

eBOOK



STREAMLINE HIRING PROCESS

YOUR

Four Steps to Successful Hiring



THE
PREDICTIVE
INDEX

A good hire can change your business and someone's life.

A bad hire can harm both.

So before you start the process, make sure you follow these four steps – D.A.S.H (Define, Attract, Select, Hire) – that will not only increase your chances of hiring the right candidate, but will help you expedite the process as well.

1. Define

- Build a business case
- Describe the job
- Describe the person

2. Attract

- Write the job description
- Post the job

3. Select

- Identify the right talent
- Screen resumes
- Administer assessments
- Phone screen/interview
- Prioritize candidates

4. Hire

- Make the offer
- Onboard



This eBook will take you through each of these steps in detail so that you can transform your hiring process and get the results you want.



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HIRING PROCESS



DEFINE

First thing's first, before you jump into hiring someone, you need to DEFINE the job you want to fill. This includes both building a business case for the position, especially if you're a hiring manager, and doing a deep dive on the job itself. It's important to set the foundation first to justify the need for a new employee.

Build a Business Case

Do you need a new hire?

New hires are costly and take time from other employees to train and onboard. So before embarking on a lengthy selection process, it's important to evaluate exactly what that new hire will be responsible for and whether anyone else at your organization has the time and skill set to handle those duties.

How much will a new hire cost?

You need to consider all costs including salary, benefits, bonuses, etc. Websites like salary.com or glassdoor.com can give you a rough sense of the expected compensation in advance so you can allocate a budget.

Are others aligned?

It's smart to check with other stakeholders and leaders at your organization to make sure they agree with the need for a new hire, the responsibilities that person will be accountable for and how he or she will fit into the organizational structure. You also need to set a budget for the role.

When you make that hire, you want others to be excited about that person's expected contribution, supportive of how he or she will fit in and committed to his or her success.

Describe the Job

Now it's time to drill down on the specific details of the job.

Job analysis

Traditionally job analysis is about building a full understanding of a job including the tasks performed and the competencies required. This information is typically used to document the knowledge, skills, abilities and other factors required for a job and provide a benchmark for assessment and selection procedures.

How deep should you go?

Rigorous job analysis is not always necessary. When done right, job analysis sets a foundation of legal defensibility so you can determine which competencies are required for success. For instance, if your job analysis shows that you need a certain level of literacy, then you are better protected (not completely protected) when your literacy skills test eliminates people with reading disabilities from getting hired.



Beyond legal risk, why should you do a job analysis?

A job analysis can be beneficial in situations where you have a completely new or unique role, since it will help you to write a good job description, figure out what to look for on the resume, such as education and experience, and help you pick the right selection tools.

Is there a simpler way?

When considering your job analysis strategy, you'll want to align your approach with the selection tools you plan to use. A skills test will make sure a specific skill is really needed for the job.

Describe the Person

When thinking about the job it's also important to identify what types of behaviors are required for the position. Should the ideal candidate be detail-oriented, good under pressure, able to multi-task, a big picture thinker, outgoing? The types of behaviors required for the job are just as important as skills when it comes to job fit. A behavioral profile, such as The Predictive Index PRO™ assessment, will pinpoint the behavioral characteristics required for success in any specific role, at any level, within your organization.



ATTRACT

Once you've defined the job and what it requires, you'll need to attract the best-fitting candidates who are qualified for that position. How you write the job description and posting can help you attract the best candidate

Writing the Job Description

Think of a job description as an internal document that captures the findings of the job analysis.

Be sure to include:

- Job title
- Purpose of the job
- Duties and tasks of the job
- Skills and competencies required (listed separately from each other)
- How the job relates to other jobs and the organization
- Any additional qualifications/prerequisites (such as knowledge, abilities or other factors)

Well-written job descriptions

Job descriptions and job posts (covered later) are similar, but not the same. The job description should be a thorough write-up of job requirements written using proper grammar, short and focused statements, and present tense verbs. It should tell a prospective candidate what the job is, what's expected for success, and how it fits into the broader organizational landscape. Job descriptions are also important beyond the hiring process because they are the cornerstone for how performance is measured and a reference for any disputes or disciplinary issues.

Jazzing up That Job Post

Now that you have a solid job description, it's time to turn it into a job post so the application process can begin.

Job descriptions vs. job posts

If a job description is like a technical manual for a job, a job post is an advertisement designed to attract the right applicants. A post should be short, sweet and to the point, and it should catch and keep a job seeker's attention. It should include a description of the position, the primary duties, details on the company, and a brief overview of benefits or other important factors.

Writing a great job post

A great job post should make both the job and your organization sound appealing, exciting and attractive to the values and interests of the kinds of people you want to attract – remember, you don't want everyone – you want the right people. To get them, follow these simple rules:

- **Make your post stand out** – it should be easy to read and understand so you can grab the attention of candidates skimming through multiple postings.
- **Highlight unique selling points** – great benefits, free lunches, an on-site gym or strong cultural characteristics.
- **Speak to the type of people you want** – and use that information to build your job description. For instance, if you want really ethical people, then talk about the importance of operational integrity, accountability, solid processes, etc.

