

Hire the Best

attract, qualify, and inspire the
best candidates

an e-book by Manage 2 Win



Hire the Best

avoid the rest

PLEASE NOTE

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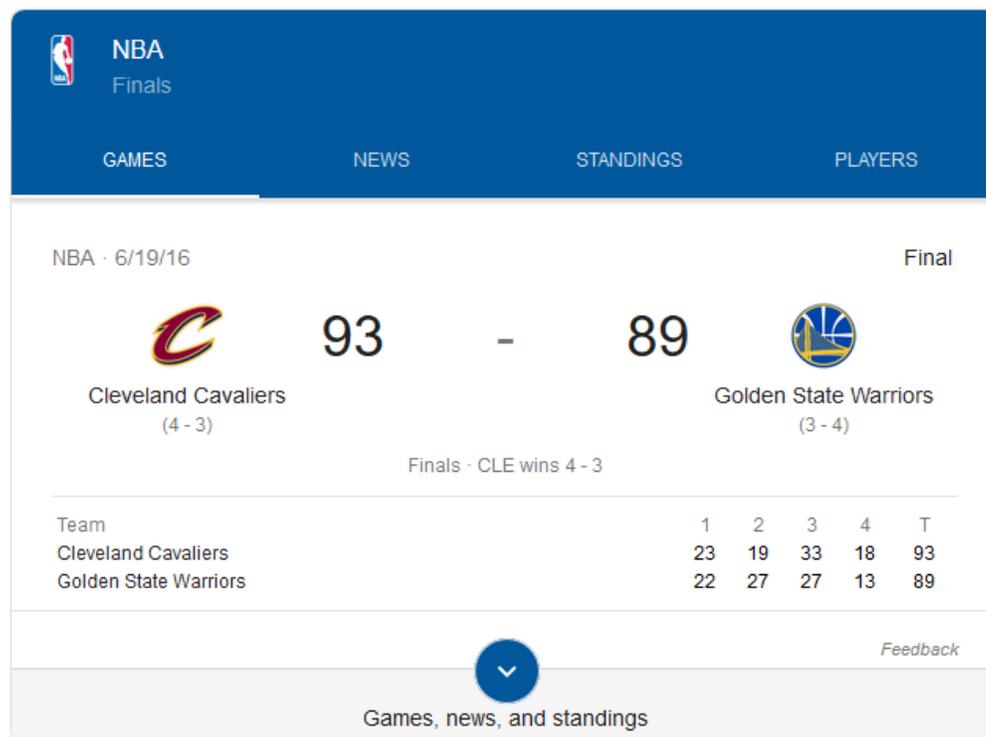
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Why is Hiring the Best People So Important?

Because there's a big difference between a Big Mac and a filet mignon.

On the night of June 19th, 2016, Draymond Green was sitting at his locker in full uniform. The Golden State Warriors had just lost the seventh game in the best-of-seven NBA Finals to LeBron James and the Cleveland Cavaliers.

The final game tally: Cleveland 4, Golden State 3.



As the rest of the team milled about, showered, and prepared to leave Oracle Arena, Green mulled over the lost championship. “He replayed in his mind the climactic moments of a weeklong collapse against Cleveland.”¹ The missed shots. The cold 4th quarter. And James. How could they shut down King James? What did the Warriors need to do to avoid this pain in the future?

The solution wasn't a *what*, it was a *who*.

Unbeknownst to much of the NBA, Draymond Green had been busy courting one of the best players in the game. He knew the Warriors were lacking a critical piece of their dynasty puzzle. They had the shooters, Steph Curry and Klay Thompson. They had the bruisers, Iguodala and Green, himself. They had a level-headed coach with big-time experience in Steve Kerr.

But they were lacking necessary depth. They had an aging center in Andrew Bogut, a young small forward in Harrison Barnes (whom James exploited in 2016), and a bench that was good, but not great. Someone was missing, someone who could take some stress off Curry while also covering dominant players like LeBron James.

The one, capable person available? Kevin Durant.

Arguably one of the best players in the game, Kevin Durant was and is the missing piece in the star-studded roster of the Golden State Warriors. Shortly after receiving a text message from Draymond Green the night after Game 7, the 6'9" forward responded:

“

I'm ready. Let's do this.

Durant declined to re-sign with the Oklahoma City Thunder in 2016 and became an unrestricted free agent on July 1st.

The Warriors signed him July 7th.

The Warriors then won the 2017 NBA Finals 4 games to 1 against the Cleveland Cavaliers. They won it again in 2018, against the Cleveland Cavaliers, 4-0.

What do people buy from you?

You may think it's a product or a service.

It's not. It's your people.

Your customers and clients pay money for the experience and interaction with your people. They can buy a similar product from a competitor. But they choose to buy from you because of the people who work for you and the decisions those people make daily. You could have a good product, but if you do not have the best people to develop, sell, deliver, and support it, then other companies and advancements will pass you by.

If you have unique ways to transform the world but do not have a great team to help reach your audience, then your wisdom will die with you. If you have the strength to work harder than anyone else, and the persistence to overcome any obstacle, but do not have a great team to help you expand beyond your individual limitations, then you will gain nothing.

