

eBook

The business leader's guide to building a hiring culture

Actionable guidance to help your company be ready to hire for what's next

greenhouse





Contents

Introduction 03

Part 1

Why every team should be great at hiring 04

Part 2

How to make better hiring decisions 06

Part 3

Use the right hiring resources 09

Part 4

Lean into your employer brand 11

Part 5

Make candidates your best advocates 14

Part 6

From hiring to talent making 18

Conclusion 20

Introduction

Regardless of fluctuating circumstances, people will always be the most important factor in achieving your goals. That makes your company's ability to hire and retain the right people a business necessity. It's up to leaders to uphold this belief within their companies.

This isn't a new idea. In 1996, Steve Jobs said, "I consider the most important job of someone like myself is recruiting."

Business plans are always subject to change, and economic instability and market changes may signal that it's time for your business to make some adjustments. Your hiring strategy should be equally agile – it's often the recruiting team that experiences the impact of change before other parts of the company.

If you're in a phase of low or slow hiring, or hiring isn't an immediate business priority, this time presents an opportunity to focus on getting everyone in the company aligned on the importance of hiring. A low-volume hiring period is the perfect time to do foundational work on your hiring strategy. By using a strategic approach and focusing on key areas now, you'll be ready to hit the ground running when the situation changes.

In this guide, we'll walk you through six areas of focus to improve your overall approach to hiring. We'll also share why every team should become great at hiring, along with a foundational look at how you can take your company from good to great.

Why every team should be great at hiring



Maybe you're not on the recruiting team. You might not even interact with your recruiting or HR team day to day. Maybe you're a business leader or a hiring manager with business goals you're accountable for. Hiring is a major part of how you will deliver on those goals.

There's no denying that business problems are people problems: [48% of business leaders surveyed in the Workplace Intelligence Report](#) feel that talent-related challenges are their most important business concerns.

Whether you're leading finance, engineering, product, sales, marketing, legal or accounting, the bottom line is that hiring is your department. It is your responsibility. No matter your role, you influence the people your

company hires, whether you're the person selecting new employees, providing a referral, sitting in on an interview or making the final offer decision. In other words, you don't have to be on the recruiting team to influence hiring.

Why care about great hiring? In the most successful companies, hiring is a strategic function that extends far beyond the tactical steps of creating a role, searching for the right candidates and hiring someone. In this data-driven era, who you're hiring can make or break your company. Consider the pain you feel when a high-priority role isn't filled quickly or doesn't get offered to the right person: work piles up, deadlines are pushed and goals can be negatively impacted. It's a fact: hiring is the single most important factor impacting your ability to achieve your goals.

Another key element that sometimes gets overlooked is the importance of alignment throughout the entire company. Set the expectation that hiring is everyone's job, and that it's a process that requires just as much rigor as finance and other important functions.

By consistently and efficiently hiring the right candidates for the right roles, your company will become more agile, more innovative and more competitive. It's important to be confident in each and every hire you make so you can focus on what's next for your business. That's why every team – not just the recruiting team – should become great at hiring.



How to make better hiring decisions



You wouldn't make a marketing plan or sales revenue goal without thinking about the data and process that drive it. The same goes for your hiring decisions. When it comes to making better hiring decisions, there's a number of factors you need to master in order to create an excellent process. The first thing is to think about it as just that, a process. A rigorous, repeatable process. A detailed hiring process is transparent, built with a foundation of strong interview questions. By doing so, you'll put your team in a better position for making smarter hiring decisions.

It comes down to understanding and embracing structured hiring practices.

Structured hiring is the approach that ensures hiring team alignment on what's necessary to fill a role successfully. Structured hiring helps you define the role, requirements, experience and attributes a successful candidate needs to have – before a job is opened. It also provides a consistent and fair interviewing experience for everyone involved.



