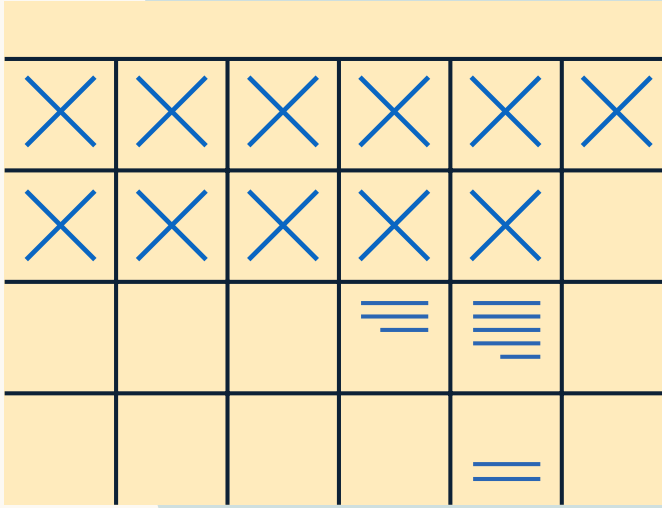
50 Productivity Hacks Essential for Hiring

Your guide to the most effective tips, tools, templates, and more

Building great teams can add extra work to your day



Finding the best candidates and moving them through the hiring process while also providing an exceptional candidate experience – there's a lot to do, and only so many hours in the day to do it.

That's where productivity hacks can help.

These clever little strategies can help you hire more efficiently, without sacrificing the quality of your hires. In fact, many of these hacks can help make you better and faster at your job, so that you find the best employees in no time – and set yourself apart.

To help you work more efficiently, our 50 hacks are divided into:

Tips

Tools

Templates

Hacks to the rescue

Here are tips, tools, and templates to help you be more productive at every stage of hiring.

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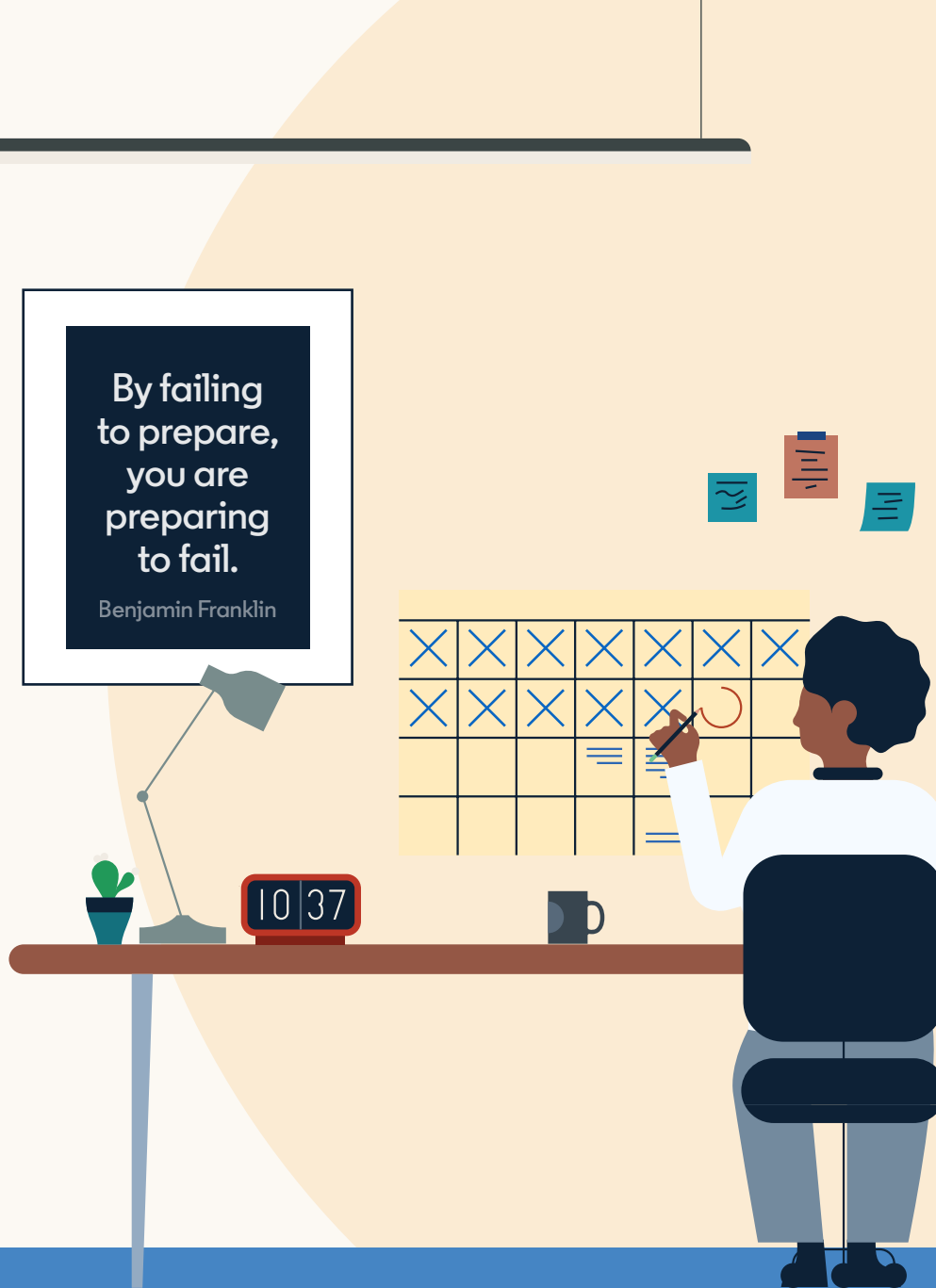
Chapter one

Planning and preparation



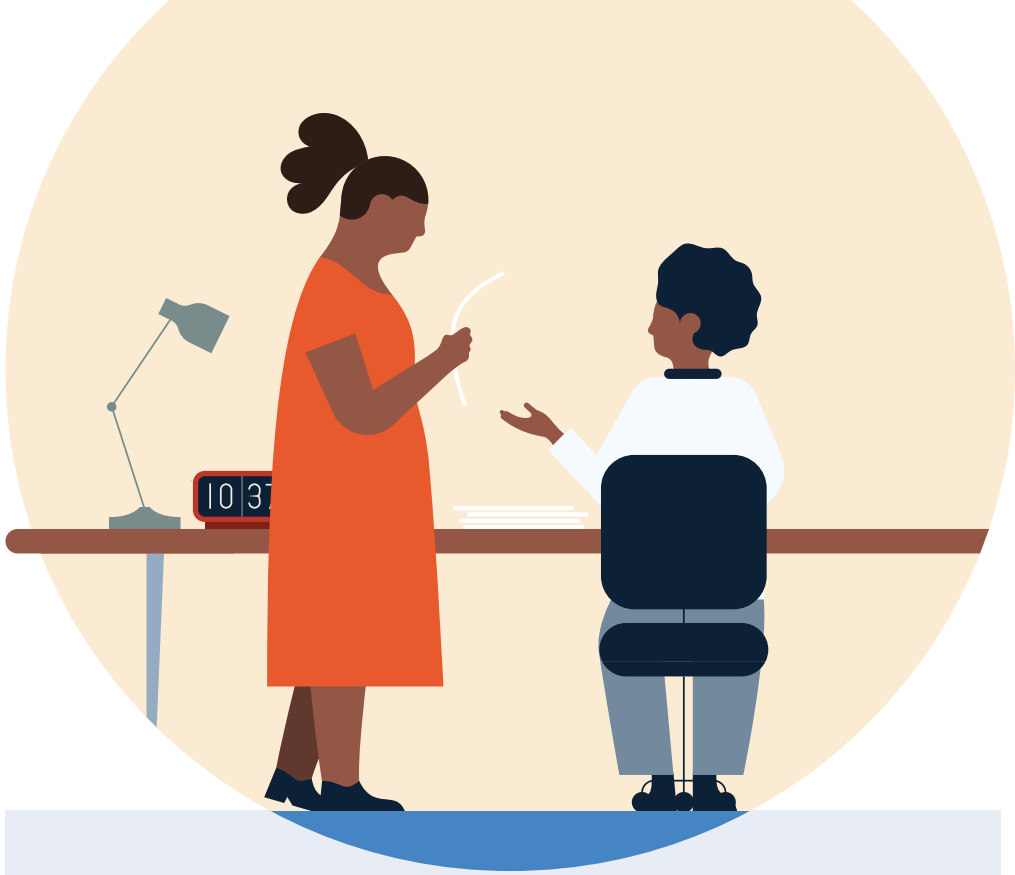
As Benjamin Franklin once said, “By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.” Neglecting planning and preparation when hiring can lead to unanticipated problems later, so it’s worth the extra effort up front. But that doesn’t mean it needs to take all day.

These easy hacks will help you plan a solid strategy and refine job descriptions in no time.

Let’s get started.

01 TIP

Get key stakeholders to vet sample resumes before kicking off your search



Does this scenario sound familiar: putting together a stellar slate of candidates only for a manager to say they're looking for something else? It's frustrating, but it can be avoided.

Take a moment to check in with key stakeholders before you start your search. While this might sound like an extra step, trust us, the minutes you spend here can shave hours or even days off the process.

At the end of this simple process, you'll have a clearer picture of the ideal candidate, which will make writing the job description a breeze.

» How to get started:

1. Put 10 minutes on the relevant manager's calendar
2. Bring sample resumes that impress you to the meeting
3. Ask them to vet the candidates in front of you
4. Take note of what impresses them and what puts them off

02 TEMPLATE

Speed up job posting with these job description templates

Writing a job description from scratch for every role isn't always feasible. A template gets you halfway there in half the time. That's why we've created over 139 job description templates for the top roles that companies hire for.

Spanning a range of industries and experience levels, these templates cover roles as diverse as data analysts, dentists, accountants, and art directors.

Simply copy and paste, swap out information as you see fit, personalize with enticing details about your company's values and culture, and you're done.

See the full list of job description templates →

Dentist

Job Descriptior

[CompanyX] promote
to quality care that is
efficient. We are curre
personable dentist wh
autonomy, but is willi
dental professionals.
regular patients who
and execution of com
our trained clinical, o
empowered to help u
dental care.

Objectives of th

- Work alongside
environment th
prevention
- Evaluate the or
and treatment
practices
- Recognize earl
warrant referra
- Directly oversee
laboratory tech

Data Analyst

Job Descripti

At [CompanyX], w
Using the latest an
offerings and deliv
further, we're searc
The ideal candida
including mining,
be committed to tr
continued innovat

Objectives of

- Develop, im
taking comp
- Identify tren
data sets
- Evaluate org
and informa
- Create best-
visualization
- Evaluate int
developing
cleaning da
- Work directl
provide stat

Accountant

Job Description

At [CompanyX], our financial success is fueled by the accuracy of our facts and figures. That's why we are proud to staff some of the most skilled financial experts in the industry. We'd like to add a highly skilled accounting clerk to our team to support our finance team with daily operations. Our ideal candidate has a natural passion for math and eagerness to learn more about financial planning, tax planning, and budgeting. Under the direction of the financial manager, the thriving accounting clerk will update and maintain financial records, reconcile bank statements, and manage our accounting databases. He or she will join like-minded financial experts continually focused on sharpening their skills and dedicated to growing into financial managers.