Getting the best people on your team leads to creating great products, delivering excellent service, delighting customers, and winning championships.

One person can make a difference. One excellent hire can be the catalyst for success. Great people attract great people.

Companies often spend 70% of their operational budgets on employee expenses.² People are probably your greatest expense, and consequently your greatest asset.

Can you really afford to fail at hiring?

Hiring with a Plan

Follow a process, avoid costly mistakes.

John, a businessman, once met a nice woman at church. Let's call her Margaret. As they got to know each other, John and his wife developed a casual friendship with Margaret. They would exchange hellos, talk about their week, and share stories about their kids. They liked Margaret. She seemed sensible, funny, and rational.

A few months after meeting Margaret, there was an opening on John's team at a time when Margaret was looking for a new job. After a couple of coffee meetings, he decided to hire her.

Fast-forward a year later, and Margaret had become the most toxic member of John's team. Good employees had quit because of her, and any team members that stayed were unhappy and less productive because of her workstyle, attitude, and inconsistent work standards.

For her part, Margaret was very unhappy. In her mind, her role was undefined, she took on too much work, and she regularly worked on the weekends to keep up. She was exhausting herself for the company and for John, whom she no longer respected.

What a nightmare.

This is a true story. The company had less than 20 employees.

Consider all the time and money spent onboarding Margaret and training her. Consider the negative effects on other team members, and the opportunity cost of a bad hire versus a good hire. Margaret had become toxic and caused good or great employees to quit. Sales were lost. Customers were upset. Opportunities were missed that would have generated revenue and profits for years. Think about it. Even in such a small company, hiring Margaret may have cost a million dollars.

In a larger organization the loss might have been more. The impact of one bad hire can hurt your company financially for years.

And what about Margaret?

She felt she was working hard to help the company. She was frustrated, unhappy, and depressed. She was probably regretting her decision to join the company in the first place. A bad hire cuts both ways. This is another cost which is often overlooked.

For everyone's sake, we need to avoid hiring the wrong person.

The evidence of bad hiring costs is staggering

A Career Builder study³ from 2013 says 66% of employers blame bad hires for lower company productivity, negative worker morale, sales declines, strained client relationships, and even costly legal issues.



A report⁴ by the SHRM Foundation concludes direct replacement costs of departed employees, including accrued paid time off, overtime or contingent employee costs, and staff time for exit interviews and administration, can reach 50-60% of an employee's annual salary.

This doesn't include indirect costs, including any adverse effects on organizational performance, culture, and employee or client relations, to comprehend the total expenditure of replacing an employee. When you do this, the total cost of replacing one employee can be 90-200% of their annual salary.⁵

Need more? The cost increases for more senior roles. While the costs of losing a "normal" employee are high enough, CAP found that the cost of losing an executive is astronomical - up to 213% of the employee's salary.⁶

Kendra Angier is Vice President of Human Resources in North America for Ingram Micro, a \$40+ billion firm. According to Kendra, Ingram estimates the cost of losing a good employee at 300% of their annual compensation.

According to The Harvard Business Review, 80% of employee turnover is due to bad hiring decisions⁷, and the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) says replacing a bad hire can cost up to 5X their annual salary for executives and top contributors.

The cost of a bad hire keeps going up!

Great companies avoid these costs

Jim Collins⁸, Stanford professor, researcher, author of *Good to Great*, *Great by Choice*, and other leadership books, describes himself as “a student and teacher of leadership and what makes great companies tick.” Jim explains:

“

“You are a bus driver. The bus, your company, is at a standstill, and it's your job to get it going. You have to decide where you're going, how you're going to get there, and who's going with you.

“...If I were running a company today, I would have one priority above all others: to acquire as many of the best people as I could. I'd put off everything else to fill my bus. Because things are going to come back. My flywheel is going to start to turn. And the single biggest constraint on the success of my organization is the ability to get and to hang on to enough of the right people.”

Jim Collins

Make it a priority to get the right people on your bus.

Follow the Steps, John

Hiring the right people is easier said than done. In our story, John's method was simple: Find someone I barely know and generally appreciate. Casually interview them twice. Hire them.

That is the wrong way to hire someone.

Instead, your hiring process should identify qualified candidates based on real data from interviews, testing, and assessments. It should resemble an elaborate mating ritual.



You should attract candidates, qualify them, select your finalists, and ask them to prove themselves in a few short, relevant tests. You should flaunt the advantages of working with your company. Prepare an exquisite home for the new employee in which they will feel welcomed and appreciated on their first day. Aggressively pursue the candidates you believe are best suited for your team. Verify your finalists are true, quality candidates. Then onboard every new hire like they are the next best thing to join your company.

Also, make sure every step is documented and easy to follow.

The good news? The following chapters include a brief overview of our hiring system, including steps you can immediately use in your next hiring process.

Hire the Best is based on our experience working with hundreds of companies, our interviews with thousands of job candidates, and our research from innumerable books, articles, websites, and expert opinions.

Let's get into it.

[Want help with your hiring? Work with us.](#)

Talent Acquisition is... War?

