

the celarity

HIRING GUIDE

for interviews

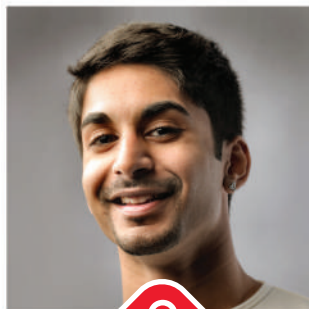


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INTRODUCTION

Feel like you're losing the war for talent? You're not alone. Hiring has never been more challenging, and the stakes are high. In a recent study by CareerBuilder®, 66 percent of employers in the U.S. reported they had been affected by a bad hire, with 27 percent saying a single bad hire cost them more than \$50,000. Add that to indirect costs – project delays, lost opportunities, plummeting employee morale – and you see the rationale for hiring well, and it all starts with interviewing.

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

A. CREATING A PLAN

The first step toward interviewing a new employee is to come up with a plan. Establishing clear goals, guidelines, a timeline and criteria of candidate skills is essential to success.

A checklist before interviewing candidates:

- 1 Three must-have skills – What are the requirements? For example, if you are hiring for a developer position, you may want to put “HTML experience.”
- 2 Three nice-to-have skills – A bonus skill, such as the ability to speak a second language if your company occasionally deals with international clients.
- 3 Deal-breakers – Non-negotiable requirements that would make you not able to hire someone. This could be an inability to work 40 hours per week if the role is full-time.
- 4 Necessary traits – Personality traits someone must have. You might put ‘excellent communication skills’ if your work environment is team-oriented or client-facing.



Extra Tip

Keep these answers as a checklist for each candidate. This will prevent personal bias from all the stakeholders during the process. Throughout the hiring process these qualifications and requirements can be modified depending on availability of candidates.

B. PEPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

1. Study the resume

Make a list of questions the candidate's resume poses to you and decide if there are any points that will need clarification, and make notes regarding parts of the candidate's experience or education that you would like to talk about in person.

2. Do your research

This can be as simple as entering the candidate's name into LinkedIn®. Does this person present themselves in a positive way on a professional networking site? With the rise of social media, this can be a good way to see how the candidate interacts professionally online. If you see that they portray themselves poorly on the Internet, they could do the same with your company's image.

3. Get the facts

If this role is a pivotal hire within the company, such as a senior management position, you may want to have the candidate take a personality assessment at some point during the hiring process. Personality assessments are not a 100 percent tell-all, but they can be a good indicator of how the candidate thinks and operates. It might also reveal how the candidate would interact with coworkers in their environment.



DURING THE INTERVIEW

A. EFFECTIVE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Gathering and drawing out the right information from an interview is essential to good hiring. Here we have listed some effective questions to ask candidates. These questions will reveal their true skills and accomplishments based on who they are, why they want the position and what they can bring to the table.

WHO are they?

1. What are the three most important things for me to know about you?
2. What is your preferred work style?
3. How would coworkers describe your work style?
4. What traits do you think make a good manager?
5. What is your biggest success story and how did you achieve it?
6. Tell me about a time you failed and how you handled that situation.
7. Who is a role model for you and why do you look up to that person?

WHY do they want the position?

1. What is it about this opportunity that makes you want to work here?
2. Where else have you been looking for work?
3. What job duties are you interested in doing and which do not interest you?
4. What is your plan if you don't find what you are looking for?

WHAT can they bring to the table?

1. What are the most important attributes you have that would benefit this company?
2. Tell me what has made you a valuable employee and give a specific example.
3. How do you stay organized?
4. What would you like to accomplish in your first six months here?

Extra Tip

Remember that the interview is often a stressful occasion for both parties involved. Be patient with candidates when you ask the tough questions that are met with silence. Give them time to prepare an answer.



B. INTERVIEW DOS AND DON'TS

Dos ...

- Have a plan – Know exactly what you need to find out about the candidate. Use the previous interview questions we listed as an outline, and add on what you need to know from there, based on what you see from the candidate's resume.
- Know your candidate – Just like they've researched your company, you need to research the candidates. Prior to an interview, read the candidate's resume a few times and try to learn as much as you can about the person's background. Doing this shows that you care about the candidate's experiences and that you took the time to get to know who this person is.
- Be candid – Keeping details about the position from candidates, for example, saying there's a "decent amount" of travel for work versus 75 percent might make a big difference in their interest as a long-term fit for the position. Be honest, and communicate your decisions promptly, that way you don't lose a valuable candidate.
- Treat the interview like a conversation – Interviews can sometimes become an interrogation where the interviewer asks questions to intimidate, rather than understand the candidate. An interview is not a one-way street, but rather a conversation where both parties exchange valuable information with each other.
- Sell the opportunity to strong candidates – Interviewers sometimes feel they have all of the decision power and don't consider that the candidate may have other offers. The interview should be an opportunity to really sell the position and show what a great place your company is to work for.



Dont's ...