Objectives of this Role

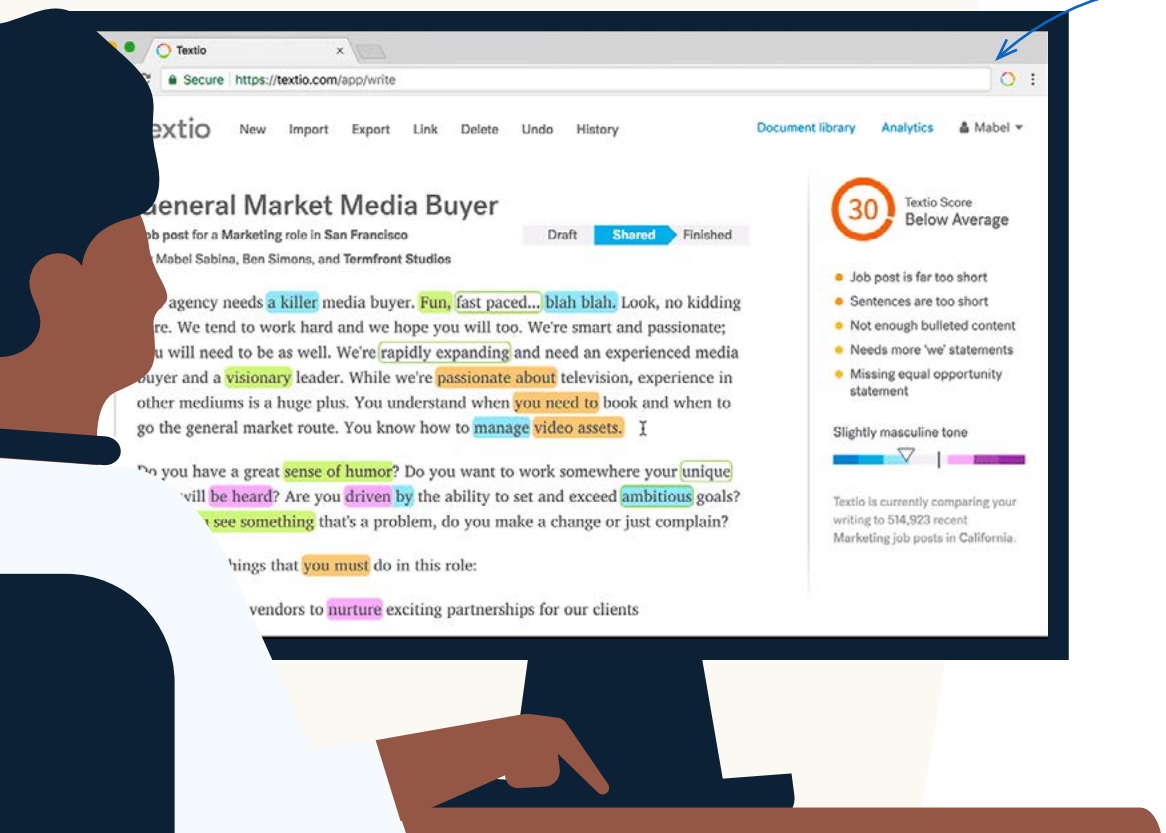
- Perform routine clerical accounting duties within a fast-paced finance department, while adhering to established accounting standards
- Be a resource for accounts payable and receivable
- Assist in year-end audit requests
- Execute accurate reporting, filing, and database management in multiple systems
- Secures financial information by completing database backups, keeping information confidential.
- Continue training with classes, workshops, and networking

Each template lays out the role's key objectives and responsibilities, as well as typical skills and qualifications.

03 TOOL

Root out gender-coded language in job descriptions with Textio

Before sending a job post out into the world, ask yourself if it will appeal to the wide, diverse network of candidates you want to attract? If not, you may need to scramble to fix what was broken from the start.



Textio, an augmented writing platform, highlights gender-coded phrases that could discourage some candidates from applying.

It also analyzes outcomes from millions of job postings to recommend quick fixes to help you attract more qualified applicants. This could include using more bullet points, adding “we” statements, or striking buzzwords.

Check out Textio →

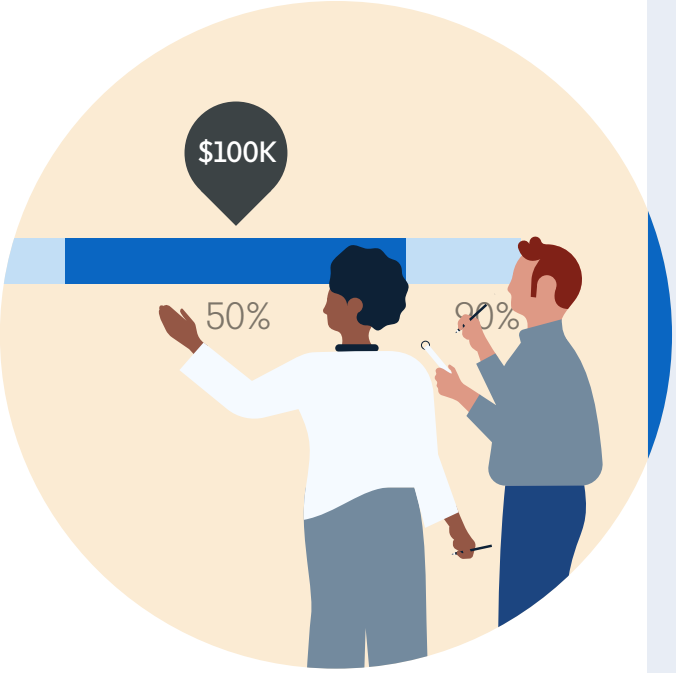
04 TIP

Share salary ranges on your job descriptions to set expectations with candidates

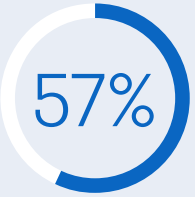
One last thing before you post: Does your job description include a salary range? If not, it's worth considering adding one.

Empowering candidates to self-select is just one benefit of sharing a salary range. It can also encourage more underrepresented candidates to apply, since they can feel confident about fair pay.

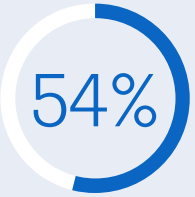
The extra seconds you spend adding a salary range to your job post could save hours at the bottom of the funnel, as it will ensure you're only nurturing candidates who would seriously consider an offer.



Of talent professionals who share a salary range with job seekers:*



say it streamlines negotiations later in the hiring process



say it filters out candidates who would decline

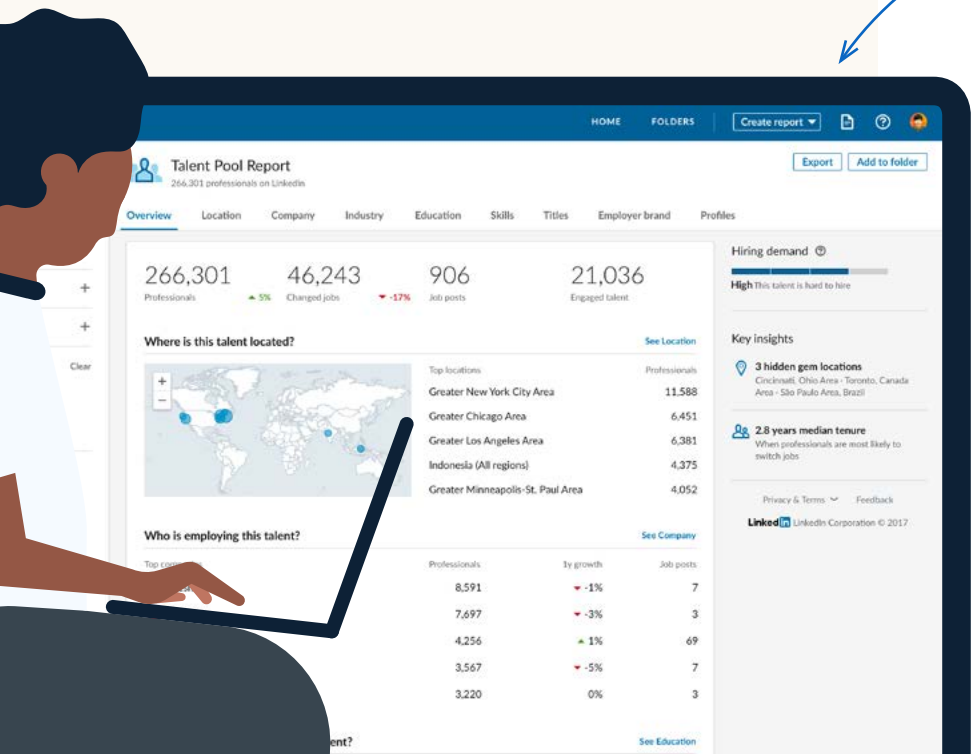
*Global Talent Trends 2019, LinkedIn.

05 TOOL

Invest in workforce planning to get ahead of your hiring needs

A proactive approach is always more productive than a reactionary one, and intelligent workforce planning can help you answer many questions. For example, which skills should you be hiring for, and which schools are candidates graduating from?

Stay one step ahead of your hiring needs, rather than frantically playing catch-up to fill vacant roles, with a self-serve talent analytics solution.



Workforce planning is essential to your long-term success. We can help with this, too. LinkedIn Talent Insights helps take the guesswork out of your strategy for a more focused, forward-thinking hiring process.

Sign up for a walk-through of LinkedIn Talent Insights →

Chapter two

Employer branding

A strong employer brand can encourage 50% more qualified applicants to apply,* persuade in-demand talent to respond, and tip the scales in your favor for acquiring top candidates.

You probably know the basics of employer branding. Here are several steps to help you take your employer brand up a notch – without too much extra effort.

*The Ultimate List of Employer Brand Statistics, LinkedIn, 2016.

06 TOOL

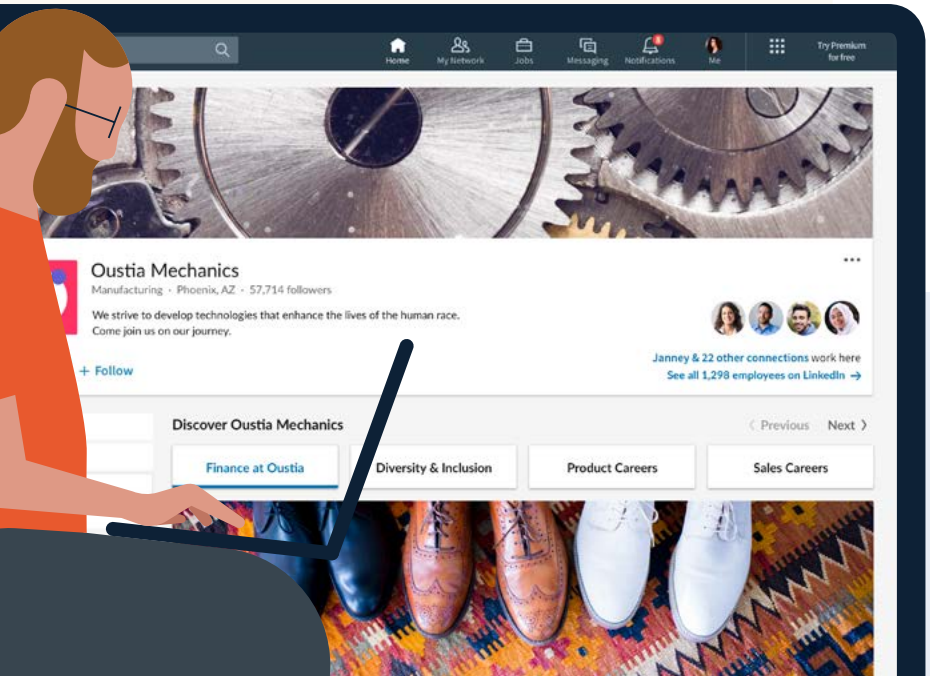
Create a snapshot of your brand that will impress potential candidates

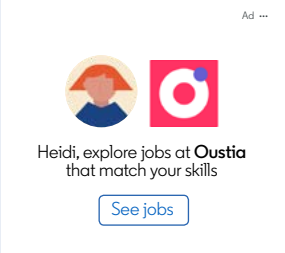
When you reach out to candidates about a job opportunity, they'll probably look into your company before deciding whether to respond. LinkedIn Career Pages can help.

Candidates can quickly research your organization on a platform they're already using to cultivate their careers.

Career Pages also give you the opportunity to make a great first impression through eye-catching videos, photos, testimonials, and more.