Finding great people is a mission, not an armed conflict.

You may have heard the term, “Talent Acquisition is War”, or seen a headline with the words “The War for Talent”. That kind of rhetoric sounds like hiring managers are setting up bunkers at job fairs, dressed in full camouflage, ready to fight for resumes with company branded t-shirt launchers and notepad covers.

It’s silly. Hiring isn’t a war. It’s a competition, sure. But it shouldn’t be treated like a combative sales process.

Instead, hiring is a matchmaking exercise. It should be focused on bringing people together in a mutually fulfilling, meaningful, long-term relationship.

Luis and Ronni Alvarez of [Alvarez Technology Group](#)⁹ in Salinas, California are a great example of a company focused on matchmaking.

In August 2013 their company had doubled in size from a few years prior. They did this without the drama and turnover many companies experience.

“

We had established clear metrics, confirmed employee productivity was high, and determined our planned workload required additional staff. Before starting our hiring process, we decided to be careful to avoid candidates who were nice but not a good fit. We like our company culture, we wanted to keep it that way.

*Luis Alvarez, CEO
Alvarez Technology Group*

This is the correct approach.

Your company culture is unique. You can try to compete against other companies on price, benefits, or silver-tongued persuasion. You can wage war on the talent front. But every other company can offer the same thing.

No one can offer you, your mission, your values, and your way of doing business.

Create Your Talent Plan

To find the best match for your company, you'll need a plan. Your plan will describe in detail the type of people you are looking for, how to identify them, and how you will get them to apply at your company.



#1 – Define Quality

The only qualification of some hiring managers is to find someone who is breathing. If they are alive and might work out, then the hiring manager often gambles on them. This is a failing strategy.

Instead, you should start by defining your ideal match.

Southwest Airlines receives a job application every two seconds, yet they only hire 2% of all candidates.¹⁰ Southwest knows exactly who they are looking for and only hires people who are fully engaged and match their culture from the beginning. Similarly, the first standard of Google's formula for hiring top talent¹¹ is: Set a high bar for quality and never compromise.

What type of person are you looking for? Do you want someone who shows up 10 minutes late, needs a decent amount of training, and is rarely pro-active?

Probably not.

The first task for your hiring plan is to define your version of a quality candidate and stick to it.

#2 – Prepare the Position

Before posting an ad for a position, every job opening should have a thorough explanation of the role and how to succeed in it.

Most companies call this a job description. That's not enough.

At Manage 2 Win, we call it an [Employee Strategic Plan](#). Employee strategic plans are an asset you can use to hire, manage, develop, and retain great people. In addition to containing a job description, they also include goals, expectations, and specifics on the person's assessments. It is a living document you can edit and refer to whenever necessary.

Using your definition of quality, a well-defined employee strategic plan will help you find and attract the best career candidates. Don't start hiring without it.

#3 – Be Ready to Onboard

Having an employee strategic plan is the first step to being ready to onboard a new hire. It's not enough on its own. You should also have an onboarding plan.

An onboarding plan is a step-by-step process of trainings, activities, and check-ins to help new hires quickly settle in, become acquainted with their environment, and connect with their coworkers in their first 90 days.

This is their grand welcome and initiation into your company. Who do they need to know? What hard skills and soft skills should they develop? How do the rhythms and workflow in your company affect each person's day?



A good onboarding plan will energize and empower a new employee.

#4 – Determine the Why

Why should a candidate want to join your team? Too often companies fail to give people a reason to want to join their team.

Before looking for candidates, you need to be ready to offer them meaningful work and career advancement. For instance, if you are hiring another service manager, The Why might be:

“

You are the superstar we are looking for! We expect to grow 50% this year and we want to add another service manager to continue meeting the needs of new clients. You will have a huge opportunity to lead a team, coordinate directly with management, and streamline operations so our sales team can continue to focus on growth. At our company we like to work hard, but we also want our employees to have a balanced life. Expect to take on significant responsibility while being compensated fairly.

Example of The Why

Sounds pretty good, right? Invite people in a way that touches their hearts and minds. Tell them what they can expect and share the benefits of working at your company.

The Why may be the tipping point to whether a superstar joins your team or not.

#5 – Build Your Candidate Pool

The best hires come from a variety of sources. You should be actively sharing your company and developing a network of potential hires in good talent pools.

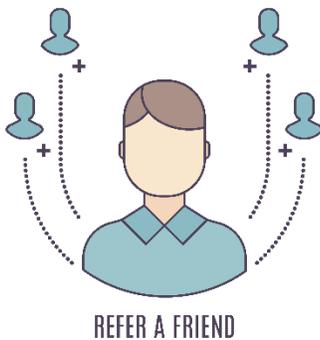
Engage with Colleges and Universities

If recent college grads are your best option for a certain position you should be engaging with nearby universities, developing relationships with professors and deans, and attending career fairs.

You don't have to hire every person you meet. Develop a list of candidates you admire, hold onto their contact info, and perhaps advertise an internship to the most promising ones.

Start a Referral Program

Great people are usually employed already. They are smart enough to keep their job while looking for other opportunities. You can capitalize on this by starting a referral program.



