

Nine years of C#/ASP.NET Core depth culminating in 'Technical lead for the core payments API handling ~1.4M transactions/day' is exactly what this market segment screens for.

Lead with: The .NET 8 migration of 14 services, the 850ms-to-210ms p99 latency win, and the 99.98% availability figure.

Senior Software Engineer - Payments

Two consecutive payments companies with domain-specific evidence — 'paying out £9M+ daily to 12,000 merchants' and idempotency/reconciliation work — make you a domain hire, not just a stack hire.

Lead with: The £38M daily volume across card/open banking/direct debit rails, the settlement engine at Fenwick, and the 90% duplicate-charge ticket reduction.

Lead Backend Engineer

You already do the job informally: 'Mentor three engineers... through weekly 1:1s' plus running an 8-engineer on-call rotation and leading a 9-service API standardisation group.

Lead with: The mentoring-to-promotion outcomes, the Lisbon follow-the-sun rotation ownership, and the API-design working group leadership.

Senior Platform Engineer

Genuine hands-on platform work — 'Containerised the payments estate with Docker and moved deployment to Kubernetes (Amazon EKS)' plus a 30% AWS cost reduction — supports this adjacent title.

Lead with: The 45-minute-to-8-minute deploy time, 20+ releases/week enablement, and the £14k/month cost saving.

Senior API Engineer

You have designed, versioned and shipped a public API at partner scale: 'now integrated by 60+ merchant partners' with OpenAPI 3.1, idempotency keys and pagination.

Lead with: Payments API v3 design, the internal API standardisation at Fenwick, and consumer-driven contract testing at Northlight.

One deliberate move away

Staff Software Engineer

Gap to close: Evidence of influence beyond one team — architecture decisions adopted org-wide or across multiple teams; your current scope is one payments team's estate plus the Lisbon rotation.

Engineering Manager

Gap to close: Formal direct reports and accountability for performance, hiring and delivery of a team; you have mentoring ('Mentor three engineers') and interviewing evidence but no line-management record.

Principal Engineer - Payments

Gap to close: Multi-year architectural ownership across an entire payments platform with published technical strategy; you currently own one API and one migration, not the platform roadmap.

ATS Readiness

Parse rate 90%

1 warning



Contact info in parseable text

Name, email, and phone number are present as plain selectable text at the top of the resume.



Standard section headings

Uses conventional headings (PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY, EXPERIENCE, EDUCATION, SKILLS, CERTIFICATIONS).



Dates on every role

Every role lists a readable start month/year and end month/year or 'Present'.



Single-column layout

Not assessable from pasted text.



No graphics-only information

Not assessable from pasted text.



Text-based document

Not assessable from pasted text.



Appropriate length

With roughly 9 years of experience across five roles and highly detailed bullets, content likely exceeds two pages; consider trimming older roles (PixelForge, Northlight) to fewer bullets.



Scannable bullet density

Achievements are consistently formatted as scannable bullet points rather than paragraphs.

CV Craft Checks

- ✓ **Resume file name**
"admin-sample|daniel-mercier|none|advanced" is a clear, professional upload name.
- ✓ **Section order**
Section order follows best practice for an experienced hire with Experience placed before Education and Skills near the end.
Observed: PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY → EXPERIENCE → EDUCATION → SKILLS → CERTIFICATIONS
- ✓ **Spelling and grammar**
The resume text is clean, consistent British English with no spelling, grammar, or agreement errors.
- ! **Word and phrase repetition**
Some phrases repeat (e.g. "SQL Server" ×4) — tighten duplicates so impact reads fresh.
"SQL Server" ×4
"on-call rotation" ×3
"ASP NET" ×3
- ! **Action verb audit**
12 of 22 bullets open with a strong action verb (55%) — rewrite weak openers so each line leads with impact.
Weak openers: Cut, Mentor, Participated, Run, Technical, Took

EVIDENCE SIGNALS (not part of your total score)

Soft skills

74 strong

Collaboration and communication are demonstrated through outcomes, not adjectives: cross-team standardisation, documented APIs, structured mentoring, and incident review leadership all appear in bullets with results attached.