Request a demo of LinkedIn Career Pages →



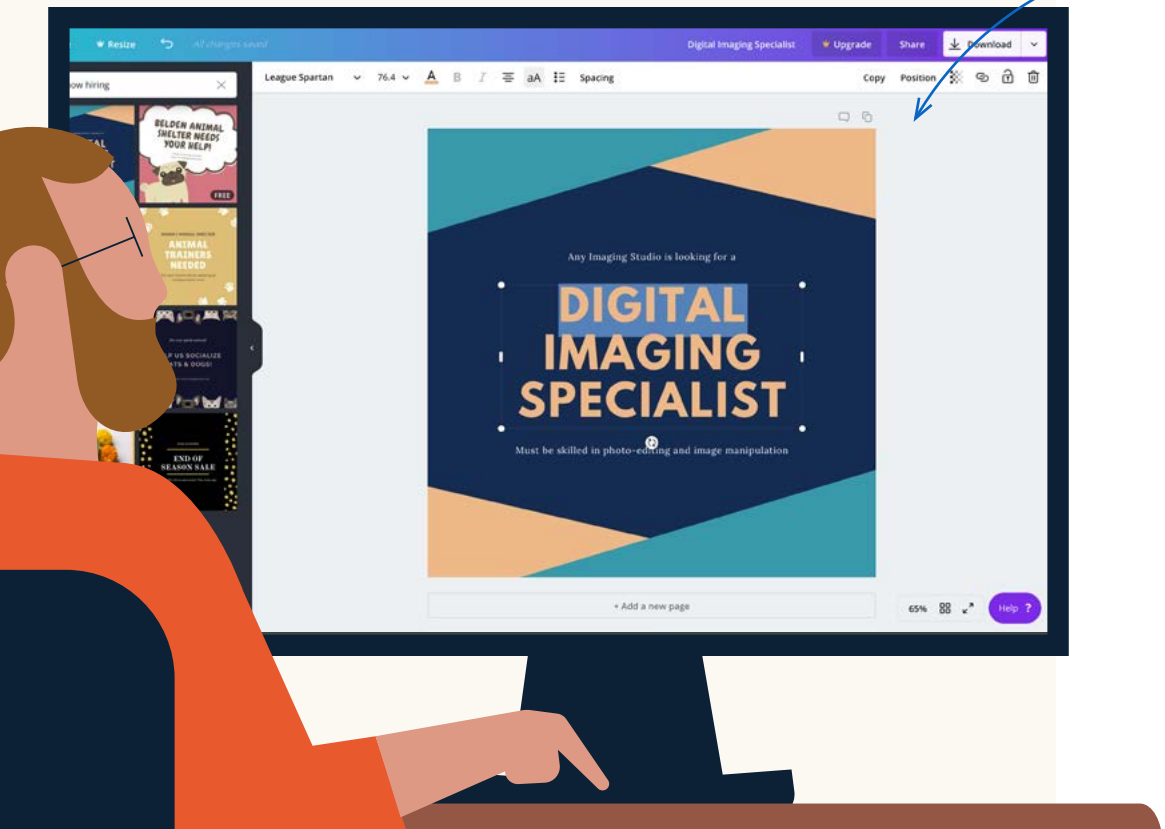


» **Bonus: Create targeted ads to expand your reach**
Target specific audiences by job title, seniority, skills, school, years of experience, and more, delivering personalized ads that pique their interest – leading to a 2x increase in applications and InMail responses.

07 TOOL

Design professional images and infographics in seconds with Canva

Need eye-catching graphics for your ads and posts? Try Canva, a free design tool (with paid options) that allows you to create beautiful brand content in seconds.



Customization options for design projects make it easy to differentiate your company from its competitors.

You can also instantly resize a design depending on where you want to post it. This means you can optimize for Twitter, create a banner for your career site, and make a flyer for campus recruiting, all in a few clicks.

Explore Canva now →

08 TIP

Ask employees to use a company hashtag in social media posts

Involving employees in your employer branding frees you to focus on other things. Your employees' social networks are over 10x larger than your company's, so definitely put them to work.

Employees are already posting about your company (ex: decorated desks, snaps of team-building events, humblebrags of work perks). By asking them to add your company hashtag, you'll give prospects an authentic look inside your company.

» How to get started:

1. Create a unique employer brand hashtag
2. Ask employees to use it when sharing work-related content
3. Promote your hashtag so candidates know what to search for

Employer brand hashtags:

#LinkedInLife
LinkedIn

#ToBeAPartner
Starbucks

#TargetVolunteers
Target's volunteer efforts

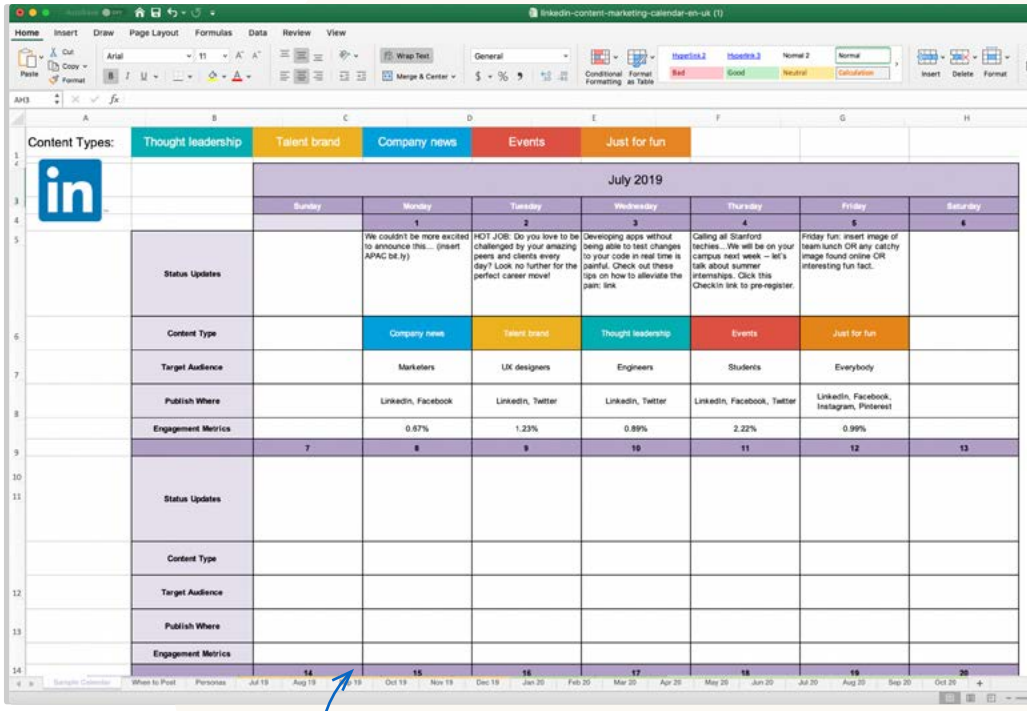
09 TEMPLATE

Keep your company top-of-mind by regularly posting content to online channels

Remembering when and what to post can be tricky – so can finding the piece of content you want to share. This content marketing calendar template can help you stay on track.

See at a glance what content you intend to share on any given day, and where you've planned to post it. Since it's Excel-based, it's easy to grasp. You'll have a complete content calendar plotted before you know it!

Download your Content Marketing Calendar →



Our free, fully customizable Content Marketing Calendar lets you quickly create a posting schedule that integrates platforms and target audiences.

Chapter three

Sourcing candidates

Sourcing candidates is an essential part of every recruiter's process. But it can take a lot of time to track down and engage talent, and there's no guarantee they'll respond when you need them to.

Fortunately, you can shave minutes (and even hours) off the process and become a lean sourcing machine with these hacks.

10 TIP

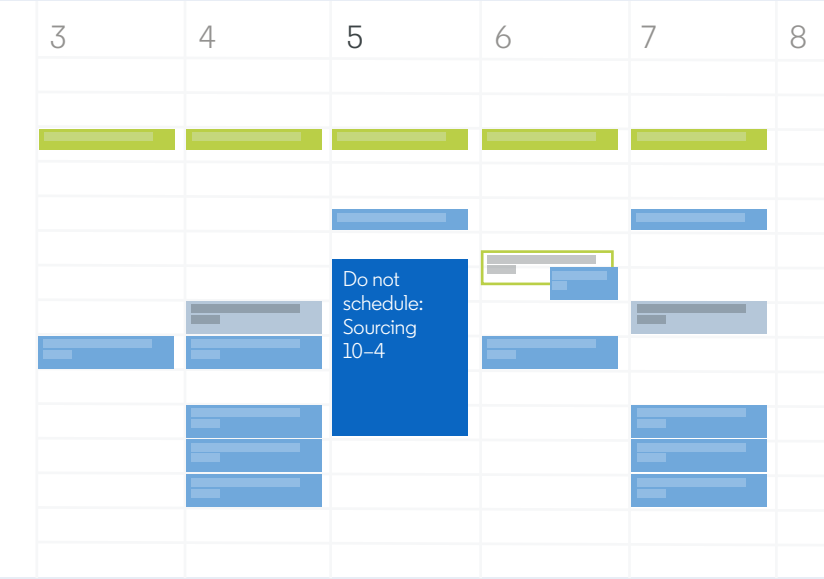
Chunk off time on your calendar to dedicate solely to sourcing

When you're sourcing, it's easy to get distracted by emails, calls, and a dozen other tasks. That makes you less efficient; it's tricky to stay in the right mindset when you're constantly shifting gears.

Recruiting expert Stacy Zapar, founder of The Talent Agency and Tenfold, recommends chunking off time on your calendar to dedicate solely to sourcing (hint: you can do this for other tasks too).

» How to get started:

1. Assign time to specific tasks
2. Cancel meetings during those blocks
3. Turn off notifications; let coworkers know not to disturb you
4. Put your head down and start sourcing!



"Whichever block of time you choose, take steps to ensure this is a distraction-free window – even if that means turning off your phone to avoid temptation."

Stacy Zapar

Founder of The Talent Agency and Tenfold

Find what you need faster by streamlining open tabs

When you're sourcing, how many tabs do you have open? 10? 20? More? Page titles aren't visible, and you waste time hunting for what you need. The OneTab browser extension can help.

OneTab helps you declutter tabs by putting them in a single list until you're ready to look at them again.

When you need to access a certain tab, click the extension icon to reveal the complete list. You can restore them all at once or just reopen ones you need.

With fewer tabs open, your browser will run faster too!

Get the OneTab browser extension for Chrome →

TIP

Reopen tabs you've mistakenly closed with this shortcut

Does your heart flutter when you close the wrong tab? Was it a really promising candidate? With 10 candidate profiles open, how will you find which one is missing?

Even if your hand slips and you close 10 tabs' worth of profiles, you can recover them all with just a few swift keyboard strokes.

With this move, you'll bring that qualified candidate back into your life in seconds. Press the shortcut again to open the tab you closed before that, and so on.

This shortcut works in Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer, Microsoft Edge, and Opera.

Avoid hunting in your browser history. Instead, to reopen the tab you last closed, press:

PC

Ctrl | Shift | T

Mac

⌘ Command | Shift | T

Set alerts to quickly identify candidates open to opportunities

Wouldn't it be great to know as soon as a top candidate is interested in exploring other roles? With LinkedIn Recruiter, you can set alerts to do just that.

Now when a candidate indicates they're open to new opportunities, you can be among the first to know about it and get a jump on the competition.

Stop wasting time re-creating the same search over and over. Find out how LinkedIn Recruiter can help you find more great candidates in less time.

Request a demo of LinkedIn Recruiter →

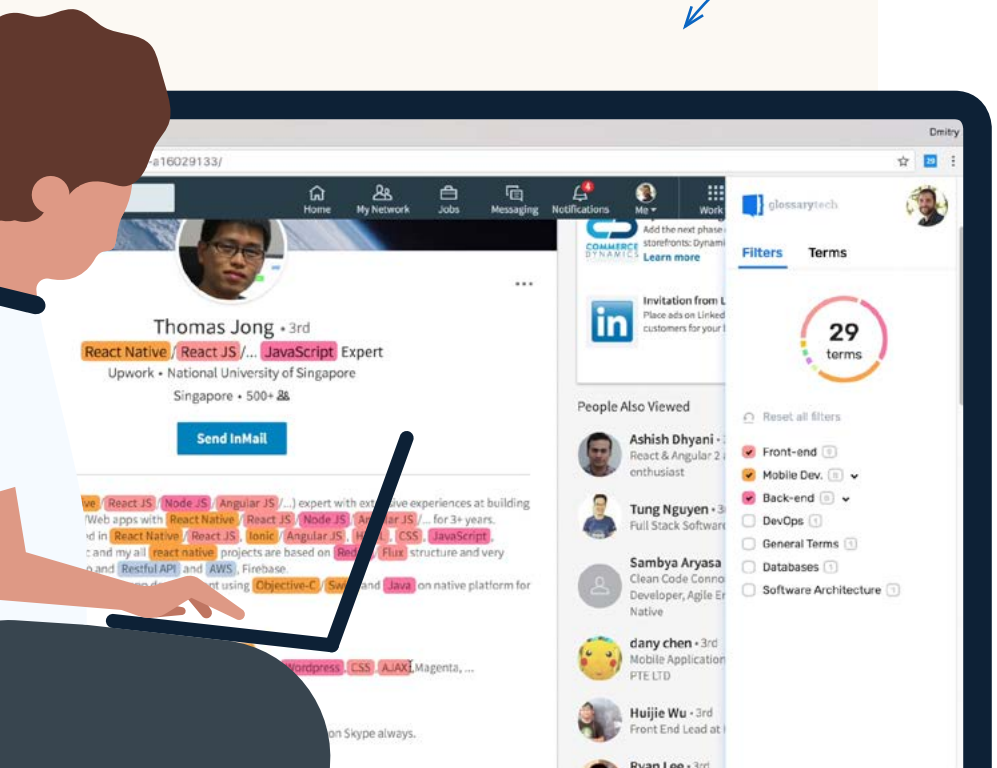
» How to get started:

1. Log in to LinkedIn Recruiter and select your project
2. In the "Talent pool" tab, click "Search history and alerts"
3. Set an alert based on who's "open"

Make technical sourcing intuitive with GlossaryTech

Recruiting for a technical role? If you don't consider yourself a tech expert, it can be tough to review profiles that are dense with complex terminology and industry jargon.