Scott Young of [PennComp](#)¹² in Houston leads a very successful I.T. services consultancy. As a former Arthur Anderson consultant, he has a network of over 500 peers. Scott is very careful with his time. He has personal priorities in addition to his company's needs and he is particularly sensitive about wasting time when hiring.

Rather than pay a headhunter \$15-\$25,000 to find technical people, Scott pays his employees and anyone in his network a \$6,000 bonus when they refer someone he hires.

\$6,000 is a lot of motivation, and it works. Scott often hires great people through their referral program. Employee referrals could be your best source of top-quality candidates.

Develop a Talent Community

In the past a recruiter would go to their list of contacts when they got a contract. A recruiter's network was and still is their own little "talent community".

However, we can create our own talent community that can be more powerful than any recruiter, and it's completely free. According to Lou Adler in Inc. Magazine,¹³ 85% of all hires got their job networking or by being on LinkedIn. He cited one study in which only 15 percent of 100,000 people applied for jobs through a job board. The rest started a new career through their connections.

You can use this to your advantage. Develop your own talent community through co-workers, peers, and social media. As much as you can, always make time to meet with people who embody your ideal candidate, or who connect you to them.

#6 - Actively Promote Your Openings

Now that you know what type of person you are looking for, the position is well-defined, and you're starting to build your candidate pool, you're ready to promote the job opening.



Your first audience for all openings is existing employees. The Harvard Business Review reported internal hires outperformed external hires in “nearly every conceivable dimension of performance” in a study of 11,000 employees of a Fortune 100 company.¹⁴

Encourage promotions and lateral moves by your people. Their experience at your company gives them an edge to learn the nuances of a new position more quickly than an outsider.

If you can't promote a current employee then you have 4 options: find someone through your network, attract candidates through advertising, recruit someone on your own, or hire a professional recruiter.

All these methods are viable ways to find great candidates.

#7 – Manage Your Reputation

Finally, while you search for ideal candidates be sure to manage your company's online and local reputation, so people are inspired to join your team instead of avoiding it.



There are plenty of sites you can use to track and promote your company. From social media to formal networking to local reviews, try to cover your bases. Find out where your industry is most prominently discussed and be proactive about responding to negative reviews and encouraging positive reviews.

Take every complaint seriously until proven otherwise.

Cull the Herd

Review resumes and conduct clear, structured phone interviews.

We were once interviewing a person for a sales role. Anxious to fill the position, we wanted to fill the seat fast so we could get back to our “real work”.

As the phone interview began, the candidate spoke clearly and had a sales style to his communication. His resume checked out, and he seemed like a nice young guy with potential, although a bit overconfident. We thought, "We can work with this guy. He's a little raw but should be trainable. He's a little cocky, and does not understand relationship sales, but hey, he could do it. It would save a ton of time if we didn't have to interview anyone else."

But a few more minutes went by and it hit us: "This guy is arrogant. He does not know how to sell relationally. He would not last. There are too many yellow flags. No, these are red flags! Hiring him would be a huge mistake."

We thanked him for speaking with us and explained he would know our decision after we completed our interviews. Later we emailed him the truth: We had more qualified candidates.

Interviewing is a disciplined process where it's okay to "listen to your gut", but it's not okay to be driven by your emotions.

If you have done a good job advertising a new position you should receive plenty of applicants. It can be a daunting task to sift through a bunch of resumes, but by reviewing resumes and conducting phone interviews properly you can save yourself a ton of time.

Stop talking with any person who is not a fit. Keep the conversation going with good candidates. Finally, be mindful of the candidate's perspective, you are not only assessing them, they are also assessing you.



Start with a test

Many employers use pre-interview questions to avoid wasting time interviewing people who are clearly not qualified. Pre-interview questionnaires can be required as part of the application process and we highly recommend them.



The questions confirm information you want to know, and each candidate's answers give hints as to their level of communication skills.

Requiring all applicants to complete a series of questions also eliminates people who are "resume dumping." This is our term for people who are blasting their resume at a ton of job posts, even ones that do not match their skills. These folks typically do not take the time to competently answer a survey or complete required tasks as they apply for positions.

You can ignore anyone who answers poorly or not at all.

For those who complete the questionnaire properly, review their answers as part of your resume review. They might have received help, or they might have answered the questions on their own. Either way, they were smart enough and motivated enough to complete it and that's a good sign.

Review Resumes

The resume review is your first interaction with each applicant. They have had unlimited time to prepare their resume so it should look excellent.

Their grammar, format, and content should be correct, appealing, and 100% accurate. The design should look professional.

Have they included all their contact information? Do they have a statement of what they are looking for? Does their experience match the position?

Each of the jobs they list on their resume should explain their accomplishments, not just a simple description. How long did they stay at each job? Do they have any employment gaps? If so, why?



Look for any interests, activities, or sports. Does this person look like they will fit into your company culture?

When you find a good match, schedule a phone interview.

For the candidates are not a good match, always reply with a thank you. Do not let your job postings be a black hole where resumes enter and never get a response, or if they do, it is a generic postcard or email.