"Led the API-design working group that standardised error contracts,"

"Collaborated with the frontend team on API contracts, introducing"

"led the post-incident review process for"

"created the team's starter project and two-week onboarding plan"

Leadership

62 mixed

Strong technical and mentoring leadership — with promotion outcomes to prove it — but no formal people-management or multi-team organisational scope; this is influence-based leadership, not line leadership.

"Technical lead for the core payments API handling ~1.4M transactions/day"

"Mentor three engineers (one junior, two mid-level) through weekly 1:1s,"

"Run the team's on-call rotation (8 engineers, follow-the-sun with the"

"Interviewed and onboarded four backend hires; created the team's starter"

Strengths

- ✓ You operate business-critical payment infrastructure at serious scale with proven reliability.
"Technical lead for the core payments API handling ~1.4M transactions/day"
Bytegrove Ltd — Senior Backend Developer
- ✓ You deliver measurable performance wins, not just maintenance — a 4x latency reduction on a revenue-critical endpoint.
"Reduced p99 latency on the payment authorisation endpoint from 850ms to"
Bytegrove Ltd — Senior Backend Developer
- ✓ You have executed a large-scale legacy migration safely, a rare and highly marketable proof point.
"Led the migration of 14 legacy .NET Framework 4.8 services to .NET 8 over"
Bytegrove Ltd — Senior Backend Developer
- ✓ You show cost-consciousness with concrete cloud savings, which distinguishes you from purely feature-focused seniors.
"Cut monthly AWS spend by 30% (~£14k/month) by right-sizing EKS node groups,"
Bytegrove Ltd — Senior Backend Developer
- ✓ You have a documented mentoring track record with promotion outcomes, not just a claim of mentoring.
"both mid-level engineers passed promotion review within 18 months."
Bytegrove Ltd — Senior Backend Developer
- ✓ Your progression is clean and gapless from junior to technical lead over nine years.
""start_date":"2017-09" through "start_date":"2023-03","end_date":null with no gaps between roles"
Dates

Weaknesses

- ! At least eight listed skills — Terraform, Python, TypeScript, Elasticsearch, Grafana, Prometheus, Lambda, GitHub Actions — never appear in any bullet.
""Terraform","GitHub Actions""
Skills section
- ! Your resume likely exceeds two pages, with the oldest agency role carrying detail no screener will read.
"Developed and maintained 25+ client websites and custom PHP plugins;"
PixelForge Agency — Junior Developer
- ! One of your few unquantified claims sits on your strongest cross-team leadership evidence, weakening it.
"reducing cross-team integration defects by roughly a third."
Fenwick Payments — Backend Developer
- ! Leadership evidence is mentoring and technical leadership only — no formal reports or multi-team ownership — capping you below staff/EM positioning.
"Mentor three engineers (one junior, two mid-level) through weekly 1:1s,"
Bytegrove Ltd — Senior Backend Developer
- ! Two bullets open with passive participation verbs that undersell incident-response ownership.
"Took part in a 6-person on-call rotation; authored the incident runbook"
Fenwick Payments — Backend Developer

Questions You Should Expect

"You list Terraform, Python and Grafana in your skills, but nothing in nine years of bullets shows you using them — when did you last touch each in production?"

TRIGGERED BY: *"Terraform","GitHub Actions" and "Python","TypeScript" in global skills with no corresponding bullet*

How to prepare: Either be ready with a specific production example per skill, or remove the ones you'd struggle to defend before you're asked.

"You say you're 'technical lead' but your title is Senior Backend Developer — who actually owns architectural decisions and does anyone report to you?"

TRIGGERED BY: *Technical lead for the core payments API handling ~1.4M transactions/day*

How to prepare: Prepare a crisp account of your decision rights — what you decide alone, what you escalate — and be honest that mentoring three engineers is influence, not line management.

"The 850ms-to-210ms latency win involved three separate changes — which parts did you personally design and build versus coordinate?"

TRIGGERED BY: *rewriting the fraud-check pipeline to run rule evaluation in*

How to prepare: Break the result into the three workstreams and claim precisely what you owned, with the measurement methodology to back it.

"You left Fenwick Payments after 18 months, your shortest recent tenure — why?"

TRIGGERED BY: *"start_date":"2021-09","end_date":"2023-02" (18 months)*

How to prepare: Frame it as a deliberate step up in scale and scope — Bytegrove's 1.4M transactions/day versus Fenwick's 450k — which the dates and numbers already support.

