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BUSINESS INSIGHTS

The Ultimate Tips for Hiring Engineering Talent Fast

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A complete guide on how to set up a structured interview process, how to use data in recruitment, and more tips for interviewing tech talent.

Recruitment and hiring processes can be long and exhausting. The good news is that the rapid tech innovation has brought numerous recruitment platforms and analytical tools that can speed up the recruitment process, pull out valuable data, and make the entire process more efficient.

When hiring tech talent, you need a structured hiring process that will help you identify high-quality candidates that will fit your company's culture. The process should be straightforward and fast. Otherwise, your perfect fit may accept another offer, and you'll need to start the process all over again.

This in-depth guide will help you create a structured interview process, and teach you how to use data in the recruitment process. Additionally, it provides valuable tips on interviewing tech talent.

Reduce Hiring Time by Collecting the Right Data

During the last few years, hiring and recruiting have changed drastically. Traditional strategies used to rely on intuition and good fortune, but now everything relies on data—especially if you are hunting for the top tech talent.

Thanks to the rapid technological innovations, plenty of recruitment platforms and analytical tools can now deliver a data-driven recruitment process.

This type of recruitment uses predictive analytics that helps recruiters make the right talent decision based on data. Moreover, data-driven recruitment makes the hiring process more efficient and saves you from wasting time and money.

How Data Helps in Hiring Tech Talent Fast

Using the right hiring metrics will help you to collect the right data, and having the right data in the recruitment process helps you find the right fit for a shorter time.

Filling out the position you need with the perfect talent as soon as possible is the dream of every HR and recruitment professional. Data-driven recruitment can help you achieve that. Plus, it will offer some extra perks such as:

Saving Costs

The right data shows you where you have found the most qualified candidates. Once you have identified your perfect sourcing channel, you can allocate the budget only to that channel. In this way, you won't spend extra on channels that don't bring you anything.

Increased Hiring Efficiency

The data can show you the right amount of exchanged emails between your hiring team and the candidates, so you will be able to identify some specific stages that can help you speed up the time-to-hire. Plus, this can help you in setting up a more structured interview process.

Hiring Forecast

Tracking all metrics will show you how many applications you need to make the right hire. If you are behind, you can easily re-publish, re-advertise, or try sourcing the role again.

How to Incorporate Data into the Recruitment Process

There are several steps you can take to implement data into recruitment.

Setting up the Right Metrics

If you want to incorporate data into your hiring process, first, you need to set up the right metrics. Below is a list of the most common metrics that companies use to calculate the effectiveness of the hiring process:

- **Time-to-hire.** It is the total time needed for a prospective applicant from applying until they accept the job offer. To calculate the time-to-hire, you need to subtract the day when the applicant entered the pipeline from the day they accepted the offer.

  Time-to-hire= Day applicant accepts the offer - Day applicant entered the pipeline

- **Cost-per-hire.** It is the total cost of bringing the new employee to the company. This cost includes all expenses of the recruitment process such as sourcing, onboarding, administrative costs, recruitment ads, etc. To calculate the cost-per-hire you need to sum up all included costs for the recruitment process and divide it by the number of total hires in a specific period.

  Cost-per-hire= (total internal + external recruiting costs) / total number of hires in a specific time frame

- **Source of hire.** It is the percentage of overall hires entered in the talent pipeline from each recruiting channel.
- **Offer acceptance rate.** It is the percentage of accepted offers. To calculate OAR, we need to divide the number of applicants who accept an offer by the number of offers extended to applicants.
- **New hire turnover.** It is the number of employees who leave the company within their first year on the job.

Collecting Data in the Right Way

Collecting data is definitely a hard and time-consuming process. To make it seamless, you may use an applicant tracking system (ATS), which is an automated tracking system that helps recruiters to track communication with applicants, schedule interviews, and screen applicants. These systems help recruiters to improve overall recruiting, hiring, and onboarding processes by the data they collect. The data can help you identify the source from which the most applicants came. When you have a future position to fill, you will be able to relocate more budget to that source and won't use the extra budget on sources that don't bring you any applicants.

Some of the applicant tracking systems are capable of creating and delivering reports. For instance, Talentcare has several actionable reports built in their ATS, including candidate source reports, regional manager reports, and turnover reports.

Automate as much as you can. Manual collecting takes a lot of time, and many errors can be made in the process. Also, you may consider gathering data from other tools that you use. For instance, gather conversion rates from Google Analytics, or use LinkedIn Talent solutions that generate job posting analytics and reports.