Even though you may not want to hire someone, you are still representing your company.

Conduct Phone Screens

We once had a client engaged in hiring a help desk technician. The candidate's resume was stellar, and they could barely wait to speak with him. However, on the phone the candidate mumbled a lot, had a strong accent that made it difficult to understand him at times, and used foul language. There was no way he could represent them with customers.

The phone screen saved our client a lot of time and potentially frustrated clients.

Most people must work effectively with others by phone. When a good resume appears, you should talk with the person over the phone to test their communication skills, timeliness, and aptitude.

Confirm the date and time of the interview by email and ask them to call you. If they demonstrate responsibility by calling you on time, begin the call with an enthusiastic explanation of the agenda. Explain what you want to accomplish and ask them about their priorities for the meeting.



As you ask several prepared questions, take note of the clarity of their voice, the tone of their responses, and their sincerity. Be aware of potential red flags, problems to avoid, and notice them.

If they seem like a good match, schedule an in-person interview.

If they are clearly not a match, or you are not sure, thank them for their time and tell them you will review their answers with your team and get back to them.

Schedule interviews with candidates who might be a good fit, and kindly tell poor candidates that you have found other, more qualified candidates for the position.

Assess Your Candidates

Interview, test, and assess to identify the best candidates.

According to a SHRM study, 63% of all hiring decisions are made in the first 4.3 minutes of the first interview.¹⁵ Another study by the Harvard Business Review found 90% of hires are based solely upon the interview.¹⁶

Clearly, the interview is a big deal. To use the time effectively, you should have a plan. It might look like this:

Hiring Rep: Deborah		Candidate: Joe Garbanzo	
Interview #: 1		Date, Location: February 1, 2019, Main Office	
Time	Who	Objective	Rating
9:00am	Ben	Greetings & Introduction Give office tour Review HR paperwork	
9:20am	Deborah	Writing & Computer Skills tests	
10:00am	John, Deb	Discuss Writing & Computer Skills results Conduct formal interview questionnaire	
10:45am	Deborah	Thank you & Confirm next steps	
11:00am	Hiring Team	Discuss initial conclusions Next steps for interview team	

Having a plan like this is crucial to a proper interview. It provides structure and instructions, with each step properly documented and ready prior to the interview.

The First In-Person Interview

A key objective of your interview process is to experience the candidate as they will behave on the job if you hire them.

At your office you can tailor the environment however you like, and this is to your advantage. You should aim to make every candidate feel welcome and impressed. This will encourage them to relax, open up, and share their true self.

Greet candidates at the door, and give them a private, comfortable place to complete the job application. Have the hiring manager come out to welcome them, take their completed application, and lead them on a quick tour of the office. The tour should end at the place you are going to conduct the interview.

Get Them to Talk Outside of Their Script

Your formal interview of the candidate is the real test. Every person arrives sporting a default script: "Hire me."

10 REASONS YOU SHOULD HIRE ME

1. I AM AWESOME // 2. I HAVE 140.000 FANS ON MY FACEBOOK PAGE // 3. I AM MULTITASKING: I CAN CHECK FACEBOOK, TWITTER, TUMBLR, FLICKR AND THE EMAILS WHILE I AM WORKING // 4. I CAN SAY HELLO IN 10 LANGUAGES: HELLO, HALLO, SALUT, CIAO, HOLA, XIN CHÀO, SAWA DEEKAP, AHN NYEONG HA SE YO, KONNICHI WA, NÎHÂO // 5. HAVE I TOLD YOU THAT I'M AWESOME YET? // 6. I DON'T NEED 10 REASONS TO TELL YOU WHY YOU SHOULD HIRE ME



A capable interviewer will find a way to get the candidate to talk outside of this script, to tell the real story. You can do this by asking questions, and by answering their questions wisely. Discuss their skills and experience and share the mission, vision, and values of your company.

You can also test them in real-time, with prepared questions or real-life scenarios. You can share the desired qualities of your ideal candidate and ask the candidate

how they measure up. Review their tests or assessments and try to probe their answers for hidden insights.

Interview tactics are innumerable, and many of them work well.

When you get a candidate talking outside of their script, be sure to continue talking about whatever topic they find interesting. You will often learn more about them by talking about their passions than by asking standard interview questions. Look for ways to tie their interests back to the position and see how they respond.

At the end of the first in-person interview you should have enough information to decide whether to invite them back for a second interview. End on a good note, thank them for coming, and provide instructions on next steps.

Assess to Confirm a Match

According to the Harvard Business Review,¹⁷ Southwest focuses their hiring efforts on confirming three attributes:

1. **Warrior spirit** - The desire to excel, act with courage, persevere, and innovate.
2. **Servant's heart** – The ability to put others first, treat everyone with respect, and proactively serve customers.
3. **Fun-loving attitude** – Passion, joy and an aversion to taking oneself too seriously.



These expectations are clearly defined in every job description, their interview methodology fully explores each one, their training develops them, and every employee is held accountable to consistently demonstrate these attributes on the job.

To determine someone's ability to be a passionate team player, Southwest recruiters and managers ask the job candidate to describe a time when he or she went above and beyond to help a co-worker succeed.