- Lead the candidate – If interviewees start struggling during any part of the interview, refrain from helping at first to see how they work through the question. It will show you their ability to react under pressure and think on their feet.
- Be afraid to push – If an answer isn't satisfactory, don't be afraid to probe a little bit. Not having all of the information you need could be a costly mistake, so make sure you dig deep on important issues. Ask questions with "who," "what," "where," "why," "when," and "how," as opposed to questions that only elicit a simple "yes" or "no" response.
- Waste your own time – Hiring is an essential, ongoing business strategy. Organize your time effectively and make sure you have everything you need for the interview prepared in advance, and make sure your questions are pointed and clear so you get the information you need.
- Ask illegal questions – This one seems to go without saying but you would be surprised how often it happens. Steer clear of topics touching on religion, age, disability, marital/family status, race or sex. Stick to topics and questions about candidate's experiences and personality as it relates to the job they are applying for. This will keep you out of trouble.
- Overlook the importance of references – It's important to be thorough in the interview process and check the candidate's references. That way, you verify their previous positions and glean useful information about their past working experiences. If what their references say match with what they spoke about in the interview, you know that the candidate was honest.



C. CANDIDATE RED FLAGS

Certain behaviors can indicate why a candidate may not make the best employee, even if this person possesses all the required skills and experience. Watch out for these red flags when interviewing your candidates:

- They show up late without calling – This generally means they're poor planners and do not respect your time.
- They can't name a weakness – These people can be hard to manage and train because they don't have an objective view of themselves.
- Speaks poorly of current or former employer – This shows unprofessional tendencies and that they might have problems with authority figures.
- Asks about salary and benefits first – Money is rarely the only factor in leaving a current position. This could be a sign of a job hopper, or they are more interested in compensation than your job or company.
- No thank-you note after interview – This could show a lack of interest in your position or company.
- They don't give references – It could mean they had negative previous work experiences, and you will need to find out where that hesitation comes from.



AFTER THE INTERVIEW

A. CLOSING THE CANDIDATE

The best candidates will have other opportunities so you have to close on them quickly! This is a fragile stage in the hiring process, so here are a few steps you can take to make sure you cover your bases during the offer stage:

- **Talk compensation** - You should know what the candidate needs to accept the position. Your offer should be aligned with his or her expectations or your offer may not be accepted. While it's fine to negotiate, make sure you're on the same page when it comes to compensation and don't make a candidate feel undervalued or not worth your money.
- **Sell your opportunity** - Show your candidates why they should be interested in the job. As much as you're interviewing them, they're also considering you, so make it clear to the candidate why your opportunity is better than your competitors'. Make sure you communicate any perks or benefits of the position too.
- **Communicate consistently** - Encourage open lines of communication, and make candidates feel comfortable enough to contact you with concerns or questions. Also, if the decision is going to take an extended period of time, try and connect with them to make sure they know they're still in the running.

Here are a few questions you should have answered by the time you're ready to make an offer:

- ▶ What does the candidate expect for compensation?
- ▶ Is the candidate considering other offers?
- ▶ Is there anything I can do to make sure the candidate accepts my offer?
- ▶ Are there any extra benefits or perks we haven't presented to the candidate?
- ▶ Are the candidate and hiring manager in agreement on contract terms? (if any)
- ▶ Do I understand what the candidate wants from their next position? Does the position align with their needs?
- ▶ Is this the type of candidate that will mesh well with the rest of the employees in the company?
- ▶ Is there room for this candidate to grow in the position?

B. ONBOARDING

Got your star employee? Make sure they start off on the right foot! Avoiding chaos by being organized the first couple days is important so you make a great first impression. Here are a few tips to help you with the onboarding process:

- **Keep your promises** - A lot is promised during the recruiting phase, like what the first days will be like and what the first tasks will consist of, so make sure you stick with what you've told the candidate. Try to be consistent with everything you've agreed on, from where the office will be located to the materials and projects that will be worked on and make sure it's aligned with employee expectations.
- **Create unique onboarding programs** - While it might seem like a smart idea to have a standardized onboarding schedule and program, each employee is different and each position will have different needs in its first weeks. Would you onboard a marketing manager and a junior graphic designer the same way? Educate the new hires with unique onboarding schedules that cater to their particular position in the company.
- **Be prepared** - On the first day the employee should have everything they need for the job. Try to make your new hire feel as comfortable as possible by providing all the proper tools needed for the position.
- **Continuous onboarding** - There should be 30-, 60- and 90-day goals for new employees so that their success in the first few months on the job can be measured by specific, time-sensitive goals. This way you and the employee know he or she is a right fit.
- **Take them out to lunch!** - An essential aspect to successful onboarding is building trust and relationships. Let employees know you value and appreciate them as new team members.



C. RETAINING EMPLOYEES

When you've made it through the hiring process and have your new employee on board, the last thing you want is to lose them. Avoid costly high turnover by proactively retaining your employees. This doesn't mean watch their every move to make sure they don't leave, but rather be conscious of what your employees want and let them know you want to help them meet their goals. Here are four simple tips to reduce turnover and retain your most valuable assets:

- Don't skimp on praise and recognition - When your employees perform well, let them know they are appreciated and valued in your organization.
- Get rid of bad apples quickly - You can always teach skills and knowledge but not personalities. Bad employees will drive away all the good employees because the good employees want to work with the best.
- Provide opportunities - Give your employees the chance to grow by providing opportunities for promotion or to learn more skills. Give them something to work for, whether it be small goals or a promotion in the future. Employees want to have future opportunities.
- Make your company a great place to work - Allowing for a work/life balance as well as providing benefits and reasonable PTO are very appealing perks to employees. You want to foster their creativity and have your employees feel lucky to work for an organization that treats them well.



START HIRING!

You are now ready to get out there and find the employee superstar you're looking for!

We hope this guide is helpful in your hiring process. Just remember: Do your research, have a plan and give your new employee a warm welcome when they join your team.

We encourage you to contact Celarity with any questions or concerns you come across in your hiring process. We are here to help you!

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