The job reports are available on LinkedIn Recruiter and LinkedIn Recruiter Lite. These reports provide insights into your job posts' performance to help you improve your recruitment strategy. The reports generate data on daily unique member job view, unique member job applies, view to apply rate, and completed application.

Acting on the Data

Once you have set up the metrics and collected the data, it is important to act on it. How can you do this? First of all, identify the issues you have, and try to find solutions for them. Some of the challenges you may face include:

- **Long time-to-hire.** If you need more time to hire, then this may take a toll on your business in the long run. To make this time shorter, improve the screening process by setting up qualifying questions on your application form. If your screening process is good, you may need to work on the interviews. Try to understand the underlying issue here and work on optimizing the process so you can speed up the time-to-hire.
- **Low Acceptance Rates.** If your perfect candidates reject your offer and overall acceptance rates are low, you will face higher costs, and positions will remain unfulfilled for longer. How can you turn the tables on this? First, consider offering a competitive salary and developing a good benefits program. Consider rewriting the job description. Maybe something was not clear there. Also, ensure that every candidate has a positive experience. Some things to include here are getting back to them on time and making them comfortable during the interviews.
- **High New Hire Turnover.** New hire turnover shows the number of employees leaving shortly after being hired. To ensure that the employee stays longer,

be sure that you have clearly communicated the duties, responsibilities, and performance expectations about the job before sending your offer. Also, make sure that your onboarding process is effective. Your new hires should feel welcomed and that they are given opportunities to do meaningful work at the very beginning.

These are only a few steps to cover when you implement data in your recruitment process. Once you establish your metrics and analyze the data, you'd be able to understand what are the main issues your organization faces when hiring and find the best solution.

The Data Has Its Limits

Keep in mind that data has its perks, but it also has limitations. The data won't tell you why or how something went wrong. You can get in-depth analysis and insights into various metrics, but you still need to identify when something went wrong and act on it. Do your best to interpret your own findings; understand what part of the process performs well and where you might have a problem.

Another thing to keep in mind is that data isn't always objective. If you collect data manually, be prepared that your team might make mistakes in the things they grade. Because of this, it is always a good idea to use software and automate wherever you can.

Even if your hiring team still makes decisions based on intuition, they will find data as a strong ally. Data is here to help them improve their recruitment process and overall performance. Mixing data with hire intuition may reduce the hiring time and enhance the quality of new hires enormously.

> **IMPORTANT**
> The rapid technological innovation changed hiring and recruiting drastically by bringing numerous recruitment platforms and analytical tools that can deliver reliable data in the recruitment process. Data-drive recruitment is important especially if you are hunting for the top tech talent since it is more efficient, and saves costs and time.

How to Set a Structured Hiring Process

When it comes to hiring, all companies want the same thing:

To find talented individuals who will perform well, be a great cultural fit, and stay with the company long-term.

Unfortunately, it's easier said than done.

In fact, hiring is an exhausting process. It costs money, it can drag on for weeks, and there's always the risk of hiring the wrong candidate.

That's why it's critical to have a structured hiring process that will help you speed up the entire process by identifying high-quality candidates that will be a great fit for your company.

By implementing a structured hiring process, the benefits will be numerous. You'll likely see improvements in terms of new hire quality and improved retention rates. On the plus side, you'll manage to hire the right people for the right roles more rapidly and cost-effectively.

If you want to learn more about setting a structured hiring process at your company, continue reading.

The Hiring Process Timeline With Three Phases

The typical hiring process that many companies implement involves three stages, starting from application review and conducting interviews and ending with an offer of employment.

We'll dive deeper into the three phases and provide expert tips to help you identify and hire high-quality talent.

Let's begin!

Phase 1 (First Half of Week One) - Minimum Qualifications Screening and Application Review

Minimum qualifications screening
It's a common practice for candidates to apply for a job position even if they don't possess the minimum qualifications listed on the job ad. Consider scanning their resumes to see if they possess or lack the basic capabilities required for the job. For instance, if one of the requirements was "At least five years of experience working with PHP" and the candidate has only two years of experience, that's a red flag, and you can safely remove them from the consideration list.

Application review
This stage determines which candidates will make it to the next phase of the interview process.

Now that you have a list of all the candidates that meet the basic qualifications for the job, it's time to dive deeper into their applications.