They also conduct a “career motivation interview” to confirm each candidate really understands the job he or she is applying for, and how well the position is aligned with his or her career goals.

If you are going to invite someone to a second interview, make sure they meet your standards and match your culture.

The Second In-Person Interview

The second in-person interview is the final round, or close to it. You have now talked to them twice. Your team has had the chance to meet them. You have all discussed whether the candidate would be a good fit.

The second interview is a confirmation process.

It’s time to identify final candidates. Great people are not available for long. You can make a wise hiring decision after the second interview if you are smart.

For instance, you probably have new information and questions from the first interview. Now is the time to explore those topics.

Ask more questions to clarify the candidate’s previous responses and follow up on topics of interest. Did you forget to ask about a previous work experience? Did they have a question you didn’t answer fully? Perhaps they shared a story you found insightful. Take this opportunity to dig a little deeper.



Engage candidates in harder test drives and talk through more scenarios designed to expose how they think, respond to questions, and learn on the job.

You can get as complicated as you want. The nature of a test drive depends on the job. Just make sure you conduct it well. Qualified candidates will not appreciate it if you waste their time with a poorly executed test.

Lastly, now is the time to put the candidates through a group interview, if you didn't do it already. You likely have one or more people who appear to be a good fit. Up the ante to see how they interact with the whole team.

Grand Circle, a \$600 million tour operator for older Americans, likes to include a group interview of multiple candidates vying for various open jobs and employees at the same time. They give the groups challenging, odd exercises and then observe, listen, and document how well each candidate exhibits Grand Circle's core values.

One test is a "raw-egg drop exercise," where teams design a travel vessel for an egg using only straws and tape, develop a marketing presentation to "sell" the vessel, and then drop the vessel from about 10 feet. The exercise provides insights into leadership, teamwork, creativity, and soft skills.

Tested, well-designed group exercises can be fun, effective, and engaging. Mixing your employees and candidates also increases the potential accuracy of testing for cultural fit.

End the Second Interview

By the end of the second interview you should have a good idea of whether you want to hire a candidate or not.

If you are confident about the candidate, there's no reason to wait. Have an offer letter prepared in advance for strong candidates, and extend the job offer at the end of the second in-person interview. Make sure it includes a caveat, something like "This job offer is only valid after passing a background check and reference check".

If you need more time to assess candidates and pick the best one, you can also extend the job offer later.

Make Your Choice

When you have found the right candidate, inspire their acceptance.

It is sad and costly when hiring decisions are made on emotion or gut feel, too quickly, independently, or without following a system to fully verify you have the right person for the position and your culture.

When you make your choice on who to hire, be decisive and methodical, and listen to your quiet voice.

Selfish thoughts, bad habits, and illogical conclusions usually emphasize fear in loud and threatening ways. "You don't have time for this! We need help now! Don't mess this up, I don't think we will ever find anyone better than this candidate!" It is tempting to indulge these thoughts and let them guide your actions. They can lead to failure.



In contrast, the best wisdom often comes from the most humble, quiet voices in your head. Little voices advocating patience and humility. These voices help you avoid disaster. They represent your conscience, the subconscious collection of lessons learned from millions of interactions with the people in your life.

Try to listen to these humble, quiet voices. Develop a habit to pause, breathe, and think, rather than rush to assumptions. Doing this will save you and your firm copious amounts of time, stress, and money.

Then, when you do make your choice, inspire the candidate to accept your offer.

Inspire Their Acceptance

When it's time to make an offer, there is no room for error.

We once spoke with Kendra, a recent graduate with a masters in statistics. Upon looking for work she was offered a decent job with a seemingly competitive salary at a good company. Being fresh out of school and not in a rush, she decided to think about it for a few days. Three days later she was leaning towards accepting the offer when she received a call from another company. Hearing that she had already been offered a position, and knowing the evaluation process at the first company, the new company countered with an offer to join their firm instead at a 90% salary increase.

The first company had made a fatal mistake.

Kendra discussed the new offer with the representatives at the first company, upon which they immediately raised their offer to the same amount. But it was too late. She felt the first company had undervalued her and decided to take the job at the second company.

When hiring, you can do everything right up to the end, then blow it on the offer and lose a top candidate.



If you want to add a new person to your team you must make them an offer that is difficult to refuse. It's not all about money, either. It's about being considerate. You must not only convince the candidate you value them, but also convince them to value a position at your company.

Engage with candidates in sincere, caring ways. Try to incorporate your Why from Chapter 3. Include every

positive connection between you and the candidate. Tell them they have impressed you and invite them to join you on your mission.

Remember, this is the final stage of the matchmaking exercise known as “hiring”. Inspire the candidate to join your team.

How to make the offer

Here’s a few nuts and bolts to help you seal the deal. You have your offer letter, hopefully based on a well-design template, customized and ready to go, right? Print three copies, two for them, one for your records.