GlossaryTech highlights tech terms on profiles and provides a clear definition when you hover over one – no clicking required.



This browser extension helps save time and allows you to develop your tech vocabulary as you go.

Next time you have to source a technical candidate, you'll be able to review their profile even faster – and you won't worry about embarrassing mix-ups (like mistaking Java for JavaScript) again.

Try the GlossaryTech browser extension →

15 TIP

Search underrepresented schools with one Boolean string

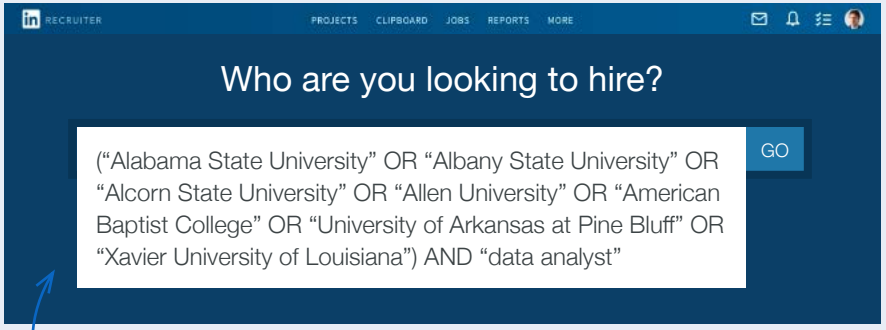
How can you source diverse candidates in a scalable way? Sourcing guru Glen Cathey suggests creating a long Boolean string that lists dozens – or even hundreds – of underrepresented schools at once.

Pull up a list of all the schools you want to search from, like women-only colleges and universities and historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

Once you've created the Boolean string, you can swap out the criteria at the end for future searches – making you even more efficient.

» How to get started:

Add the names of these institutions to your search with the Boolean operator OR between each school. Be sure to add parentheses around the entire list.



Add the AND operator followed by a term that will narrow down the search to graduates who meet your specific criteria (like "data analyst"), and hit "Search."

TIP

Incentivize referrals to build a qualified pipeline in no time

Referrals are a great way to find pre-vetted candidates fast. Offering an incentive for employees to refer is one way to quickly fill your pipeline.

Referral bonuses encourage employees to dig into their networks. You don't have to spend a lot of money – even a small gesture like offering gift cards for coffee shows employees their efforts are appreciated.

Referred candidates are more cost-effective to hire and tend to stay longer in a role.*

*Paul Petrone, "Here is Why Employee Referrals are the Best Way to Hire," August 3, 2015.

» How to build a strong referral program:

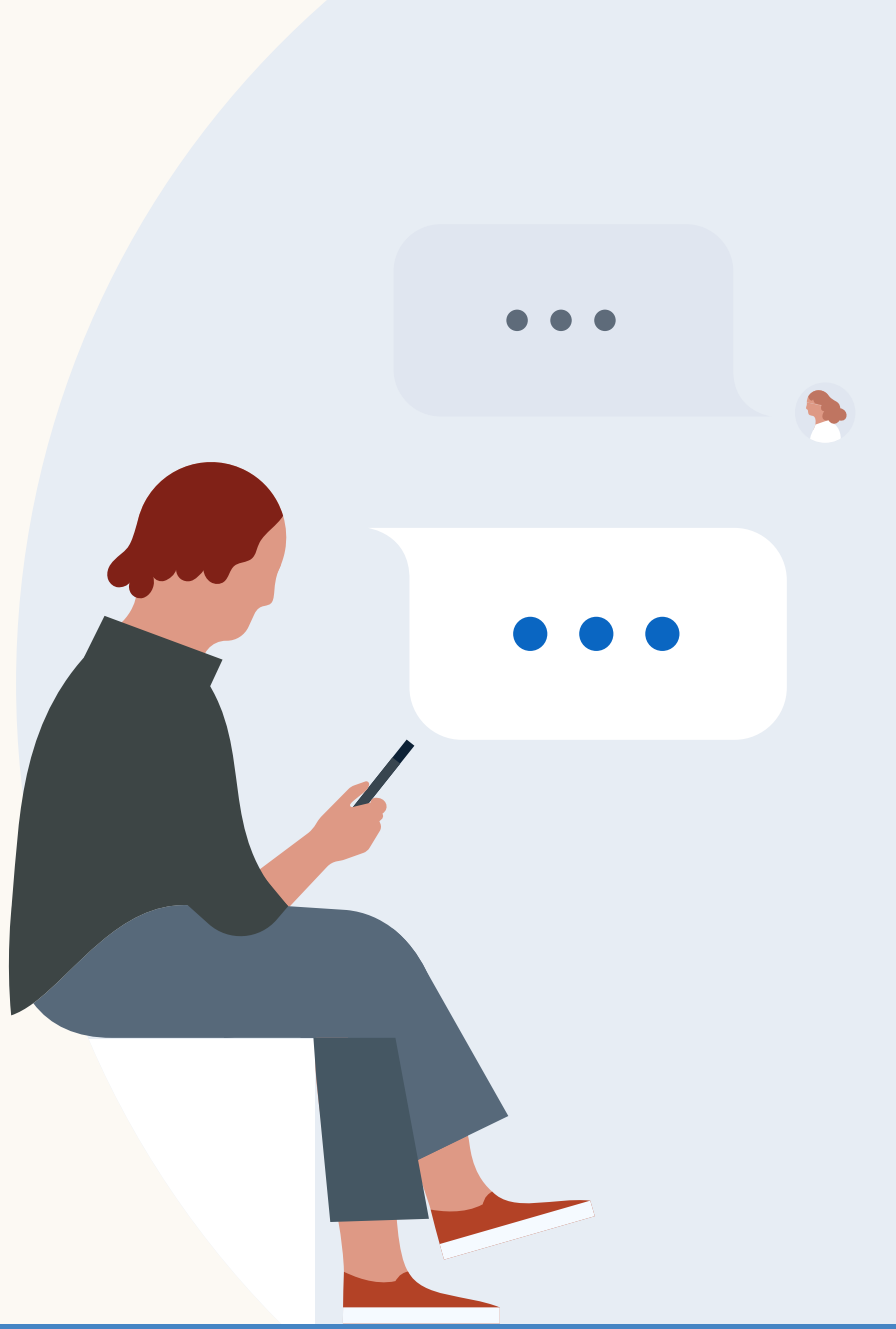
1. Create a user-friendly program that's easy for everyone to adopt
2. Promote referrals – and incentives – every chance you get
3. Make it an essential part of onboarding and manager training
4. Challenge employees to think beyond people with similar backgrounds. This helps ensure diversity in referrals, and it starts with awareness

Chapter four

Contacting candidates

First impressions matter. When reaching out to candidates, you need to give them a compelling reason to read your messages and respond – especially if they're already employed. But writing unique, compelling messages for every candidate could take all day.

These time-saving strategies can help get candidates interested and eager to reply.

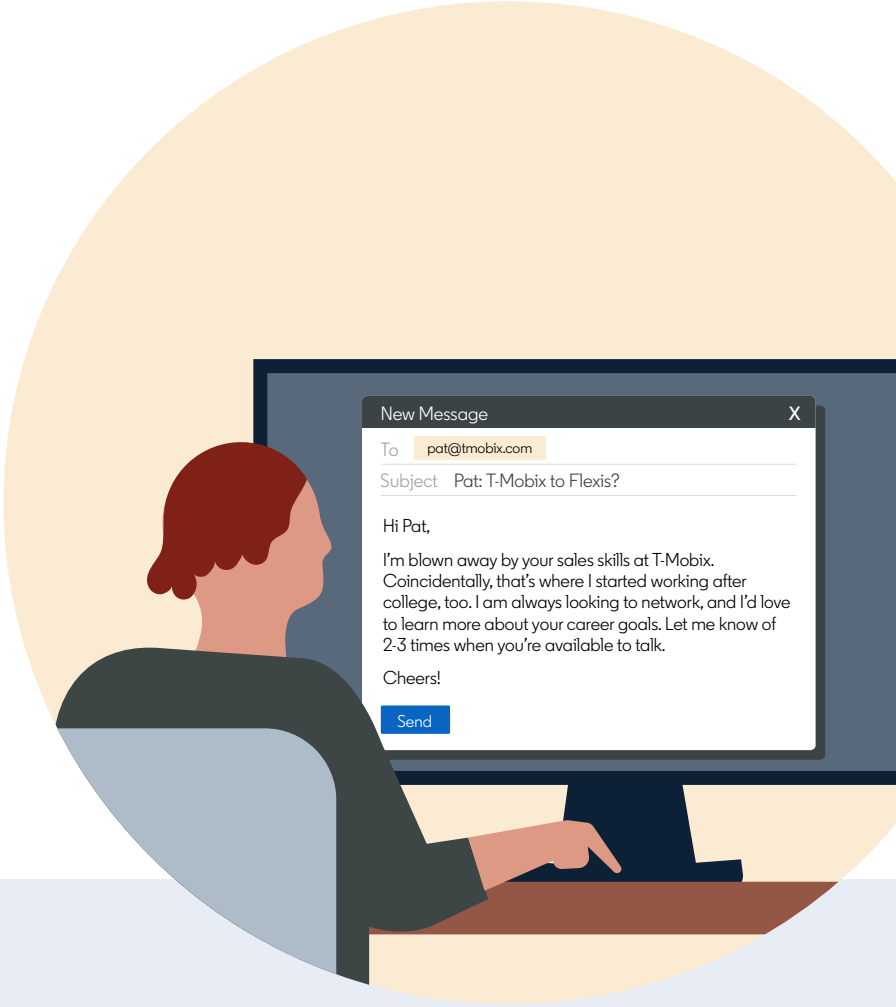


17 TIP

Keep your first message short – it saves time and boosts response rates

Writing exhaustively long messages will really slow your outreach efforts down. You'll spend more time drafting messages that candidates are less likely to read to the end – and even less likely to respond to.

Focus on keeping messages concise. Give candidates just a taste of what you have to offer and make them curious to learn more.



» Aim to stay under 100 words

LinkedIn found that messages with fewer than 100 words tend to get higher response rates, while those that crest the 200-word mark are far less likely to encourage a response, so it pays to be brief.

TEMPLATE

Quickly personalize this simple outreach template

High-potential candidates want to know you're interested in them as individuals. But you don't have time to write personal notes to everyone. Instead, use an outreach template that can be personalized with ease.

And if you're looking to source in certain industries like healthcare and finance, you can use LinkedIn's industry hiring guides.

You'll find templates you can use to help you craft catchy outreach messages faster. Even if your industry isn't covered yet, these templates still provide a great starting point.

Get the hiring guide outreach templates →

Hi [NAME],

I saw on your profile that you have great experience in [SPECIFIC ROLE OR SKILL]. After exploring more, I noticed your recent post about _____ on ____. [EX: AGILE WORKFLOW METHODOLOGY, TWITTER]. It inspired me to reach out. Any chance you'd be interested in sharing your insights as it relates to a role on our team?