"How much of the 30% AWS cost reduction was your analysis versus a finance-driven mandate, and how did you measure the £14k/month figure?"

TRIGGERED BY: *Cut monthly AWS spend by 30% (~£14k/month) by right-sizing EKS node groups,*

How to prepare: Know your baseline, the measurement window, and which of the three levers (node sizing, spot, Glacier) contributed most.

Suggested Rewrites

ORIGINAL

Led the API-design working group that standardised error contracts, versioning and authentication across 9 internal services, reducing cross-team integration defects by roughly a third.

IMPROVED

Led the API-design working group that standardised error contracts, versioning and authentication across 9 internal services, reducing cross-team integration defects by [X]% (from [N] to [N] per quarter).

You need to fill in: **exact defect reduction percentage** **defect counts before and after**

Why: 'Roughly a third' is the only vague number on an otherwise precise resume, and it sits on your best cross-team leadership evidence — a hard figure makes the claim land.

ORIGINAL

Took part in a 6-person on-call rotation; authored the incident runbook for settlement failures and led the post-incident review process for three Sev-1 incidents, all resolved within the 4-hour SLA.

IMPROVED

Led post-incident reviews for three Sev-1 settlement incidents — all resolved within the 4-hour SLA — and authored the settlement-failure runbook used by the 6-person on-call rotation, cutting mean time to resolution by [X%].

You need to fill in: **MTTR improvement attributable to the runbook**

Why: 'Took part in' buries the ownership; leading Sev-1 reviews is the senior signal and should open the bullet.

ORIGINAL

Participated in the on-call rotation covering 30+ services; diagnosed and fixed a recurring connection-pool exhaustion issue that had caused three outages in the preceding quarter.

IMPROVED

Diagnosed and permanently fixed a recurring connection-pool exhaustion issue that had caused three outages in the preceding quarter across a 30+ service estate, eliminating [X hours] of downtime per quarter.

You need to fill in: **downtime hours avoided per quarter**

Why: Leading with 'Participated' hides a genuine root-cause win behind a duty statement; the fix is the achievement, the rotation is context.

ORIGINAL

Developed and maintained 25+ client websites and custom PHP plugins; progressed to building bespoke C# / ASP.NET MVC applications for the agency's two largest retainer clients.

IMPROVED

Progressed from maintaining 25+ client websites to building bespoke C# / ASP.NET MVC applications for the agency's two largest retainer clients within [X months].

You need to fill in: **time to progression**

Why: For a 2017 junior role the only signal worth keeping is the fast progression to C#; leading with PHP website maintenance wastes the screener's attention.

Brainstorming Prompts

How many engineers across Bytegrove and partner teams build against the Payments API v3 designs you own, and what transaction volume do the 60+ merchant integrations carry?

Bytegrove — 'Designed and documented the public Payments API v3'
Turns 'technical lead' from a title claim into measurable span of influence.

What was the exact defect count per quarter before and after the API-design working group standardised the 9 internal services at Fenwick?

Fenwick — 'reducing cross-team integration defects by roughly a third'
Replaces the only vague number on the resume with a defensible figure.

How many out-of-hours pages per month did the Bytegrove rotation receive before and after your runbooks and SLO alerting — and how many runbooks did you write?

Bytegrove — 'introduced runbooks and SLO-based alerting that reduced out-of-hours pages by 60%'
Absolute numbers alongside the 60% make the reliability claim interview-proof.

How many hours of downtime per quarter did the connection-pool fix at Northlight eliminate, and what was the business cost of the three prior outages?

Northlight — 'diagnosed and fixed a recurring connection-pool exhaustion issue'
Quantifying the avoided outages upgrades a debugging story into a business-impact bullet.

Of the four backend hires you interviewed and onboarded at Fenwick, how many candidates did you screen in total, and did the 8-day time-to-deploy figure hold for later hires?

Fenwick — 'Interviewed and onboarded four backend hires'
Sustained hiring impact is people-leadership evidence you currently lack.

In the .NET 8 migration, how many engineers worked under your coordination, and how much did the upgrade reduce hosting cost or improve throughput per service?

Bytegrove — 'Led the migration of 14 legacy .NET Framework 4.8 services to .NET 8'
Team size and post-migration gains add both scope and outcome to your flagship project.