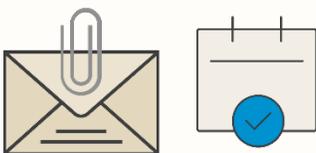
Then, like we mentioned in the last chapter, be prepared to make your offer at the end of the final interview if it goes well. This approach is best. It is a combination of a verbal and written offer, in-person. You get to discern their body language as they consider the offer, which you cannot do when making an offer verbally by phone or through email.

If they accept, excellent! Ask for commitment and a signature, and politely remind them the offer is subject to your reference check, background check, and any other pending qualification activities. Thank them for meeting with you, ask if they have any additional questions, and tell them when you would like them to start.

If they don’t respond right away, give them a few minutes to look it over, then ask if they would like to take some time to consider it.

Follow-up on pending offers

If the candidate asked for time to consider the offer then send two emails within two hours of the final interview.



First, confirm the offer and attach a PDF of the offer letter for future reference. Second, send a calendar invitation for your meeting to discuss their decision.

If they decline your offer, then you have no choice but to thank them and move on.

But if they accept the invite, be prepared to negotiate. If they haven't accepted the offer already, they might be angling for a better deal. Don't worry, everything about the position should have been discussed before your offer. Therefore, people who fit your culture and values will typically only negotiate minor issues.

Just be prepared. If they don't bring any new information and ask for significant changes, they are probably not a good fit.

In rare occasions you do everything right and a superstar still declines your offer. That is frustrating. Should you be angry? No.

Anytime a candidate turns you down it is a blessing. You have probably been saved from their departure later after you have invested even more time and energy into a relationship with them.

You did your best and they declined. Don't fight it.

Follow-up on accepted offers

If they accepted your offer, wonderful! Get to work on your due diligence, background checks, references, and preparing a welcome packet.

You did a wonderful job of inspiring their acceptance. Now keep them engaged, excited about joining your team, and looking forward to their first day!

Always Talk with References

Brian McClusky, director of human resources at InkHouse, a PR firm outside of Boston, views reference checking as the "final step" of the vetting process for new hires.¹⁸



A key part of his reference check process is to ask everyone on the team who interviewed a candidate for their feedback. Based on their comments he knows "where to delve deeper in the reference calls."

Brian typically calls a former manager and colleague. "Ideally, I always like to talk to people who've worked with the candidate in different capacities," he says. "That way I get perspective on what it's like to work side-by-side with the candidate and what it's like to manage him."

References provide extremely valuable information if you know how to approach them and discern their comments. Always talk with references.

Always Use a Background Check

One of our new clients in Central California had never done a background check on an employee. He started working with us and was shortly thereafter interviewing an I.T. engineer.

Our client said the guy was fantastic. He was a "9" on a scale of 1-10. Then towards the end of the interview our client said to the candidate, "By the way, we do a background check on all candidates. Is there anything that might turn up in your report that you want to explain to me in advance?"

The guy's response was something like, "No, no way. I'm totally clean."

Our client used our background service and the resulting report was astonishing. The candidate was apparently a sexual predator, had multiple felonies, and at least one DUI. What a disaster!

We admire many companies who give convicted felons a second chance. In this case, our client was not prepared for such a task. We have more stories like this in [our full Hire the Best system](#).

Always perform a background check before hiring someone.

Their First Day is a Great Day

A new employee's first day at your company should confirm they made a good decision to accept the job.

Dan was not looking for a new opportunity. He was a superstar at his current firm. His work was fulfilling, and he was compensated well.

However, a friend of Dan's heard of an opening and encouraged him to consider it. He researched the company online and talked to some close friends. He decided to learn more about the opportunity and eventually applied for the job.

The company responded to his resume submission the same day and scheduled a phone interview within three days. The interview process was engaging and was completed within two weeks.

Dan was not planning a career move, but he made one.

A few days after he accepted the position he received his Welcome Packet, which his wife loved (she took the gift card). He had lunch with his new boss and a member of their team. He received a few of his new business cards, and two days before his First Day, he received a photo of his desk, fully outfitted.

Wow! This was a totally different experience than starting with other companies. Dan wondered what his first day on the job would be like.

He would not be disappointed. When he arrived at his new job he noticed a "Welcome to the Team, Dan!" sign in the lobby, and the receptionist greeted him by name. His new manager, Mandy, immediately appeared and welcomed Dan to her team. She gave him a quick tour of the office, kitchen, emergency exits, and his desk, and introduced him to a few key coworkers.

Mandy and Dan then went to her office. She presented Dan with a full onboarding plan for his first 90 days. She walked him through the plan, asking for his feedback. They made a few changes and noted some thoughts.

At lunch there was a party to welcome Dan with really good food. Every person was sincerely interested in Dan and encouraging.



Each meeting he had with others, whether it was a training or conversation of how they would work together, was focused, friendly, and not rushed. No one allowed their conversation to be interrupted by a text, email, or person coming into their office. Dan was clearly their priority.

His entire First Day was organized, people were clearly committed to his success, and he got a strong sense of the strength of the organization's culture.

When Dan got home that night, his wife asked, "Well, how was your day?"

Dan smiled. "It was awesome. Everyone was great. They were well-organized. I was clearly a priority. My only disappointment is that I didn't start working at this company years ago. I'm going to reach out to a few people I know to encourage them to apply for other openings."