The core tenets of a structured hiring approach are:

The ideal candidate is defined by the business objectives of the job

All candidates are assessed using a deliberate process and rubric

Hiring decisions are based on data and evidence, not feelings or whims

Designing a solid structured hiring process takes time and collaboration. A well-thought-out process is important, whether you're hiring for essential roles only, looking to quickly fill important gaps, managing a massive influx of new candidates or preparing to build teams back up. When you have a repeatable structured hiring process, you can be confident that every candidate is being evaluated against the same predefined framework. That will ultimately result in your team making more consistent, data-driven decisions. When you have a consistent flow of data and can pinpoint what's going well, what isn't and where you may need to make adjustments in your hiring process, you have the power to make changes that can help you hire better, hire faster and bring the right people into your team. To get better data, you have to prioritize a process that enables your team to collect clean, accurate data that reflects what's really going on in your process.

Documenting a structured hiring process – which includes creating repeatable templates and building out robust interview kits – will prepare your team to host excellent interviews, providing a great interviewing experience for everyone. And these benefits extend far beyond the recruiting team.

For hiring managers and department heads as well as executives, having an organized process built on data and structure will make you more prepared, informed and engaged. When hiring managers are prepared for their interviews and have partnered with their recruiting counterparts

to create a detailed interview scorecard, they will have more engaging discussions that also bring out insightful responses from candidates.

An integral part of interview kits, [scorecards](#) ensure interviewers won't overlap and ask redundant questions, and they can also record their responses and reference them later on in the decision-making process. By approaching the interview process this way, your company will develop a more robust profile of each candidate and reduce unconscious bias. When you can look back at a concrete account of what was said in the interview, you can reference specific anecdotes and details to help you make the most informed decision, rather than relying on recall or gut feelings.

We've created [the framework for your company to design a structured interview process](#). It may seem like common sense, but without it, processes can veer off track, inviting chaos and unconscious bias. Take the time to do the foundational work to set up a structured hiring process – it will pay off in the long run as you improve your candidate experience, empower all your employees to become more aligned on the importance of hiring and make data-driven hiring decisions every time.

Your recruiting team should work directly with hiring teams to execute this process and build a better experience for everyone involved. Even if your team doesn't currently have any open roles, you can create template jobs in your applicant tracking system (ATS) for each department that are representative of a typical flow. Enable your recruiting team to reference our practical guide, [Maintaining a hiring mindset](#), which outlines the six-step process.

Use the right hiring resources



A slowdown or a hiring freeze is a good time to refresh the internal training resources for everyone in the company. It's also an opportunity to kick off internal training and recruiting enablement to test out new material, implement new processes and get teams aligned on the way hiring should be done at your company.

Trainings

It's easy to overlook the fact that all employees should be trained to interview. Consider adding basic interview training to your new hire onboarding program to drive home the importance of a hiring culture, right from the beginning of their experience working at your company.

Make sure every user group at your organization is trained. Is there an executive interview in final rounds? Develop and host executive interview training for everyone in that cohort. Has your culture or mission been refined recently? Be sure to re-train all employees so everyone is able to step in as an interviewer in culture-add interviews.

At Greenhouse, we emphasize a collaborative approach throughout the organization. Work with your people team to train all new hires and team members to think like Talent Makers™ from day one. That means looking at hiring as a strategic function that's vital to business success.

A Talent Maker is a leader who prioritizes hiring. These leaders understand that hiring is a key factor in achieving business goals.



Conduct training sessions and plan for ongoing support

Be sure to record and document all training. Save company-specific structured hiring and recruiting resources in your internal learning management platform or company wiki, and communicate to everyone where they can access these tools.

[Use this guide on enabling structured hiring success](#) as a jumping-off point. It can be used as inspiration for creating your own detailed curriculum for onboarding new users to your structured hiring workflows – Greenhouse or otherwise.

Lean into your employer brand



Every company has a unique culture that sets them apart from the rest. It's no secret that employer branding is an increasingly important function not just for talent acquisition and recruiting, but for the business as a whole. Developing a memorable employer brand will help keep your company top of mind for future applicants and help you retain the top performers within your organization.