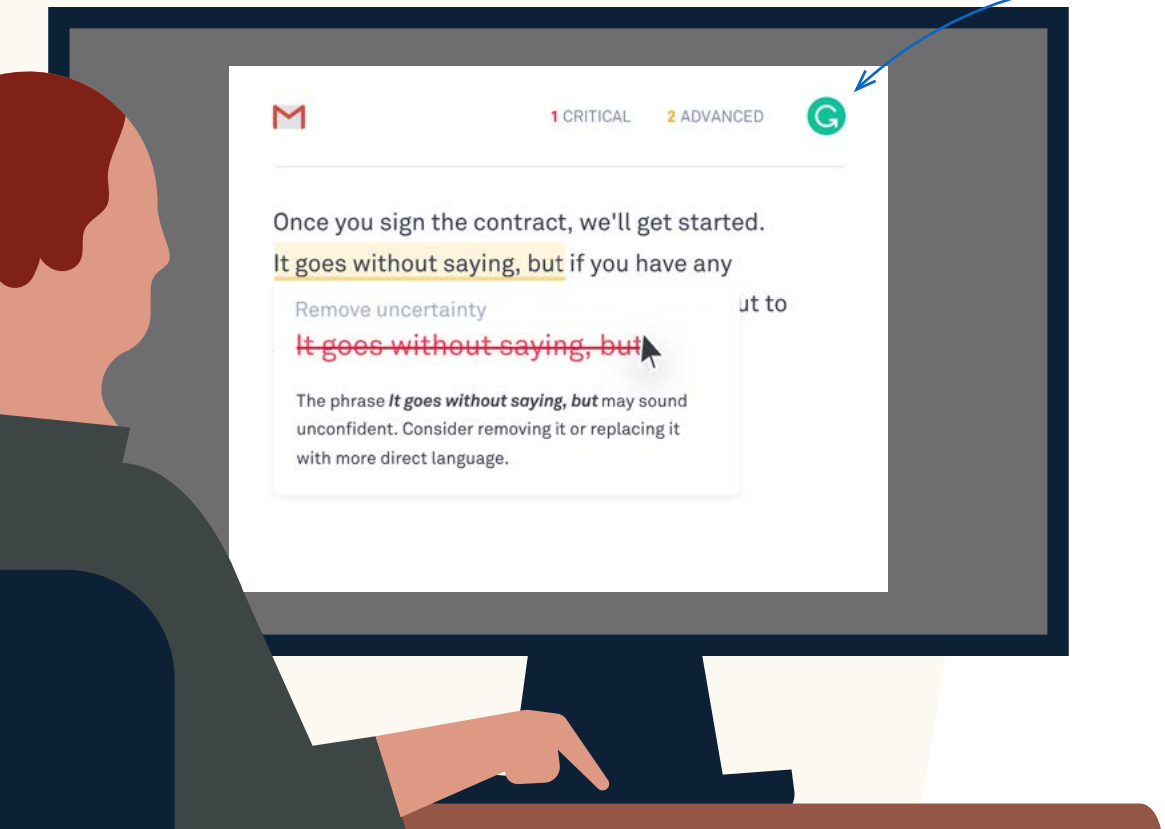
My company is currently looking for a [NAME OF OPEN POSITION] and your background seems like a great fit. You'd be joining a dedicated team with a deep enthusiasm for new ideas, and I think you'd make an incredible addition to the culture we've created. I'd love to speak with you about the role and your career goals. In the meantime, I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Best,
[YOUR NAME]

Paste this template into an InMail or email, add a few personal touches (like referencing an article the candidate published, or a hobby they enjoy), and send it. Make sure to add their name!

Automate proofreading and avoid awkward email mistakes with Grammarly

Typos can be off-putting. When you're trying to make a great first impression, the last thing you need is to misspell a name or bungle a technical term. It's time to adopt a tool that can do the time-consuming proofreading for you.



Add the free Grammarly extension to automatically check your work for typos, grammar errors, and other cringeworthy mistakes.

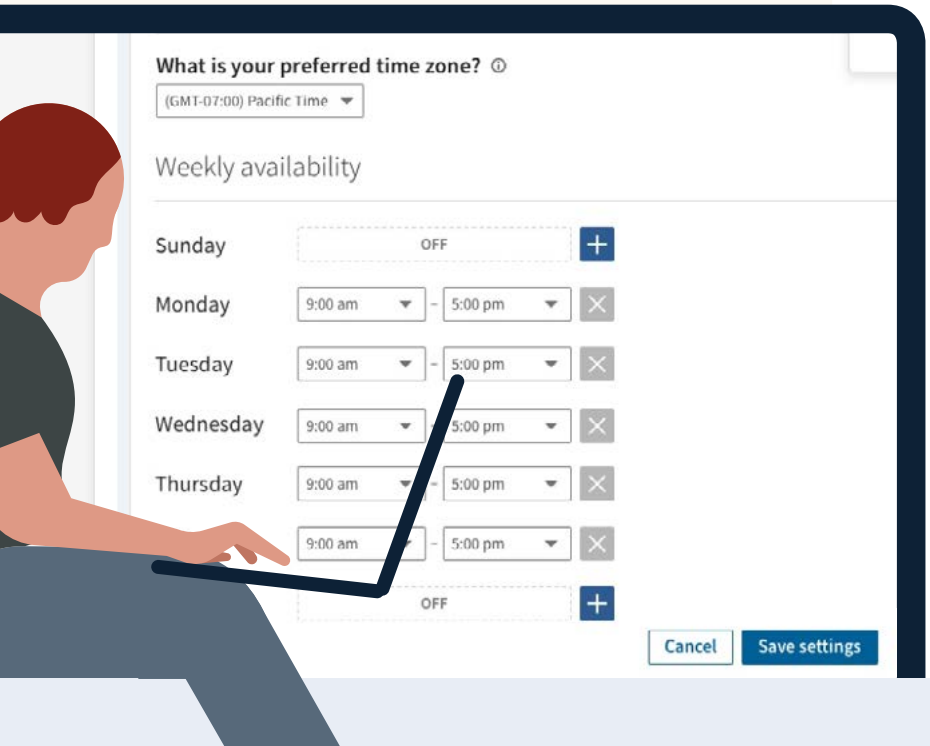
If Grammarly spots a mistake, the tool will offer suggested solutions. You don't even need to retype the word. Just click the suggestion, and it will be made automatically.

Get the Grammarly Chrome extension →

Streamline scheduling calls with the Scheduler tool in InMail

Once you've got a candidate's attention, you'll want to get them on the phone to discuss things in more detail. But scheduling that call can involve lots of back-and-forth.

Eliminate the hassle by syncing the Scheduler tool in LinkedIn Recruiter to your Office 365 or Google calendar.



All a candidate will need to do is click the link in their InMail and select a time slot that works for them (and you).

The screening will automatically appear on your calendar – saving both of you time and keeping you on schedule.

Explore Scheduler and LinkedIn Recruiter →

TIP

Ask the candidate's potential future boss to reach out instead

Sometimes, despite well-written messages, candidates just won't respond to you. If it's a candidate you're really interested in, it may be quicker to take yourself out of the equation than to waste time on follow-up messages that may go ignored.

Try asking the candidate's potential future boss to reach out directly. LinkedIn data shows that candidates are 56% more likely to respond in these instances.

People will often answer an authority figure quicker, so this tactic can get candidates to respond a lot faster.

Want more ideas? LinkedIn recruiters share five proven tactics for increasing response rates in our guide to optimizing your outreach.
Get our guide →

Chapter five

Screening candidates

Now that you've found your most promising candidates, you'll want to measure their caliber. Do they have the right skills to do the job well? Are they worth interviewing?

There are ways to quickly evaluate a candidate so that you make the right decision. The following tactics can help expedite the process – and make it more reliable.

TEMPLATE

Use this standardized evaluation form to quickly compare candidates after phone screenings

Before conducting phone screenings, it helps to establish a standard set of measurement criteria.

Print a copy for each candidate and fill them out as you go along. Note the individual rankings and jot down unique strengths and proposed start dates.

With all the forms side by side, you can quickly and objectively compare candidates, leading to better, faster, and fairer decisions.

Download the evaluation form →

HOLD A PHONE SCREENING

Initial evaluation form

Position:	Candidate name:
Interview date:	Interviewer name:

Work experience and responsibilities

Rate on a scale of 1 (poor) – 5 (excellent)

Possesses core skills needed for the role	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrates clear communication skills	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrates problem-solving skills and creativity	1	2	3	4	5

Company knowledge

Displays strong knowledge and enthusiasm for the role	1	2	3	4	5

Collaboration

Exhibits high levels of collaboration and excels in a team dynamic	1	2	3	4	5

Cultural fit

Work style, preferences, and personality are a good team fit	1	2	3	4	5

TOTAL _____

Open-ended questions

Areas of strength:

Opportunities to improve:

Compensation requirements:	Work authorization:	Available start date:

Other notes:

TIP

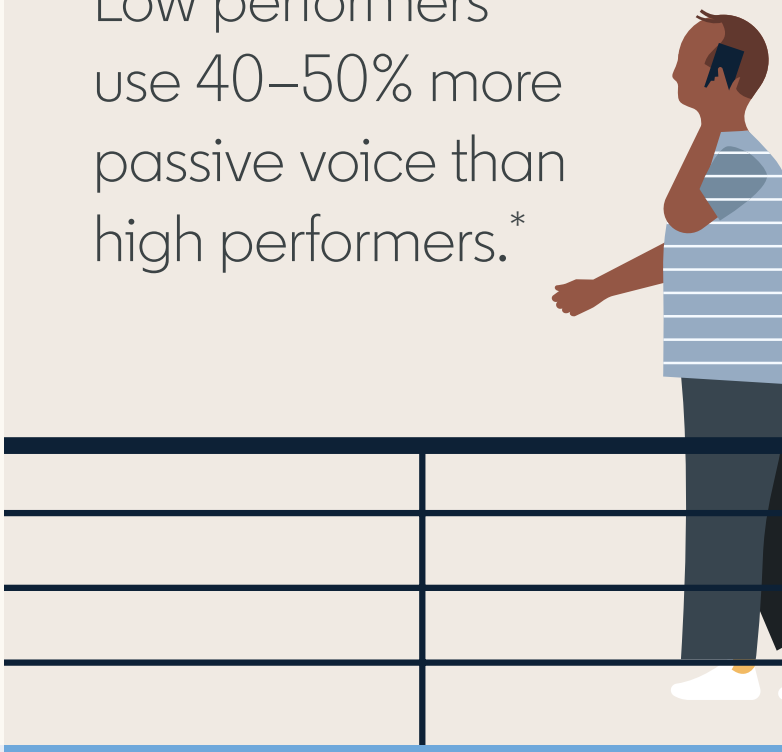
Pay attention to candidates' speech patterns to help predict their job performance

High performers tend to use first-person pronouns more often, and they're more likely to answer in the past tense, using the active voice.

Low performers are more likely to use second- and third-person pronouns and the passive voice when describing their experience. Present and future tenses are also more common.

These patterns can be valuable indicators, so be sure to take note of what you observe in conversation.

Low performers use 40–50% more passive voice than high performers.*



» High performer on the phone? Potential clues:

1. Shares stories of past workplace experiences
2. Uses the active voice such as "I'm excited to…"
3. Incorporates first-person pronouns like "I" and "me"

*Mark Murphy, "These 3 Speech Patterns Will Immediately Reveal If a Candidate is a Star or a Low Performer," January 12, 2017.

Automate screenings using the video interview tool HireVue

If phone screenings are a huge drain on your time, try using HireVue instead. This tool allows you to screen dozens of candidates simultaneously using one-way video interviews.

It's as simple as setting up the questions you want HireVue to ask and sending candidates a link. They can record their answers on a smartphone or computer whenever it's convenient.

Using AI technology, HireVue then analyzes the responses and sends a report about each candidate's potential, including soft skills, predicted job performance, and more.

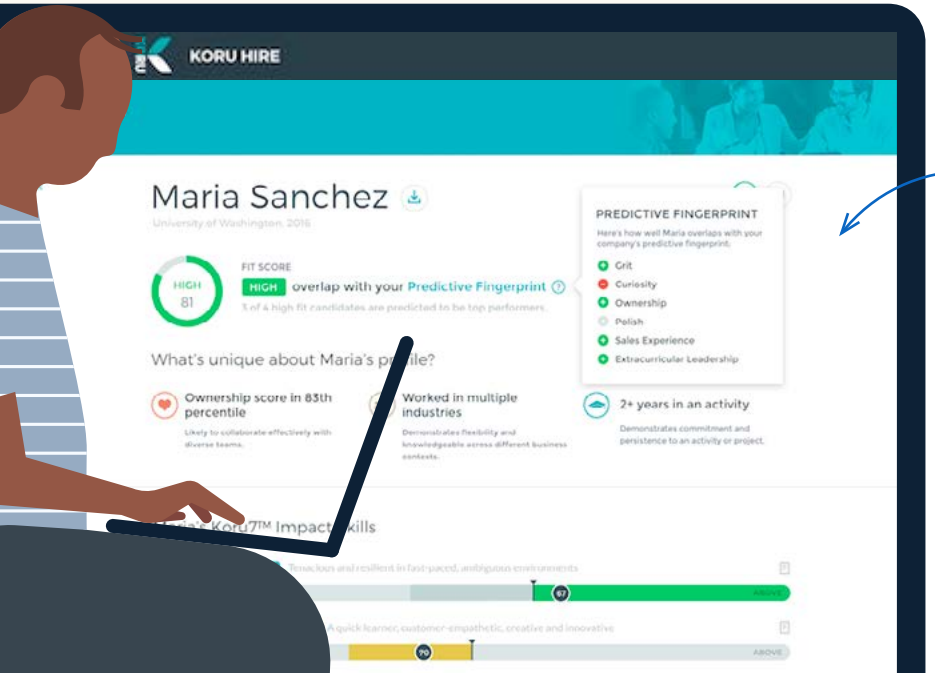
Check out HireVue →

Build predictive assessment tools into your hiring process

Soft skills can be tricky to screen for, but technology can help there too. Try using a smart predictive assessment tool instead. Koru, Pymetrics, and LinkedIn offer services worth exploring.

Koru asks candidates to answer a series of questions in about 20 minutes, then sends you a report card on seven core soft skill areas, including grit and teamwork.

Pymetrics asks candidates to play quick, neuroscience-based games that measure their cognitive and emotional traits.