About the same time Dan was applying for his new career change, across town someone he had never met was looking to make a move. Her name was Dana.

Dana applied to dozens of companies. Most never replied. One did reply after a few weeks. She went through their interview process, received for a job offer, and decided to accept.

However, Dana did not hear from her new employer during the two weeks before her First Day. When it came, Dana wanted to make a good impression, so she arrived early for her First Day at her new job.

She introduced herself to the receptionist, Janice. But Janice did not remember her. Looking confused, Janice replied, "Dana, who? Are you here to see someone?"

Janice called Dana's new boss, then turned to Dana and said, "Bob says you need to complete the HR paperwork." She handed Dana a stack of papers, a pen, and pointed to a table to the right of the reception desk, "Here is our standard packet. You can sit over there and get it done. Let me know if you need anything."

Dana completed the paperwork in about 15 minutes, gave it to Janice, and returned to her seat in the lobby.

Another 20 minutes later, Bob came out to the lobby. "I'm so sorry, Dana. I've got a fire drill I'm working on for a client. It's going to take me another 5-10 minutes. Here, come with me and you can sit in the conference room and review our employee handbook."

Bob returned about 30 minutes later. He gave her a quick tour of the office, ending at her cubicle. "Here's your desk. We don't have a computer ready for you yet, and, I apologize, your chair has a rip. We'll get you a new chair as soon as we can."

They walked to Bob's office and sat down. Bob asked, "Ok, what questions do you have for me?"

Dana was surprised. She was expecting an introduction, an onboarding plan, something to get her started in her new position. Bob did not seem prepared at all!

Not only that, but the couple of people with whom Dana met that day were also unprepared to discuss specifically how they would work together. She spent most of the day at her desk trying to figure things out or get tools she needed.

When Dana got home that night, her husband asked, "How did it go today?"

She grimaced, clearly disappointed, and replied, "Not too good. I don't think I will be staying at this job very long."

So, what type of company are you?

A new employee's First Day should confirm their decision to join your team was a great decision. Don't be Dana's company. Be Dan's company.

In psychology, the Law of Natural Reciprocity is a fancy way to describe our tendency to match someone else's behavior. Positive reciprocity occurs when people do good to others, which instinctively motivates those people to return the kindness. Negative reciprocity occurs when people want to "get even" or leave because they feel hurt by others.

If a new hire feels a positive atmosphere, if they feel engaged, they will retain a lasting impression. The same is true for the other side of the coin. If they don't feel valued, they won't value their work or your company.

You have a choice regarding a new employee's first day. Do you make their first day the best possible experience? Or do you drop the ball, fail to impress them, fail to set them up for success, and get caught up with other activities?

If a candidate truly is the best person for the job, as your hiring process should have confirmed, then they deserve your time and attention in a stellar onboarding process.

We recommend following a 2-Day Rule.



Too many companies wait until the employee is in the office to start onboarding. That's called procrastination. Instead, everything should be ready for a new team member two days before it is needed, including their desk, tools, and a 90-day plan. The new employee's boss, coworkers, and mentor should be ready to receive them, with training time already scheduled in their calendars.

Then, when the employee finally arrives, welcome them with a big smile, high fives, and an incredible experience. Produce each First Day so it inspires the best in everyone. Walk the candidate through the office,

get them acquainted with this new, strange environment. Talk with them as they experience your company as part of the team for the first time. Observe their reactions and ask for their feedback so you can improve your First Day routine the next time you hire someone.

At the end of their first day, talk with each new hire, thank them for joining your team, and ask them how their day went.

Never Stop Onboarding

As you reflect on your new employee's first day, we will let you in on a little secret: Once you hire someone, if you want to keep them, never stop onboarding.

Facebook's human resources team conducted a study in 2017 in which they tracked why employees quit.¹⁹ They assumed, as the saying goes, "People don't quit a job... they quit a boss." However, what they found was slightly different. People left Facebook because of their manager, but not in the way the HR team expected.

In working with their People Analytics team, Facebook tried to predict who would stay and who would leave the company based on survey data. After surveying thousands of employees before and after they quit, Facebook found something they hadn't expected: Employees did not explicitly quit because of a boss, they quit because their job was not enjoyable, did not utilize their strengths, and was not helping them grow in their careers.

But, as the team at Facebook wisely concluded, a boss is responsible for making all that happen. "People leave jobs, and it's up to managers to design jobs that are too good to leave."

After you hire someone the relationship has just begun. Their first onboarding process is the beginning of a long, flourishing career at your company.

It is fun to work with great people. Try to keep them around.

Start Hiring the Best

Better late than never.

Now you have learned all about Hire the Best*.

Good people are the lifeblood of your company. One great hire can mean the difference between a good year and a bad year, and a team of great hires can accelerate growth exponentially. Follow the best practices introduced in this e-book, challenge yourself to only pursue the best candidates, and be the kind of company that the best candidates want to join.

Thanks for reading,



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info@manage2win.com

*this e-book was adapted from [our full Hire the Best system](#) and documentation including videos, processes, and sample documents

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