

How to Up your Success in Hiring

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FINDING A STRONG HIRE who has the skills, experience, and traits you need can be challenging. And the current 4% Delaware unemployment rate can be discouraging.

Following are some tips to help you attract better suited candidates and ways to interview them to get good insight into how the candidate will function in the job.

Write a thorough job description so both you and the interviewee know exactly what the position entails.

Along with skills and experience, include desired behavior traits of the person whom you believe will succeed in that position.

Up your chances of a “good fit” responding

to your posting by describing your work environment. Tell applicants about company culture and values, and special perks, i.e. flexible hours or work-from-home schedules. If you’re not sure what makes your company attractive, ask current employees why they applied, and what keeps them there.

Use words in your posting that will resonant with your ideal candidate. For example, “high-energy, fast-paced environment” will likely attract someone who prefers a rapidly changing, growing workplace with lots of opportunities to advance. But those same words could deter someone who has settled into their career and likes tried-and-true procedures and processes that rarely change.

Implement an Employee Referral Bonus Program. Let your employees know when you have openings. Since they know what it is like to work at your company, they can be your best advocates. By offering an appealing recruiting bonus, you can tap into their social networks and reach candi-

dates you may not have otherwise. It can also be more cost effective than a recruiting agency.

Consider using social media – LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook – as a

recruiting tool for passive candidates who may not be actively searching job sites.

Screen resumes and cover letters against your list of “must have” experience, skills, behavior characteristics, and education. For applicants who seem closely matched, set up a prescreening call. This allows you to get answers to any initial questions or concerns you may have, and to find out their career goals.

During a screening, clarify salary expectations and be prepared to

share a salary range to avoid any confusion. Remember that it is against Delaware law to ask about salary history or current salary during the interview and hiring process.

Prepare your interview questions in advance and stick to them. With the myriad of advice available on the internet today, job seekers are savvy about interview questions. Avoid only using standard questions, such as, “What are your strengths and weaknesses?” or, “Tell me why I should hire you over the other candidates.” Instead, focus on behavioral interview questions.

How someone behaved in one company is likely how he/she will behave in yours. Behavioral interview questions provide you with real life examples that display the candidate’s skills and work demeanor. Questions should be relevant to your job, its duties, and required skills. Hint: if you have employees who perform this job well, consider their work behaviors, skills, and traits. Each candidate should be asked the same questions to



compare across interviews.

Examples of behavioral interview questions:

- How would your current boss describe you? What would he/she say are your greatest strengths? What areas of training would he/she say you would benefit from the most?
- What aspects of your current (or previous) position(s) did you enjoy the most? What was most challenging? Why?
- Share a time when you were working hard to complete a task but then asked to leave that task unfinished to begin a different task.
- Share a time you went out of your way to please a client or a manager.
- What is the most stressful work situation you've handled, and what was the outcome?

Toss in a couple untraditional questions, though be clear in what you are trying to garner from the candidates' answers. Unique questions can give you insight into the candidate's character. For example, if your company has an upbeat, light-hearted culture, asking off-centered questions can give you a feel for whether their personality is a good fit for your organization.

Make sure candidates feel comfortable, come away with a good impression of your company, and gain a sense of your corporate culture. You can do this by:

- Not making candidates wait when they arrive for the interview. Offer

a beverage and create conversation to put them at ease.

- Having several people interview the candidate.
- Inviting final candidates to lunch or happy hour with some of your more personable employees who would be the candidate's peers. This would serve as a casual, ask-anything meeting. Make sure to have separate meetings for each candidate.

Time is of the essence! All interviewers should know the hiring process and timelines. Interviewed candidates will want to know your next step and you should keep the process moving quickly so you don't lose a good candidate. Create a schedule of the hiring process that shows where each candidate stands, and make sure everyone involved adheres.

Once you have decided on a candidate, but before you make an offer, check references and verify prior work history. A written offer to the candidate should state it is contingent on them passing a background check, and any other requirements your organization may have.

If your hiring process gets delayed, do a courtesy email or call with the candidates to update them. It is also an opportunity to ensure that they are still interested.

Finally, remind anyone conducting interviews that they should be listening 80% of the time and talking 20% of it. They have two ears and one mouth – make sure all interviewers are using them in that proportion! ■

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