
No manager is born a great recruiter. Great recruiters are made. Most of us who are skilled at recruiting became so, kicking and screaming, through trial and error—mostly error. As a matter of fact, in my twenty-plus years of working with managers at all levels, I have found that recruiting and hiring are among the most dreaded tasks on a manager's to-do list. But what if you had some critical shortcuts that could improve your recruiting process, saving you a ton of time and increasing your rate of success? Really, why should you suffer when so many of us already have? Here are some secrets to help you recruit the best of the best in your market!

INSIDER SECRETS FROM A RECRUITER

Shortcuts To Hiring The Best

By: Brenda Abdilla

Recruitment Shortcuts

1. Be stingy with your time. One of the reasons managers hate recruitment so much is that it sucks up time. From this point forward you need to scrutinize your system and get rid of the habits that cost you time and do not increase your chances of hiring the best. If you invest some time initially, you can organize your process in such a way that it puts the onus on the candidates to prove their worthiness to you, and things will go much smoother and much faster.

2. Spend time writing a great ad now instead of trolling through hundreds of resumes later. Write the perfect ad and be as specific and direct about the job as you can. Think about the key qualities you are looking for and then move onto the requirements of the job. Be sure to include a description of the most challenging parts of the role in your ad so that you can literally scare away some of the unqualified people who might apply. For example: *This high-stress, high-stakes role requires nearly constant navigation of competing agendas from customers and suppliers.* Spending some creative energy on a great ad will pay high dividends when you attract fewer candidates overall, leaving you with a small pool of qualified people to contact when you get to that step.

Top 3 Recruitment Myths

Myth 1— A bad economy is a good time to hire. *A tough economy is a tough time to hire unless you have unlimited time to find the 1% of qualified candidates within the sieve of applicants. It is NOT like shooting fish in a barrel; it's more like finding a needle in a haystack, so adjust your expectations.*

Myth 2— Specific, related experience trumps all other qualities. *This tends to be true in our minds but not in reality. Research overwhelmingly supports less concrete elements as being more important to performance of new hires. Elements such as motivation, strengths and timing will impact results more than the fact that someone has done the job before—even if they were a rock-star at their last company.*

Myth 3— The more applicants the better.
Refer to myth #1 above.

3. Advertise your posting through the best available channels. Sure, Craigslist is free—but is it the best choice for the circumstances? Probably not. As a matter of fact, when our clients ask us to use Craigslist as part of our search, we comply, but we require applicants to apply through other, more formal channels instead of just spamming us with their resumes. Depending on the job, you should consider paying for a proper ad on Linked-In, Yahoo/Monster, CareerBuilder, etc. It can be tedious to set up but is a great investment of your time and money if done right. Once you place the ad, send an email with the link to your key networking groups so they can forward your email to qualified candidates, giving you the most bang for your buck.

4. Do not delegate the screening of resumes to administrative assistants. The reason most administrative assistants are good at their job is the very thing that can make them poor resume screeners—they tend to be very structured, systematic thinkers. Now that you have significantly fewer people applying you will want to have an experienced, managerial eye reviewing those resumes rather than someone with good intentions who is simply parsing elements according to a list of criteria you gave them. Same goes for parsing software.

5. Stop talking during interviews and start listening. If you are doing all the talking during an interview with a candidate then you are simply projecting your own thoughts and feelings onto the candidate and you are therefore finding out nothing during the process. When a hiring manager (or recruiter) gets excited about a candidate, their brain immediately starts flipping ahead and imagining qualities and results that have not yet been proven or even addressed in the process. Talking is an impulse that needs to be resisted. The only way to do this is to ask questions, then shut up and listen hard to the answers. It will also help to ask the same questions of every candidate. Not only will you be holding everyone to the

“When it comes to recruitment, rely on your process—not your intuition.”

~Brenda Abdilla

same standard but your HR department will love you for lowering the chance of discrimination lawsuits.

6. Create hoops for candidates to jump through if they pass the first interview. Interviews are relatively ineffective in revealing the truth about people but they are the only line of defense we have in recruitment. You can increase your chances of success if you require candidates to jump through some relevant hoops you create as part of your process. Ask candidates to write a letter, do a business plan or complete a written test (preferably on-line) and then watch every part of that process very closely to assess whether they fit the role and the culture of your company.

Of course, most managers are overworked and overwhelmed already, and the thought of taking time to change-up your recruitment system can seem like an extravagance that cannot be afforded right now. But succeeding at making a great hire can pay enormous dividends in results, revenue, culture enhancement and team success, and we can all use a little more of that. ~



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