Strategic ideas for you and your company to consider evaluating and implementing now:

[Get recognized with culture and workplace awards](#)

From Inc. Magazine's Best Workplaces and Fortune's Great Places to Work to employee review sites, there are a number of accolades your company can apply for to get recognized for your culture and workplace excellence every year. Engage your employees to authentically respond to any submissions that require surveys or reviews, and share any rankings or awards won on your website, in your recruiting marketing materials and on social media.



Showcase diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I)

One of the many valuable benefits of an effective talent brand is highlighting the diversity of skill sets, backgrounds and identities on a given team and across your business as a whole. Doing so gives candidates an authentic look at your company. You can do this in a number of ways. Provide employee testimonials on your career page so candidates can get an at-a-glance feel for what it's like to work at your company. You can also encourage hiring managers to share posts on LinkedIn about what it's like to work in their respective teams.

Leverage your best advocates as spokespeople (your employees)

Whatever your industry, your employees are your best source of brand advocacy. Train and use these folks for more than company reviews. Enable them with packaged social posts that share insights about what it's like to work in your organization, the latest thought leadership about your sector and even some of those workplace awards you may have won.

Highlight your employer brand and talent brand everywhere

Definitions and distinctions

- Employer brand – the story you shape and share about your company as a workplace
- Talent brand – bringing your company's workplace to life directly through the voices of your people

Beyond managing your Glassdoor and Comparably pages, there's a lot you can do to bring your company's talent brand to life online. Feature videos, photos and testimonials of your employees on your company's website, LinkedIn and social media pages, via your blog articles and even for media outlets. Actively engage your team in creating content to feature your culture and workplace, [such as this example in TechRepublic](#) about work-from-home office setups.

Engaging employees

Your talent brand may attract quality candidates who want to do their best work at your company. But once they're in, it's important to live up to your mission and external brand, internally. Survey your employees on a regular basis to get feedback on your culture. Encourage dialogue and participation through culture committees, employee resource groups and

3 tips for distinguishing your brand

Get social

Include links to your company's social media profiles in your signature and your marketing to let candidates explore your brand in a less formal way.

Share recent awards and accomplishments

Include a sentence in the footer of your candidate and prospect emails highlighting any recent milestones and accolades.

Tap into your employees' experiences

Let candidates get to know your culture and what it's like to work on different teams by hearing directly from current employees. Share written testimonials, video interviews and blog posts that include direct anecdotes and quotes.

more. Make sure that actions and words align so that when it comes time to fill out a survey for a workplace award, for example, your employees understand and believe in your mission and know that it is indeed a great place to work.

Tactical ideas for your recruiting team:

Approach events collaboratively

Partner with your recruiting team to understand their recruiting events strategy and encourage your team to attend these hiring-related events. A conversation with someone from the hiring team can be the most memorable kind of talent branding for a candidate to experience, especially if you're looking to fill difficult roles like engineering. The hiring manager's team can provide detailed information on what it's like to work within their specific team on a personal level. Use [a recruiting events app](#) so your recruiters and hiring team can focus on engaging prospects in thoughtful conversation at in-person events rather than squandering time manually gathering resume information.

Brand your recruiting emails

Make a great impression by showing candidates you care. [Including branded visuals in your email templates](#) can enhance your candidates' experience while promoting your employer brand.

Customize your application confirmation page

All candidates have the potential to become brand advocates for you. Make every experience a candidate has with your company a great one. [Customize your application confirmation page](#) to include blog posts, videos and articles that inform and engage candidates with an authentic reflection of your brand.

Highlight your employer brand

Create custom content to educate candidates on your employer brand. Consider changing and/or updating your [Greenhouse job board integration](#) with your external career page to allow for even more flexibility and customization.