These tools make it easy to screen numerous candidates at a rapid pace – and spot candidates with the most potential.

TIP

Scrap personality assessments from your process

Not all assessments are created equal, and some may be drawing your process out. If you rely on personality tests, it's a step you might consider cutting.

Personality assessments can be easy to figure out. Candidates can often sense which answers are considered right, so the results aren't always as telling as they may seem. They're also poor predictors of future job performance,* which can lead to perfectly good candidates getting screened out.

"Eliminate 90% of the 'must-haves' requirements and focus on the essential one or two."

Lou Adler

CEO, Performance-based Hiring Learning Systems

*Lou Adler, "Personality Assessment Tests Lead to a Poor Candidate Experience, Try This Approach Instead," September 26, 2015.

Chapter six

Interviewing candidates

The interview is one of the most critical parts of the hiring process, but it can be very time-consuming. Arranging times for multiple candidates to meet the team, planning around calendar conflicts, and gathering feedback all add up to long interview days. Throw in unforeseen issues like traffic jams or trouble finding your location, and interviews can become a real slog.

Interviews shouldn't take forever, though. Save time with these helpful hacks.

TIP

Outline your interview process on your career site

The interview process generally goes more smoothly when candidates know what to expect before they even walk through your door. One way to set their expectations is to outline the process on your career site.

On your career site, let candidates know what they'll need to bring to their interview (such as a resume or portfolio) and what will be expected of them. Do they need to check in when they arrive and, if so, where? What kinds of questions will they be asked? This information empowers candidates to proceed with confidence – and you won't have to field as many questions or calls.

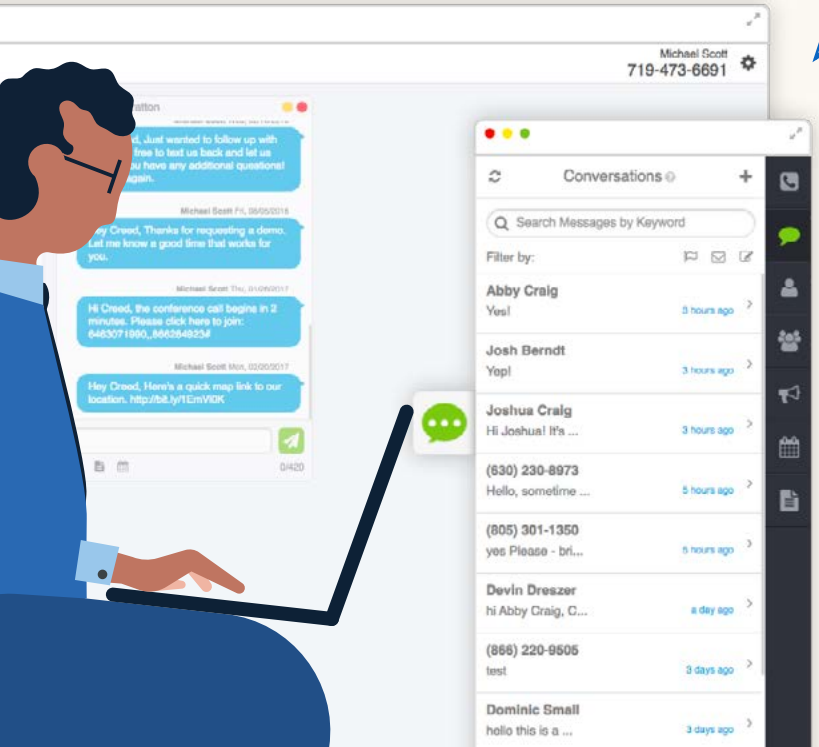
65% of candidates turn to a company's website to prepare for an interview.*

*"Inside the Mind of Today's Candidate," LinkedIn Talent Solutions.

Text interview updates to candidates from your computer with TextUs

If there's a change of plan before the interview, candidates need to know as soon as possible. Texting is a fast and effective option, since they're almost guaranteed to have their phone on them.

TextUs is a simple app that allows you to send a quick text message directly from your computer. Both the Chrome extension and web app enable texts from business numbers, so candidates know who is reaching out.



The best part: TextUs claims it can increase response rates by up to 800%.*

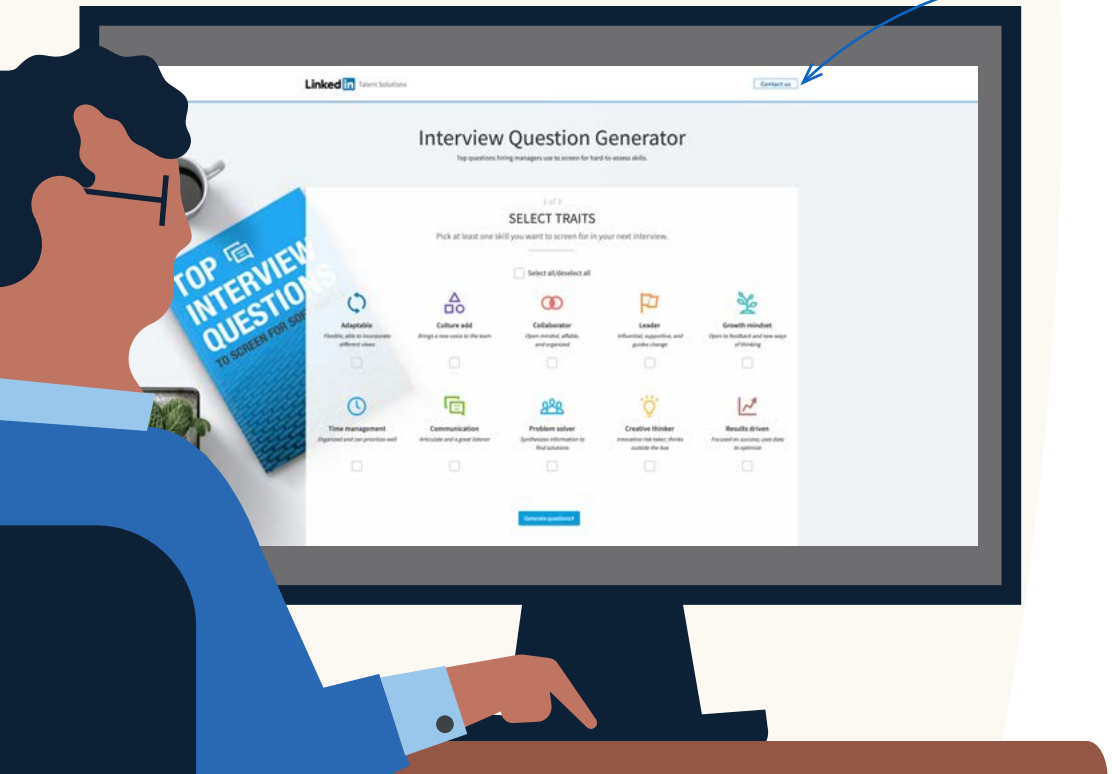
If you do decide to text your candidates, make sure they're open to it first. Unsolicited texts, even helpful ones, can feel invasive or go unread. When you schedule the interview, just give a heads up that you might text them updates, and let them opt out if they prefer.

Check out TextUs →

*"Why Over 700 Staffing Firms Now Use TextUs," January 2019.

Create a list of questions tailored to your open role with our Interview Question Generator

When was the last time you gave your list of interview questions a refresh? While it's okay to have a few go-tos, it's a good idea to generate a unique list for every open role to ensure that you're searching for the exact skills and traits the company needs. To streamline the process, we created an Interview Question Generator.



Select the soft skills you want to screen for – like leadership, adaptability, and creativity – and generate questions to help identify those skills.

You can select the questions most relevant to the role, and the tool will generate a printable guide, including space for notes and a scoring system. Best of all, it only takes about a minute to fill out and print.

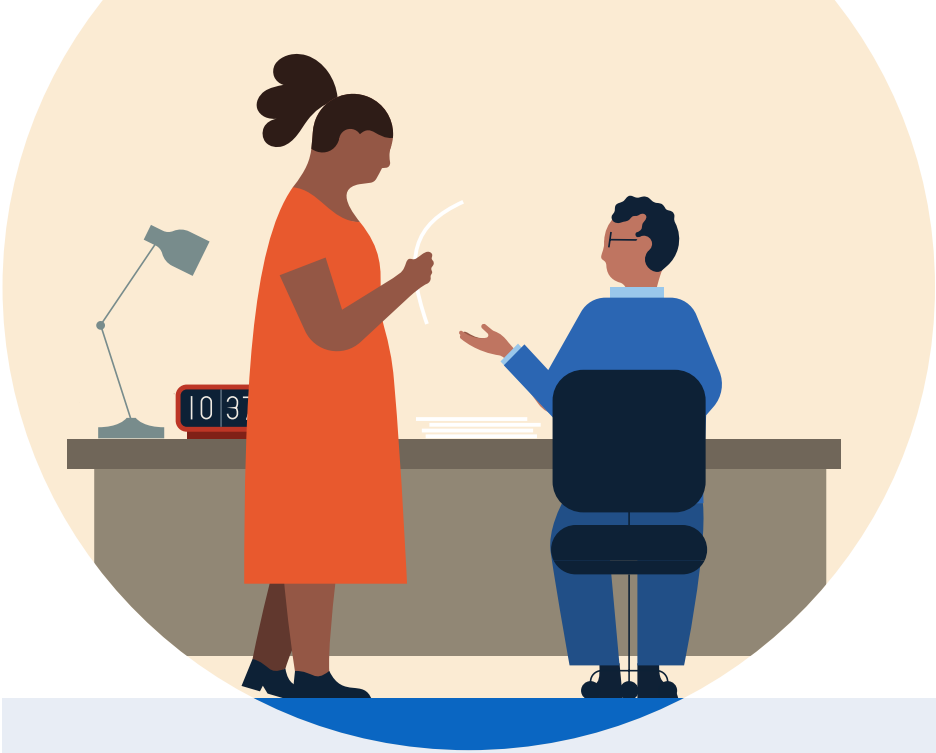
Generate interview questions →

TIP

Provide interviewers examples of the soft skills you're looking for before they meet the candidates

Different interviewers have different interpretations of what a particular soft skill is (and looks like). This can lead to misunderstandings and ultimately hold up the evaluation process.

Clearly explain what each soft skill looks like in action and provide a few relevant work-related examples.



» Take a few minutes to define the skills you want to see. Here's what this could look like:

- **Problem solver:** Asks relevant questions, identifies challenges, poses achievable solutions, can speak to past work successes
- **Good communicator:** Articulate, replies promptly, adjusts tone and communication style depending on audience

TIP

Have candidates meet your best interviewers first and last

You probably have a sense of who your company's best interviewers are. An easy way to make the interview process better is to have candidates meet these interviewers first and last.

Why? The brain remembers the first and last events in a series better than what happens in between. Schedule meetings to ensure candidates leave with the best possible impression of your company – making it more likely they'll accept an offer if you decide to extend one.

Ask the first and last interviewers to probe for soft skills – which are tough to assess – using different tactics. Here are the top tactics interviewers use*:

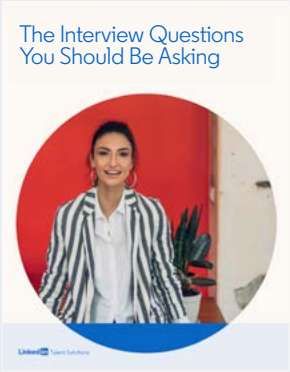
Behavioral questions	Reading body language	Situational questions
75%	70%	58%

*Global Talent Trends 2019, LinkedIn.

Cut down the number of interviewers per candidate, and make every question count

It's easy to assume that using more interviewers will make your interview scores more accurate. This is true only to an extent. When Google recruiters tested this theory at their company, they found that after the fourth interview, the rule of diminishing returns kicked in, and they got more of the same results.*

Try reducing the number of interviews and interviewers, then measure the results. If you can still predict future job performance with a relatively high degree of accuracy, make the change permanent. You'll spend less time scheduling – and more time closing offers.