Here are some best practices when it comes to reviewing applications for technical roles:

- Review the candidate's work experience and whether their experience would be applicable to the open position. Pay attention to the length of time in each position, any promotions, and reasons for leaving each position (ask them during the interview).
- Note any gaps in employment and ask the candidate to explain them during the interview.
- Look at their educational background. If you have any preferred educational level, then this is critical. If not, skip this step.
- See if the candidate has the specific skills you're looking for that are critical for the job position. For instance, if you're hiring for a PHP development position, you might be looking for specific skills like experience with SQL databases, a good understanding of OOP and SOLID, and knowledge of Laravel or Symfony.
- Divide resumes into three groups: 1) resumes that match the job requirements and qualify for an interview; 2) those that meet some requirements and may be given a chance; and 3) those that do not meet the requirements.
- By the time you're done reviewing applications, you should have eliminated one-third of all applicants.

Phase 2 (From Second Half of Week 1 to First Half of Week 2) - Conducting Interviews

Once you identify which candidates meet the job's requirements, it's time to assess their technical and soft skills in greater detail by inviting them for interviews. Assessing both technical and soft skills is essential, especially if you're hiring for a higher-tech role.

Remember: the candidate will be assessing the interview as well. If they have a negative experience, they won't think twice about jumping ship, so make sure you leave a good impression.

Although every company and role is different, consider holding at least two separate interviews. For instance, the first interview will serve as an opportunity to discuss the candidate's resume and assess their soft skills, like communication and teamwork skills. The second will focus more on the technical aspects of the job.

Interview #1 with an HR representative
Schedule a Zoom call (or invite the candidate on-site if you have a physical office) to learn more about them. This is the time to go over any red flags you noticed from the candidate's resume, like large gaps in employment or switching jobs too often. Probe into these issues to learn whether it's an actual reg flag or a false alarm.

This is also an opportunity to evaluate a person's communication skills and identify the type of environment the engineer will thrive in. Once the interview ends, write down your impressions. What did you like about the candidate, and what did you dislike? This will help you arrive at a final hiring decision.

Interview #2 with a Tech Expert
The next step in the interview process is to assess the candidate's technical skills. This interview is usually led by someone who is an expert in their field. For instance, if you're hiring for a JavaScript developer, you'd either need a Senior JavaScript Engineer to conduct the interview and see how skilled the candidate is with the specific technology. Or, you could have a Senior Engineer experienced with any tech stack who'd assess the overall engineering capacity of the candidate.

Here are a few other best practices to bear in mind:

- Have a list of interview questions ready at hand to help you speed up the interview process and have an easier time identifying great developers.
- Try pair programming, as it's an excellent approach for testing tech skills. It's also an excellent opportunity to test a candidate's communication and collaboration skills. Tools like Tuple and CodeAnywhere that are explicitly

designed for remote code interviews can help you conduct effective pair programming exercises.

- Let the candidate ask questions about the position and company. Giving them the opportunity to speak is also a chance to see what matters to them and then use this information when making an offer. Let the candidate have at least 20%-40% of the conversation.

Phase 3 (Second Half of Week 2) - Reference Check

Phase 3 of the hiring process involves conducting reference checks to learn more about a candidate's previous work experience and their employer's feedback.

A good practice is to conduct reference checks for only the top candidates that managed to impress you. Reference checks can be a great opportunity to learn more about a candidate's strengths and limitations so that you know how to support them in their role once they join the company.

Here are a few best practices to help you conduct more effective reference checks:

- Before you reach out to the referrer, ask for feedback from everyone in your company who interviewed the candidate. Ask them what they liked about the candidate and what they disliked, as well as what they want to know more about or follow up on. This will help you develop a list of questions to ask the referrer.

- If you're tight with time, you can always contact the referrer by mail. However, remember that phone calls can give you a more detailed answer about the candidate's strengths and weaknesses.

- Describe the specific job position the candidate is about to take on and ask the reference if they have seen the candidate perform in similar circumstances.

- Ask more specific, open-ended questions. For example, questions like "What can you tell me about Jonah" are very broad and tend to elicit vague answers.

- Pay attention to what the referee is saying without interrupting them or enforcing the answer you want to hear.

Final Steps (Third Week) - Offer of Employment and Onboarding

Offer of employment
The next step in the hiring process is extending an offer of employment.