Make candidates your best advocates

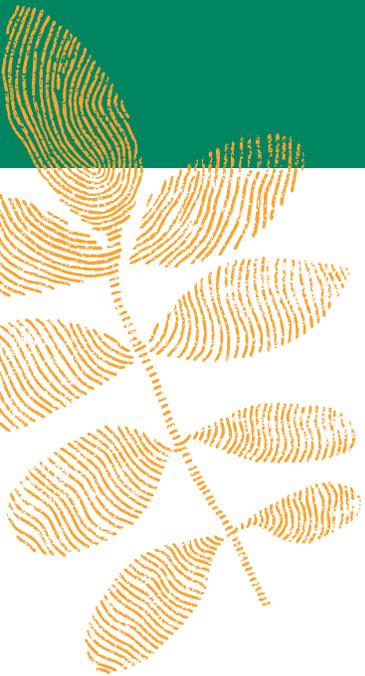


The most innovative and successful companies today know there's a big difference between good and great hiring. For one thing, these companies are often the most competitive in their hiring strategies (they know top talent is up to **8x more productive** than the average) and, for another, they recognize how great hiring affects the creation of [employee lifetime value \(ELTV\)](#).

By now you recognize that improving the candidate experience should matter to the entire company. It's frustrating to lose a top candidate to a competitor within any interview stage due to a poor candidate experience. "Was it something we said? Or did?" The answer is likely yes. Some businesses have given up hope that they can even compete in the war for talent with stakes that high. According to McKinsey, 82% of companies don't believe they recruit highly talented people and for companies that do believe so, only 7% think they can keep them. If a company's view is that only one department should be focused on providing the type of candidate experience that top talent expects, it's easy to see where the lines are drawn.

“The hiring process itself is a major factor in how people form their impressions of most companies. If a candidate has a good experience during your hiring process, you’ll improve your hiring brand, making it easier to get great candidates who are excited about working for you.”

Daniel Chait
CEO and Co-founder of Greenhouse



Candidates can also become brand advocates. The way a person interacts with your brand can have a truly lasting effect. Creating meaningful relationships with active and prospective candidates can be a huge differentiator in your long-term recruiting efforts. Use a CRM tool to help you design a process that takes intentional steps toward keeping your most valuable assets – your talent pools – engaged during a hiring slowdown.

With Greenhouse CRM, for example, users can:

[Build out prospect pools](#)

Segment prospects into strategic groups and create communication strategies that provide relevant marketing and brand information to help prospects stay connected to your company.

[Create prospect posts](#)

Use prospect posts to collect applications from those who are interested in your company even if you’re not actively hiring and build a pool of talent to source from for future openings. At Greenhouse, our internal recruiting team built prospect posts for each department within the company so that prospects can self-select which department(s) they’re most interested in learning more about.

[Action prospects with reminders](#)

Managing next steps for multiple prospects across different pools and stages can be a challenge. Use reminders to manage tasks for nurturing prospect relationships.

[Update your referral program](#)

Take advantage of the advocates you already have. Your current employees know your employer brand better than anyone else. Make it easy for them to refer candidates to help build and strengthen your talent pools.

For more inspiration and CRM best practices, [check out our guide on common CRM use cases](#).

Building a positive candidate experience that in turn creates brand advocates doesn't just happen – it's a strategic function of great hiring. In a world where 75% of job seekers interact with an employer's brand before they even submit their application, every department can and should contribute. And with today's advanced planning and scheduling tools, informational resources and structured hiring systems, no one has to add more to their already lengthy to-do lists to do so.





Examples of CRM prospect pools

Use prospect pools to organize prospects based on how you plan to communicate with and evaluate them for future roles. Here are a couple of examples to get you started.

Talent community

Who are they?

Prospects who have expressed interest in your company and have qualifications and skill sets that could be a fit for future roles.

How do you organize them?

Create a pool or multiple pools based on where the candidate came from and how specific you want your nurture emails to be (for example, an engineering talent pool might get different content than a marketing talent pool).

Within the various pools, you might have stages such as “monthly nurture,” “quarterly nurture” and “in discussion” depending on how high touch you’d like your engagement to be with that particular audience.