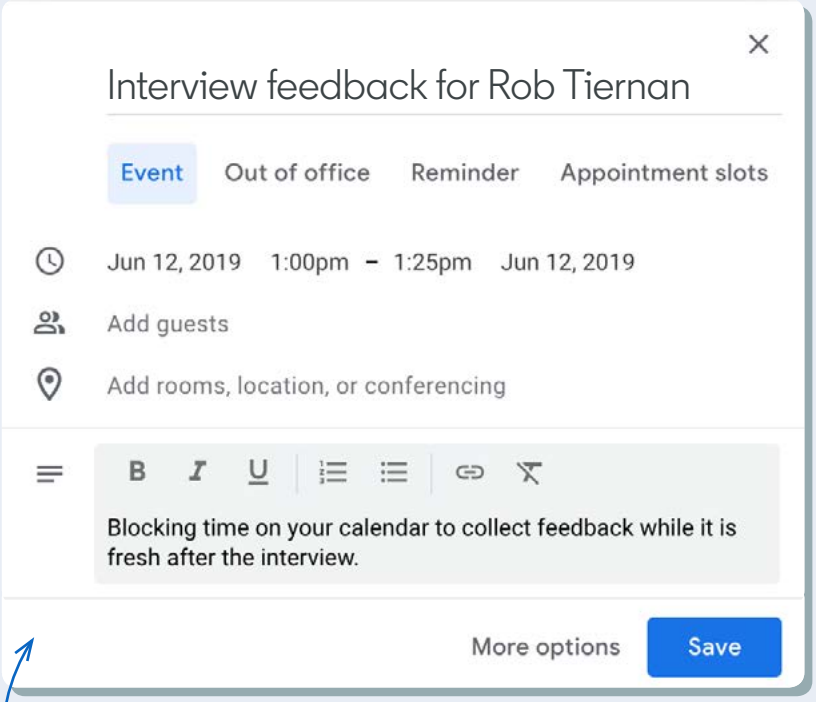
With fewer interviews, it's even more important to make every question count. Find out what to listen for in "The Interview Questions You Should be Asking."
Get our guide →

*"How Hilton, Google, and More Have Dramatically Reduced Their Time to Hire," LinkedIn Talent Blog, May 2018.

33 TIP

Block time on each interviewer's calendar to gather feedback while it's fresh

Chasing down individual interviewers for feedback on candidates can be a full-time job. Also, if too much time goes by between interview and feedback, interviewers may forget key observations – or rely too heavily on other interviewers' opinions.



While you're scheduling interviews, take a minute to block off time on interviewers' calendars for feedback. This will also remind them that they need to meet with you to close the loop on the interview process.

Chapter seven

Keeping candidates warm

It's a basic rule of hiring: All candidates want to know where they stand. Regular follow-ups can keep them reassured and engaged and help prevent them from looking elsewhere.

But following up with candidates as often as they may like isn't easy. These time-saving tricks can help make your open role the one they're willing to wait for.

TIP

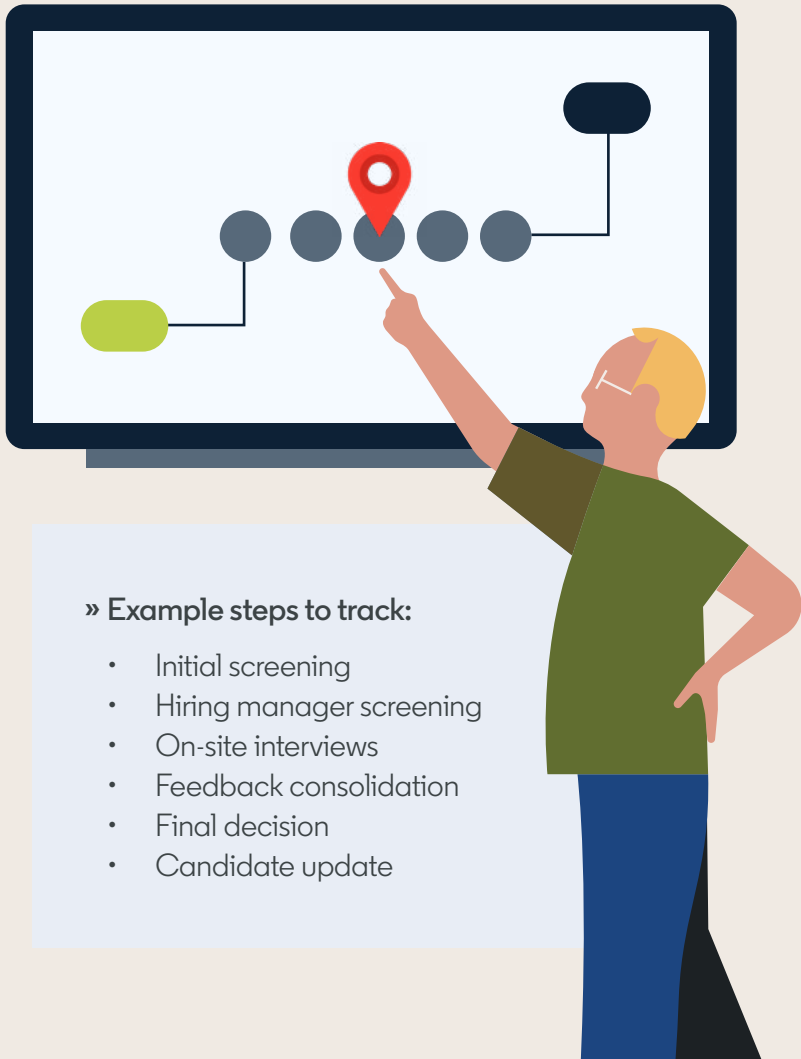
Give candidates an easy way to check their status through the hiring process

Some companies offer candidates a way to check their interview progress online. Johnson & Johnson built a platform called Shine that allows candidates to see exactly where they are in the process, along with updates about each step.

This kind of transparency helps set candidates' expectations, including when they will hear from you. It can also save you a lot of time and effort throughout the process.

53% of candidates want clear expectations laid out about the hiring process*

*ClearCompany, "Taking Advantage of the Transparency Trend in the Hiring Process."



» **Example steps to track:**

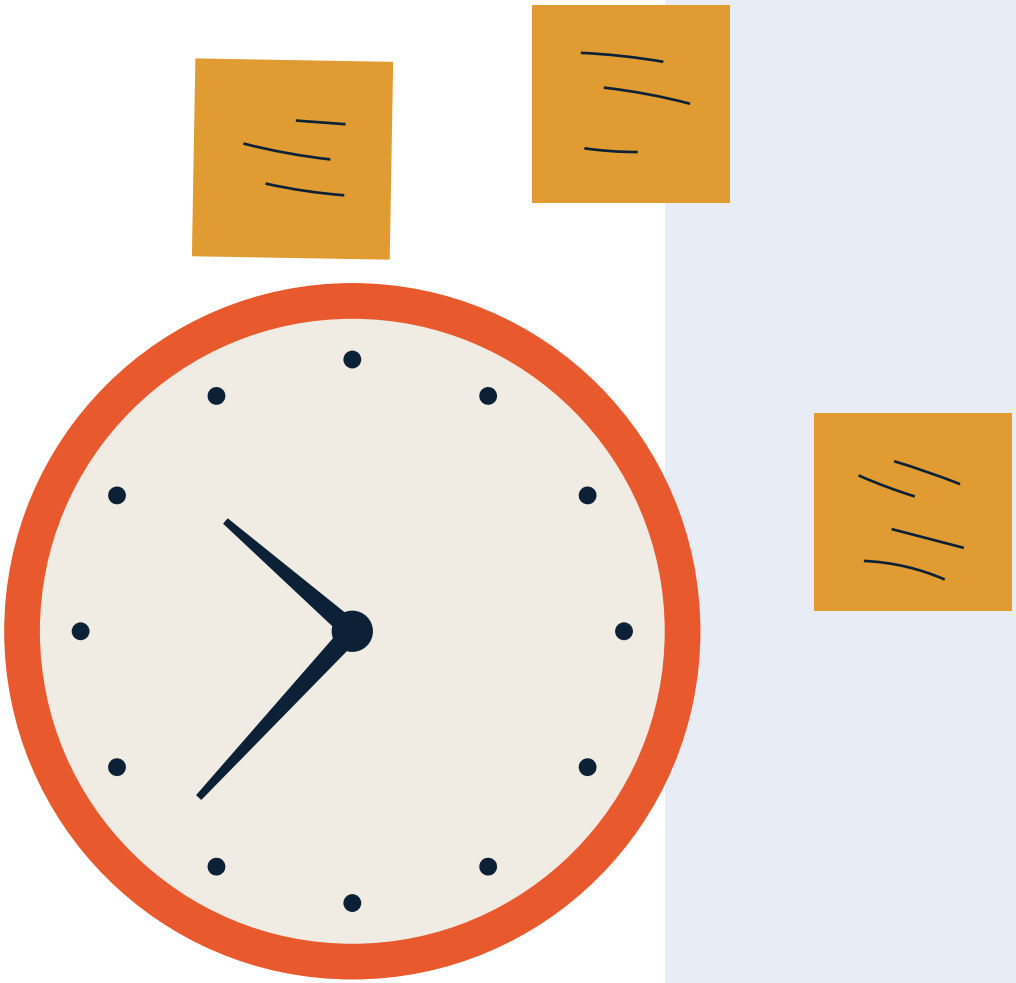
- Initial screening
- Hiring manager screening
- On-site interviews
- Feedback consolidation
- Final decision
- Candidate update

TIP

Set reminders to follow up with candidates after the interview and before the offer

The period between the final interview and the offer is one of the most crucial times for keeping candidates warm. You don't want them to get away!

Setting reminders in your calendar or Applicant Tracking System (ATS) is an easy way to remember to follow up with your top candidate. It will also reassure them that they're still top of mind.



"My candidates know that they'll never go more than a week without hearing from me."

Stacy Zapar

Founder of The Talent Agency and Tenfold

Do a "feedback blitz" to update every candidate about their status

If you have a lot of candidates at once, consider blocking off a few hours on your calendar dedicated to following up with them. By doing it all at once, you won't be sidetracked by emails and texts throughout the week.

This is a tactic advocated by Stacy Zapar. She calls these follow-up sessions "Friday Feedback Blitzes" because she does them at the end of the day on Friday. She also promises candidates they'll never go into the weekend without hearing from her. They can still reach out to her if they have questions, but by setting this expectation, she doesn't need to field as many messages throughout the week.

TEMPLATE

Send this email to candidates to keep them warm while they're being considered

Haven't made a final decision just yet? Reduce the likelihood that your top candidates will accept an offer elsewhere.

If the candidate is really passionate about your company, they'll be more inclined to wait if you're transparent about the process taking a little longer.

Dear [NAME],

Hope you're doing well! Thank you for coming in to learn more about the [JOB TITLE] position at [YOUR COMPANY NAME]. The team really enjoyed meeting you. We especially enjoyed hearing about [SOMETHING SPECIFIC]!

I wanted to keep you in the loop – we're still in the process of meeting with candidates and aim to complete all interviews by [DATE]. I'll notify you about any next steps as soon as possible.

In the meantime, if you have any questions for us, just let me know.

Sincerely,
[YOUR NAME]

Copy and paste this quick check-in template and fill in the key details.

TIP

If a candidate stops responding to you, say these two words

If one of your top candidates suddenly goes silent, it can set your process back weeks or even months.

Rather than sending endless follow-ups, try this strategy recommended by LinkedIn VP of Global Talent Brendan Browne.

Use these simple words to get a candidate's attention.

This straightforward approach will likely lead to one of two outcomes. Either the candidate will confirm they're still interested, or they won't reply – and you'll know it wasn't meant to be.

Chapter eight

Extending an offer

You've finally found the perfect candidate. While you don't want to delay the offer, you also don't want to push the candidate to accept when they may not be ready.

It's worth streamlining the tedious parts of the offer phase so you have time for more detailed negotiations, if necessary. These hacks will help you strike that balance.

TIP

Establish a post-interview timeline so candidates know what to expect

Will you have a final answer for candidates within a week? If so, tell them – and follow through on your promise. After their final interview, put a clear timeline for what happens next in writing in an information packet or email.

If you have next steps written down and ready to go, you won't have to repeat the same information every time. Candidates will be reassured – and they won't have to follow up.

After their final interview, put a clear timeline for what happens next in an information packet or email.

TEMPLATE

Personalize this offer template to seal the deal

When you're ready to extend to an offer, you don't want to keep your candidate waiting. Let them know the good news right away with this handy template.

For many recruiters, losing a great candidate at this point in the process can shake their confidence. A timely, thoughtfully considered offer letter helps ensure they are as excited about the offer as you are.

Dear [NAME],

Congratulations! It is my pleasure to formally offer you the position of [JOB TITLE]. This is a [FULL/PART]-time position with an [ANNUAL/HOURLY] salary of [$X]. You will be reporting to [MANAGER'S NAME] in the [DEPARTMENT] located at [OFFICE LOCATION]. Your expected start date is [DATE].

Attached, please find [LIST OF DOCUMENTS (ex: formal acceptance letter, employee benefits)]. We will need all forms signed and returned by [DATE]. We are very excited to start this journey together and can't wait to have you join the team.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

Copy and paste this template, fill in the important details, and attach any additional documents your new hire may need.

TIP

Never extend an "exploding offer"

It may seem like a good idea to set a very narrow acceptance window – like asking for a final answer within 48 hours. But many experts caution against this approach.