Keep in mind that most candidates find job posts through online searches, so it's still important to use familiar job titles, relevant keywords, and enough details so they can understand what role they're applying for.



Where to post

In the past, job posts were limited to print publications and classified ads, but today there are so many ways to find top talent. Broad job sites such as Indeed, Monster, Glassdoor, LinkedIn, and Career Builder will get your candidate pipeline humming. However, don't forget to check out many of the more niche job sites which target specific types industries or job types such as dice.com for tech jobs. Finally, social networking can get your job posts out to those valued, passive candidates. So be sure to involve your employees and staff and have them share the posts on Facebook, LinkedIn, or wherever else they communicate with their friends and family.



SELECT

This step requires narrowing down the candidates you've attracted to prioritize the best potential people for the position. It's important to incorporate a method that gives you some objectivity when making a decision because subjectivity can often lead us astray.

Identify the Right Talent

Before you post your job, it's a good idea to develop an employee selection strategy so you can efficiently and effectively identify the best candidates for the job.

What's in a selection strategy?

The best employee selection strategy will help you quickly screen employees so you can spend the most time, energy and resources with the candidates who have the most potential. There are two major phases in employee selection:

1. **Employee screening** involves sorting through large volumes of candidates to eliminate the undesirables and identify those who have the potential to be a good fit.
2. The **"select in" phase** requires making a decision between similar candidates.



Screen Resumes

The first step in employee screening starts with the resume. Today, Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) help make resume analysis easier, but not everyone has access to this technology. Without an ATS, it's important to establish clear criteria (from the job analysis) for what skills, experiences, etc. meet the minimum requirements. It may be helpful to develop a checklist for these important qualifications both to make comparisons and to instill discipline on what should be evaluated. This checklist might include whether an applicant has relevant experience, a track record of accomplishments, the right educational level, or key business or technical skills.

Next, use a minimum qualifications screening questionnaire to help you weed out people who lack certain basics required for the job, such as a driver's license. Depending on your bandwidth, you can use recruiters to conduct resume screening calls to gather more information and help wade through the pile.

Administer Assessments

You may decide to use skills testing to identify whether certain candidates are qualified for the job. You can also use psychometric assessments (behavior, cognitive, culture fit, etc.) to identify whether the candidate has the right characteristics, critical-thinking horsepower or values to be successful (more on this later).

Employee screening is largely about increasing your odds of making a good decision. The ideal approach needs to be both accurate and legally defensible which means it should be:

1. **Standardized** - all candidates go through the same process
2. **Objective** - there are clear criteria by which people either stay in the pool or get eliminated
3. **Valid** - the tools being used are good predictors of job performance
4. **Focused** - the requirements for the job are determined during job analysis

Prioritize candidates

As the pool narrows, the “select in” phase begins. This is all about going deeper with candidates and uncovering information to help you make a high-quality decision through an interview.

Interviews

Phone interviews are a good preliminary step for identifying any red flags up front and getting more information from a potential candidate. They can be conducted quickly without tapping into too many resources and are an important first step. Once you’ve narrowed your pool of candidates you can move onto face-to-face interviews.

Companies often give too much latitude to how interviews are conducted. Both legally and scientifically, unstructured interviews are a risky proposition. Instead, build a structured interview off of key competencies that were identified during the job analysis. Provide the same set of questions to all candidates and give interviewers a clear rating format for identifying great answers from poor ones. If you have multiple interviewers, it’s reasonable to have multiple structured interviews designed for each person.

In addition to structured interviews, it’s helpful to use a behavioral assessment to further understand the drives, characteristics, values, motivations and/or interests of the candidate. Behavior-based assessments like the PI Behavioral Assessment™ provide objective information about behavioral tendencies in terms of strengths and potential weaknesses. Be sure to use behavioral assessments designed for hiring, as there are many tools that aren’t appropriate for employee selection purposes. Also make sure that they don’t discriminate against people on the basis of gender, ethnicity, or age. You can recycle some of the results from tools you used during the screening process as you may have valuable data about behavioral tendencies that can help decision-making.

Once you have a high-quality tool in hand, the information can provide valuable insight into how a person will fit in the role or help. Or you can personalize the interview or probe into potential concerns such as, “these results suggest that you have low extroversion, so how do you build relationships at work?” The combination of a structured interview approach with a high-quality behavioral assessment will make it much easier to differentiate among those who have the potential to be a superstar vs. merely a star.

Reference checks

Once you’ve narrowed the candidate pool down to one or two people, you need to conduct reference checks. This might be the most important step because past behavior is one of the strongest predictors of future performance. However, many companies skip this step because they believe asking certain questions is unlawful, don’t think references provide valuable information, or don’t want to hear negative feedback about a candidate whom they have their hearts set on. Similar to earlier steps in the selection process, reference checks need to be approached using an objective, standardized strategy. Ask candidates early on for a list of past supervisors from each position he or she has held and make him or her responsible for connecting you with those references.