Here are a few best practices:

- Keep it simple and straightforward. Get in touch with the candidate and say, “We’re excited to offer you a position as a Senior Laravel Developer at [name of company].”
- Once you extend the offer, make sure you maintain regular contact with the candidate. A good practice is to get in touch every 2-3 days to keep them in the loop. A short email or call would do the trick.
- Keep in mind that many candidates won’t be just looking for a competitive salary. They would also be interested in additional perks like flexibility at work, time away programs, health benefits, mental health programs, etc. If you’re offering some of these perks at your company, make sure the candidate knows this.

Onboarding

Once the candidate accepts your offer of employment, the onboarding process may begin. Proper onboarding can be critical and can influence the new hire’s productivity and satisfaction with the job. In fact, some studies show that organizations with a strong onboarding process improve new hire retention by 82% and productivity by over 70%.

Similar to how you can benefit from a structured hiring process, there are also many advantages to following a structured onboarding process. Here are a few tips:

- Think about what the new hire should learn or receive before their first day. For instance, have a welcome meeting (in-person or on Zoom) to greet the new hire and inform them of things like their tasks for the first few weeks at work, normal working hours, your coding standards, the communication and collaboration tools you’ll be using, etc. This is also a great time to present the company’s values, mission, and vision if you haven’t done it already
- If there’s any paperwork to be signed, send it over before their start date. Nobody wants to spend their first day at work signing papers. You can use e-signature tools like HelloSign and DocuSign to speed up the process.
- If you’re planning on sending the new hire equipment like a laptop, plan this beforehand.
- Share login details and invitations to give the new hire access to your project management systems, chat apps, email, learning management systems, etc.
- Make the new hire feel welcome by introducing them to the team. This can

happen on a group video call, for instance. Another idea is to send a new hire announcement on Slack.

- Consider assigning a buddy who will be the new hire's go-to person for everything work and culture-related for at least two months.
- Don't forget to hold regular one-on-one meetings where you'll share feedback, discuss difficulties, celebrate milestones, and more.

> **IMPORTANT**
> It's critical to establish a structured hiring process that will help you speed up the entire process by identifying qualified candidates that will be a great fit for your company.

Tips For Interviewing Tech Talent

Tech interviews are a delicate endeavor. Not only do candidates need to possess good technical skills, but soft skills are also critical, especially if you're hiring for a higher-tech role—not to mention the importance of company culture fit.

What's more, the candidate will also be assessing your interview process. High-quality software engineers are in high demand, and they won't think twice about turning down your offer if they have a bad candidate experience.

In this chapter, we'll give a few tips for accurately assessing a candidate's technical aptitude and overall fit. You'll learn what you have to do before the interview, how to impress the candidate, and what's the first thing you have to do once the interview ends.

Prepare for the interview

Similar to how candidates prepare for interviews, you, as the interviewer, should also come prepared. Give yourself a few minutes to prepare for the interview to ensure everything goes well. Here are some tips:

- Make sure you know the role you're interviewing for. Is it a junior role or a senior role? If you lack details about the position, discuss this with the hiring manager.
- Review the interviewee's CV to learn more about their experience. Pay attention to their experience in the last 2-3 years.
- See if everything works well on the logistics side of things. Double-check to see if you sent the interview invitation at the right email address and at the right hour. Check your internet connection and setup (microphone, camera, etc.)

Have a thorough, standard interviewing process

Before we dive into what to do (and what not to do) when interviewing engineers remotely, it's important to note that you need a thorough, standard interviewing process. A standardized interviewing process will help you arrive at more meaningful conclusions.

At Adeva, we have three different steps, each of them used to evaluate something specific.

- Pre-qualification call: we schedule a Zoom call to understand more about each engineer. For us, evaluating a person's communication skills is imperative and identifying what type of environment an engineer will thrive in.
- Skills evaluation: the next step in our process is to make sure the engineer is a top-notch candidate in terms of skills. In this step, we discuss best practices in software development, code design and architecture, as well as specifics about the chosen tech stack.
- Company culture check: the third step of the interviewing process is conducted by the client to identify whether the engineer fits their company culture. It can be a bad idea to put a person with a startup mindset in an enterprise culture when things are slower. Or the other way around.

Consider pair programming interviews

Pair programming is an excellent approach for testing tech skills. It's also a great opportunity to test a candidate's communication and collaboration skills.

Zoom, Google Hangouts, or any other video-conferencing tool with a screen-sharing option would do. You can also use many collaborative coding tools to conduct a pair programming interview, like Visual Studio Live Share and CodeTogether. These tools let users edit code, provide input, and test code live on the platform.