High-pressure offers can make you 8-13% less efficient overall.*

J.T. O'Donnell, CEO at WorkItDaily, believes an "exploding offer" puts unnecessary pressure on a candidate and can hurt their relationship with the company before they even accept.

Instead, keep acceptance deadlines reasonable and start a dialogue with candidates who struggle to meet them.

*Adam Grant, "It's Time to Eliminate Exploding Job Offers." LinkedIn.

TIP

Ask candidates this very important question during the salary discussion

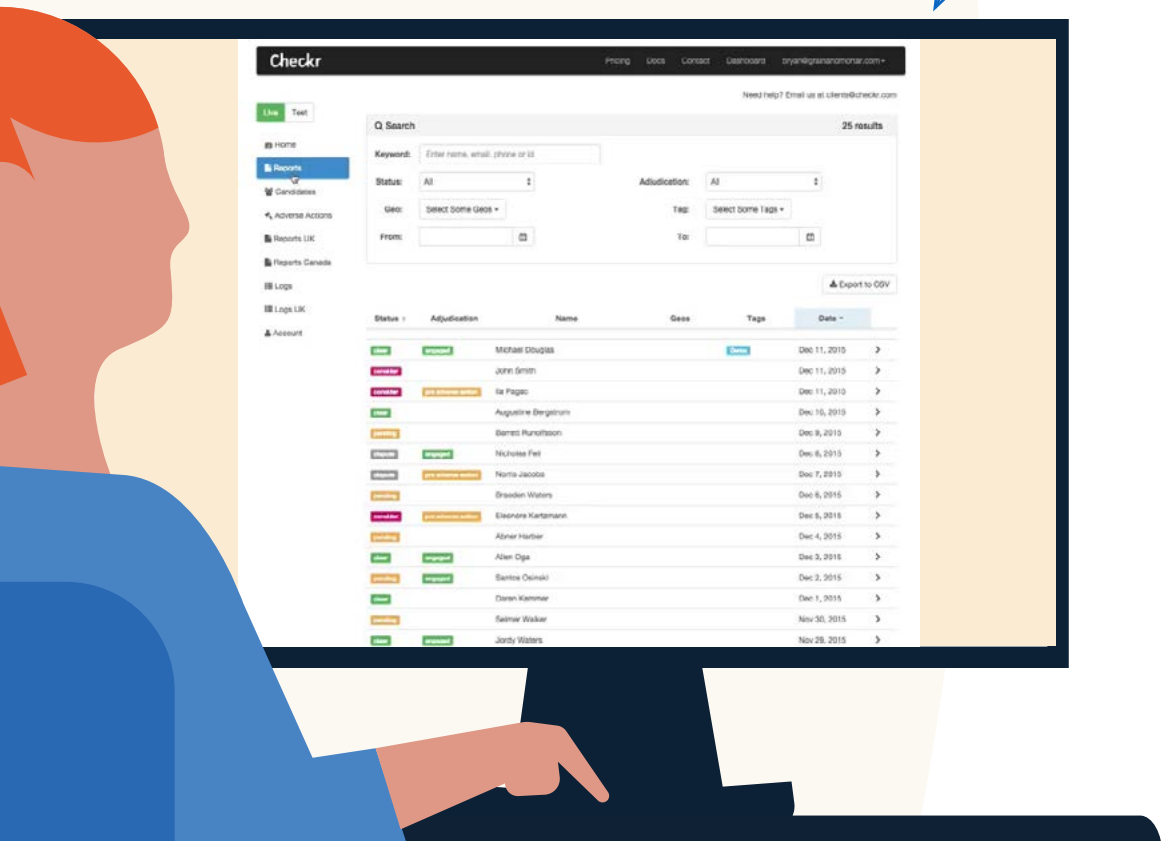
Lou Adler, CEO and Founder of The Adler Group, recommends asking candidates the counter-offer question during any negotiations for compensation.

If the candidate says their decision is final, it can save a lot of back-and-forth and help ensure you're only extending an offer to candidates ready to make a move.

It can also help you lock down a new hire much faster and prevent a costly bidding war.

"Are you willing to tell everyone at your company your decision is final and you won't consider a counter-offer?"

Automate background checks and eliminate potential bias with Checkr



Running background checks can grind the final stages of the hiring process to a screeching halt. Here's how to speed this step up.

Checkr's software uses artificial intelligence to deliver color-coded reports while ensuring compliance.

Checkr can also help prevent potential bias. If you discovered that a candidate has a criminal conviction, would it change your perception? Would you have second thoughts about hiring them, even if it was an old conviction and they've since turned their life around? Checkr allows you to customize how much you see, so it will only flag convictions that have a bearing on the job at hand.

Learn more about Checkr →

Chapter nine

Onboarding a new hire

The transition from candidate to employee has a big influence on a new hire's tenure. If they feel welcomed and taken care of, they're more likely to stick around for the long term.

Don't let unclear communication and confusion cause your new hire to question their decision to join your company. Here are simple strategies to help them feel settled and satisfied.

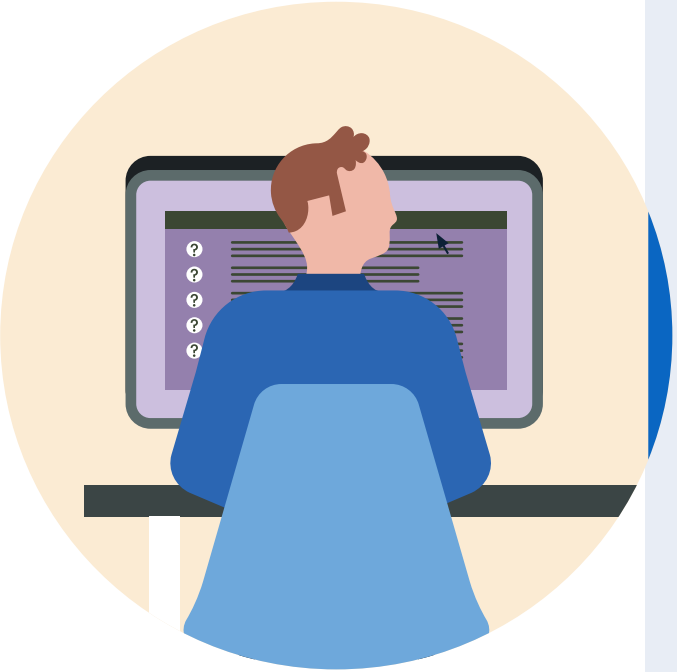
TIP

Ask new hires to complete a short survey about themselves after they accept their offer

Help new hires feel like family before their first day by sending them a quick survey to fill out. It's an easy way to help introduce them to their new team.

Ask about their interests and hobbies outside of work – send the questions via email or set up a survey in Microsoft Forms or Google Forms.

Share the results with their team to speed up team bonding and help their coworkers feel like they already know them.



Get started with these sample questions:

Q: What's your preferred working style: methodical, free-form, collaborative, or individual?

Q: Where would we find you on the weekends?

Q: Butterfly or wallflower?

TIP

Set up new hires on your company systems before their first day

First days can feel overwhelming. By getting each new hire set up on internal systems prior to their start date, you can avoid a lot of stress for everyone involved.

Set up new hires with their company email account, as well as any other important tools and systems, and their first day will be a lot more productive and efficient.

If your new hire already has access to the collaboration platforms that the team uses, they'll be able to get to know their coworkers before their first day.

TEMPLATE

Keep the onboarding process organized with this 45-day checklist

Onboarding involves a lot of moving pieces. Don't let any of them get away from you by using our onboarding checklist.

The checklist covers all of the most important steps in the onboarding process, from before the new hire's start date through their first day, week, and month on the job.

Check off each step as you go to stay on schedule and on top of everything you still need to do.

Get the comprehensive onboarding checklist →

ONBOARDING PHASE 1

15 days before your new hire starts

1

PREPARATIONS

- [ ] Confirm start date, time, place, parking, transportation, and dress code
- [ ] Identify computer needs and requirements
- [ ] Set up email address and add to company directory
- [ ] Add your new hire to relevant email lists

WORK ENVIRONMENT

- [ ] Assign (and clean) desk area
- [ ] Set up workstation with laptop, computer monitor, chargers, mouse, keyboard, etc.
- [ ] Prepare phone, access cards, nameplate, and printer access
- [ ] Create a welcome pack with instructions for access

COMMUNICATION

- [ ] Request employee bio for easier team assimilation
- [ ] Define week one agenda and share with the new hire

PLANNING

- [ ] Grant access to key accounts, drives, systems, tools, and platforms
- [ ] Set up regularly scheduled meetings, and add the new employee to other department meetings that will be helpful to onboarding
- [ ] Schedule pertinent training sessions
- [ ] Schedule a team lunch to introduce the new hire on day one or two
- [ ] Plan the new hire's first assignment

Take your new hire through all of the most important steps in successful onboarding with this handy checklist.

TIP

Help new hires build connections by assigning them a work buddy

A buddy system gives new hires an opportunity to learn the ropes from someone they'll be working with on a daily basis.

Pairing new hires with coworkers can dramatically speed up orientation, helping them feel at home in no time.

Plus it helps them build connections and learn about company culture firsthand. The buddy should be able to anticipate the new hire's needs and make them feel comfortable.

69%

Employees that go through a structured onboarding program are 69% more likely to stay for 3 or more years.*

*Christine Marino, "7 Need-to-Know Facts About Employee Onboarding," HR.com, August 5, 2015.

Bonus

Improving the candidate experience

A great way to reinforce your employer brand and reduce the number of dropouts during the hiring process is to elevate the candidate experience. This could boost your company's reputation – and that could have a strong influence on future candidates.

Here are some simple tactics to give your candidate experience a meaningful boost.

TIP

Apply for a job at your own company to test out the application process

How long does it take to apply for a job at your company? Does the website run smoothly? Are questions clearly worded? Are there unnecessary extra steps, like being asked to upload your resume – only for the next screen to ask for your educational and work background?

Discover answers to all these questions and more by applying for a job at your own company.

This firsthand experience can be truly eye-opening, helping you to immediately identify areas for improvement.

» Make this a semi-regular process

A few times every year, set aside 15 minutes to reapply. If it takes you longer than 15 minutes, there's your first area for improvement!

Answer candidates questions with help from a chatbot

Candidates often apply for jobs outside standard business hours. If they reach out to you on evenings and weekends, you'll come in to a heap of emails every morning. Instead, get a chatbot to answer for you.

Chatbots like Mya can integrate with Facebook Messenger or be built into your career site, allowing candidates to get instant answers to FAQs.

Some chatbots can even gather missing information, like asking a candidate whether they possess a required skill, saving you even more time down the line.

Try integrating a Mya chatbot →

TIP

Ask candidates to provide feedback about their experience

Want to know exactly where the friction in your hiring process lies? Invite candidates to rate their experience, and you'll soon find out.

Don't just ask candidates after they're hired – build feedback into every key touchpoint, from the application to the phone screening and beyond.

And there's no point spending hours writing up an exhaustive survey that no one will fill out! Candidates will be much more likely to give feedback if they can do it in just a few clicks.

» Feedback put to work

One company created an amazing candidate experience and saw job applications skyrocket.
Read the case study →

Conclusion

Hire smarter, not harder

Finding candidates who will take your organization to the next level is no small task. With these 50 clever recruiting hacks, you can shave hours off your week – allowing you to dedicate more time to the tasks that benefit from your touch the most.

When you automate or streamline the most tedious, time-consuming aspects of hiring, it's easier to focus on nurturing high-potential candidates and providing an exceptional candidate experience for all.

Candidates will appreciate the extra effort – and you won't burn yourself out providing it!

LinkedIn Talent Solutions

Experience LinkedIn in action

We're dedicated to helping you work more productively at every stage of hiring. LinkedIn Talent Solutions offers a full range of hiring and recruiting solutions for every step in the process. We'll help you find and engage the right candidates, build your brand, and make even smarter talent decisions with LinkedIn's data and insights.

Founded in 2003, LinkedIn connects the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful. With 630+ million members worldwide, including 75% of the US workforce, LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network.

Request demo

Subscribe to our blog

Connect with us on LinkedIn

Follow us on Facebook

Follow us on Twitter

Try LinkedIn's hiring and recruiting products.

Plan

Use data to inform difficult hiring and recruiting decisions.

Talent Insights

Find

Search, connect with, and manage your top candidates in one place.

LinkedIn Recruiter

LinkedIn Scheduler

Post

Post jobs to reach candidates you won't find anywhere else.

Post a job

Learn more about LinkedIn Jobs

Attract

Showcase your company culture and spotlight jobs with targeted ads.

Career Pages

Recruitment Ads

Pipeline Builder