When you contact the reference, set the context for the role, your organization and the challenge ahead. Define your hiring process and expectations so you can gather open opinions on how the candidate will fit. Use this as an opportunity to discuss what your ideal candidate will look like and how the reference believes the candidate fits into that vision. If you want to understand potential “weaknesses” then frame them in terms of coaching needs. Finally, ask the reference whether he or she “would hire him or her again if the situation arose?”

Before you make that final offer, be sure to conduct a background check including criminal background, employment verification, drug-testing and a credit check. It's important to understand the laws and regulations related to appropriately using each of these tools. For example, credit checks are of limited use for most employers and have come under recent legislative scrutiny in many states so they should be used with caution - it's illegal to request credit information for certain employees and job applicants in Colorado. On the whole, background checks tend to help ensure a better quality hire by uncovering false information on resumes, reducing legal liability from negligent hiring such as hiring someone who has a propensity for doing harm. They also help increase workplace safety and security by eliminating people who might steal, have workplace accidents, act violently, etc. There are many reputable background screening vendors who can provide more guidance on the right approach for your company.

While a number of factors ultimately influence the final decision such as compensation, willingness to travel, etc. it's important to keep the entire process as objective and fair as possible. Even if someone doesn't get the job, his or her experience and perception of fairness may lead to future referrals, positive impressions and even a willingness to re-apply for future roles.



HIRE

After reading masses of resumes, using assessment tools, interviews, and references, you've finally found your top candidate. Now it's time to seal the deal and bring them on board.

Make the Offer

Before building an official offer letter make sure that all pertinent details have been discussed with the candidate. Salary negotiations should be concluded and details related to the candidate's work situation such as benefits, additional compensation, vacation days, work expectations, etc. have been reviewed and mutually agreed to. If all seems aligned, then it's a good idea to verbally offer the job to the candidate and let him or her know that an offer letter is on its way. The verbal offer should be more than just a list of terms. You should express excitement and enthusiasm for the candidate, but don't wait. The process up until this point has probably taken a lot of time, and your dream candidate may be feeling fatigued or considering other offers. Once you've decided to make an offer, act quickly so the candidate feels like the number one choice.

The Offer Letter

Writing an offer letter may be the easiest part of the entire employee selection process. There are many templates online to get you started, but it's best to stick to the basics. When writing an offer letter, you should provide the following:

- Job title
- Start date
- Whether role is exempt/non-exempt/full-time/part-time
- Salary and how it will be paid, such as bi-weekly or monthly
- Key compensation-related details such as bonus or incentive plan
- Unique benefits including additional vacation days, relocation coverage, cell phone coverage, reimbursement for home office expenses, etc.
- Job summary including who the new hire will report to, and what the primary tasks will be (go back to that job description!)

- At-will employment or similar rules based on location, or additional contingencies such as I-9s, background checks, drug screens, or confidentiality agreements
- A contact for any questions and a date by which the letter should be signed and received (usually 5 to 7 days).

What else helps at the offer stage?

A new job represents both an exciting and a stressful change for a job candidate. When providing the offer letter, include information about your company benefits and/or your employee handbook. And don't forget to personalize it and show enthusiasm for the candidate as well as empathy. Many candidates can be anxious about resigning, even if they want to leave their current jobs, so be understanding about how they feel and offer support if they need it.

Onboarding

Once your dream candidate has accepted an offer, it's no time to rest. The first 30 to 90 days is the time to make the kind of solid impression that engages him or her and confirms that you both made the right decision.

Onboarding basics

Make sure the new hire checklist is thoroughly completed – that the employee has signed certain documents, enrolled in benefits, has computer equipment and office supplies, has passwords and other security tools such as key cards, etc.

Don't forget an office tour, introductions to staff, and company training – both skills and training to understand the history, mission, etc. of the new company they've joined. While this may seem easy, missteps are frequent and can be detrimental to the early engagement of your new employees. You don't want them getting the wrong impression about how your organization operates or that they're not important enough to get all the early support they need.

Successful onboarding

Successful onboarding goes beyond the checklist. Two of the most important factors are relationships and manager involvement.

Relationships are the key to both making an employee feel welcome and accepted, and providing employees with an excellent resource for finding answers to questions that inevitably come up in the early days such as getting expenses reimbursed. If your culture isn't naturally social, it's a good idea to be proactive about selecting who is going to help your new employee get the lay of the land and introduce them to people they should know. Your new employees should feel connected, beyond their day-to-day work, so they can develop lifelong work relationships. More and more companies are using social technology to increase connectivity to other people, so you can choose to set-up onboarding groups to allow new hires to get connected before their first day on the job.

Manager involvement is also critical. Managers should be squarely responsible for new hire engagement for at least the first 90 days. They should use the data from the job profile and assessment to build a relationship with their new employee, address gaps between the job profile and the new hire's natural tendencies, and figure out what factors may help them excel. Behavioral assessment data (either gathered during the hiring process or as part of onboarding) can also be used to help a manager tailor his or her approach to more closely align with the needs of the new hire.



After 90 Days

Hiring a new employee requires a big investment, but if you've followed these steps you'll be rewarded with a great new hire who is engaged and highly productive in his or her new role.

After three months it's time to shift from onboarding to talent management – and that requires managers, HR and leaders to play a critical role in building a highly engaged workforce.



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