What to do with them

Send a regular newsletter with new job openings, company updates and engaging content (new company awards, PR mentions, published eBooks/blogs, product launches, etc.).

If/when a prospect responds showing interest in a specific job, move them to the “in discussion” stage in the pool.

Silver medalists

Who are they?

Silver medalists are candidates who did well in the interview process but didn’t get hired – maybe it was a matter of bad timing, not the right role, budget or a particularly competitive hiring class. These are desirable individuals you want to keep warm in your CRM database so that you can easily reach out to them in the future.

How do you organize them?

Simply create a prospect pool called “silver medalists” in your CRM and start adding prospects.

What to do with them

Send silver medalists a regular nurture email to keep your relationship warm and your company top of mind.

When opening a new job, refer to your silver medalists pool before having your recruiters source externally. This move could help you reduce both time-to-hire and cost-per-hire (reducing agency spend and internal spend) and bring in people that your company has already vetted in the past

- When you reduce your time-to-hire, you’re also reducing the time it takes new hires to ramp up and become productive. That means they’re hitting their objectives faster, which directly translates into business success.

From hiring to talent making



At Greenhouse, we set out to understand why some business leaders find making progress in attracting, hiring and retaining great people so challenging. We talked to leaders throughout their organizations — heads of sales and engineering as well as people team leaders — and started to see clear patterns separating the great from the merely good when it comes to hiring practices.

Unsurprisingly, we found that the most successful companies have leaders who put talent at the core of their business. They understand that structured hiring practices are the foundation of great hiring and that every single employee has a responsibility to uphold a hiring mindset. The leaders who get it are invaluable to their companies. We call them [Talent Makers](#).

A Talent Maker is a leader who prioritizes hiring. Great hiring happens when your business strategy and talent strategy are in alignment. When recruiters and people teams aren't siloed and everyone throughout the company is all in on finding great people and creating an environment where they can do the best work of their careers, that's when hiring becomes talent making.

Great hiring needs advocacy. There are three key roles every Talent Maker needs to fulfill:

Talent leader

A talent leader builds a culture of hiring, making it a priority for the whole company.

Talent magnet

A talent magnet creates an environment that attracts great talent.

Talent partner

A talent partner ensures everyone has the best support and tools to succeed.

We've published our [Talent Maker primer](#) and additional resources on our hub to help business leaders learn more about what it takes to elevate their hiring practices from “good enough” to “excellent” and become Talent Makers.

Talent making comes alive when business leaders integrate their recruiting team into their team workflows as much as possible. What does that look like? In addition to making hiring a priority, invite recruiters to team meetings and involve them in discussions around business strategy. That way, they'll be better aligned and aware of hiring managers' needs and, as a result, communicate in a more compelling and informed way with candidates. It may also help hiring managers recognize the benefit of teamwork in hiring – all the best practices we've outlined in this eBook are representative of initiatives that leaders and recruiting partners can drive together. Encourage your recruiting team and leaders alike to think of hiring as a valuable business function to work on together.

Conclusion

High-performing companies achieve the goals they set out for themselves by embracing hiring as an important business capability. Even during periods of low hiring volume and hiring freezes, your recruiting team, hiring managers and leaders can be productive and lay the foundation for a smarter approach to how your company hires. Now is the right time to consider the long-term benefits of developing a strong structured hiring process.

Treat hiring and talent making as ongoing company goals. Work with recruiters as talent partners to ensure the process of finding, hiring and onboarding new team members will bring in the right people to help you achieve your goals and shape your company and culture.

Being great at hiring is integral to business success. When you know how to find and hire the right people for your team and your business, you'll be on your way to confidently taking on whatever is next for your company.



greenhouse

Greenhouse is *the* hiring software company.
We help businesses be great at hiring through
our powerful hiring approach, complete suite of
software and services, and large partner ecosystem –
so businesses can hire for what's next.

To learn more, visit
greenhouse.io