Have a list of questions ready to use

Having a list of interview questions ready at hand will help you speed up the interview process and have an easier time identifying great developers. If you're interviewing candidates with different skillsets, such as front-end developers and back-end developers, make sure you have questions prepared for each technology.

To help you with this, we have prepared software developer interview questions for various technologies that can help you hire top software developers.

Let the candidate ask questions

Many interviewers make the terrible mistake of hijacking the conversation without even leaving room for the candidate to ask questions themselves.

But here's the harsh truth: high-quality developers are wanted in many places. Chances are, they're interviewing at multiple companies at the same time, weighing their options. You may think you're interviewing them, but they're also interviewing you.

With that in mind, consider letting the candidate ask questions about the position and company. They probably have many questions they want to ask you if you give them a chance. Letting them speak is also an opportunity to see what matters to them and then use this information when making an offer.

Set your candidate up for success

Candidate experience is critical. As we mentioned earlier, candidates are also assessing your company to see if it's a good fit for them. The candidate will move on to other opportunities if you leave an impression you're disorganized.

This brings us to the next tip: set your candidate up for success. For instance, consider sending them tips on preparing for a remote interview. Maybe this is the first time they're interviewing on Zoom, and they're overwhelmed with anxiety.

Inform them of your interview process so candidates know what to expect. Consider letting them know how long the interview will last, who will conduct the interview, whether there'll be any breaks during the process, etc.

Doing so will make them feel like you're rooting for them to succeed. Make sure you do this with all of your candidates.

Sell your company

The best engineers aren't just looking for competitive salaries. They're also interested in other benefits like flexibility at work, time away programs, health benefits, mental health programs, etc. If you're offering some of these perks at your company, make sure the candidate knows this.

At Adeva, we offer employee benefits such as flexible working hours and working from home options, private medical coverage, fitness reimbursement, parental leave, and unlimited time off. We absolutely mention these perks when hiring new talent. Consider doing the same to attract the best tech talent.

Write down impressions immediately

Immediately after the interview ends, write down your impressions about the candidate — what you liked and disliked. For example, you might write down how you liked their critical thinking skills but are skeptical about their communication skills. This is critical if you want to avoid being swayed by the impressions of somebody else.

This should help you form an opinion about the candidate: should you hire them or not? At the end of the interview you should know whether the candidate is:

- A strong hire: they demonstrated exceptional skills overall.

- A good hire: the candidate did well at the interview, but there are some things that could have been better.
- A no-hire: the candidate didn't manage to impress you, but you're willing to give them a second chance.
- A strong no-hire: the candidate is definitely not a good fit for the job.

Bonus tip: Let someone with advanced tech knowledge interview senior developers

Senior developers possess the ability to write exceptional code, design systems that are easy to maintain, clearly and efficiently communicate with people, mentor other developers, etc. Some of them also possess great leadership skills, making them great team leaders.

Some of these skills are very delicate. Someone with a similar knowledge must determine whether the candidate has what it takes to take on such a serious and responsibility-heavy role. If you have someone on your team with advanced tech knowledge, consider having them lead the interview. They're the best judge at determining whether the candidate is a good fit. They'll know the right questions to ask and notice red flags the moment they arise.

> **NOTE**
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> To avoid all the hassle and make the recruitment and hiring process easier, make sure to check Adeva. We're a global talent network that connects high-scale organizations with distributed software tech talent across the world. You could hire as fast as 2 weeks, scale up and down as needed, and work with exceptional talent.

Conclusion

In this guide, we offered a few valuable tips for how to incorporate data into your recruitment process. We looked at how you can reduce your hiring time and make the right talent decisions by collecting the right data.

The second part of the guide focused on setting up a more structured interview process, a vital component of identifying and hiring the best candidates for your company. We proposed a hiring process timeline with three phases covering everything from screening applications and conducting technical interviews to extending an offer.

The final part of the guide explored the best practices for interviewing technical candidates. Considering tech interviews are a delicate endeavor, they require a well-thought approach. We talked about what you have to do before the interview, how to impress candidates, and what's the first thing you have to do once the interview ends.

Hopefully, this extensive guide will help you fine-tune your interview process and hire the best candidates in the shortest time possible who will stay with you in the long term.

> **NOTE**
>
> This is the second part of the three-part guide "The Ultimate Playbook for Hiring Software Talent Fast." You can download the first part "The Ultimate Playbook for Sourcing Engineering Talent Fast" here. If you are interested in more information like this, make sure you subscribe or write to us.

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Work
Without Boundaries

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