



EANE HR Hotline
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EANE Recruiting Toolkit

This guide will provide employers with some best practices to help attract and hire top talent!

Welcome

Finding great employees can be very challenging in the modern business climate. Competition for top talent has continued to increase due to changing work structures (remote/hybrid work) and employee access to more opportunities. Often qualified candidates have multiple options for employment at any given time. This has resulted in increased turnover and the need to recruit and retrain new employees more frequently.

Besides increased competition, there is also a skills gap and a lack of qualified candidates for many positions. Many employers have also reported a disparity in employees' expectations around salary compared to their skills and experience. This has left employers with more work than they have the staffing for.

What Do Companies Do to Recruit Better?

- Being aware of and building your Company Brand
- Evaluating your benefits and perks to ensure your offer makes candidates excited to work for your organization.
- Job Postings that highlight all the great things about the job and company
- An efficient, interactive interview process that is detailed enough to make a great decision but not too long that the company loses candidates.
- Great communication throughout the entire process

This guide will provide employers with some best practices to help attract and hire top talent!



Evaluating Your Compensation Package

Having a great work environment and culture are essential to hiring and retaining great employees but none of that will be valuable enough if you are not competitive with your compensation and benefits. Continually increasing living costs, medical expenses, and the growing need for flexibility are forcing employees to look for employers that offer more of these benefits. If you are unsure if your total compensation is competitive, there are a variety of resources to help evaluate where your company stands.

Compensation is More Than Just Pay

When evaluating your compensation package, it's important to consider more than just pay. Employees more than ever look at the compensation package as a whole when considering a new position. Many employees have children or elderly parents, and time off/flexibility is an important component. Health Savings Accounts and Flexible Savings Accounts provide a way to proactively save for medical needs. Many employees are concerned about their future and retirement and want to work somewhere that can help them meet those goals. Other employees find value in benefits like tuition reimbursement, student loan forgiveness, and wellness plans as well as voluntary insurance benefits. Having a better understanding of what your candidates/employees value can help you tailor your package to better attract talent.

Compensation Analysis

There are a variety of resources available to review your compensation practices. A compensation analysis will evaluate your employees, their jobs and how they compare to others in and outside of your organization. This can be done internally or by a third party. This can give your organization and much better understanding of where you are competitively.



The Applicant's Perspective: Company Brand

As we go through this toolkit, look at your processes through the applicant's eyes. Are there barriers or obstacles that would deter the candidate? What message do your materials and interactions send to potential employees? Everything from the job posting to the offer affects how candidates view your organization.

Every member of your team who interacts with your candidates is an extension of your employer brand, that is why it is essential that you have the right people in your recruiting process. Interactions should be informative and friendly. It is important that your recruiters, interviewers, and company ambassadors are excited and able to talk about all the great things about your organization.

Social Media and Company Website

Most applicants research companies (and sometimes their leaders) before they apply or go to an interview. It is important to understand what your company's presence looks like on social media and your website. This may be one of the first impressions your organization gives.

When you are looking at your online presence consider the following:

- Does your company use social media and its websites to discuss all the opportunities and benefits?
- Is it up to date?
- Does your website include testimonials, success stories, and awards?
- Does it promote your values and beliefs?

Company Reviews

Websites like Indeed and Glassdoor allow current and previous employees to post reviews on an organization. The comments and reviews can be general or focused on certain categories like compensation, management, and work-life balance. Potential applicants may look at these reviews prior to interviewing and or applying. Being aware of your reviews and reputation on these platforms can help you understand potential strengths and weaknesses of your company's culture and practices.



Improving or Repairing Your Company Brand

What can you do if you feel your company has a less than desirable employer brand or review? Investigate! Talk to your employees and get more feedback. Look for consistent trends or complaints in the reviews. This can help you identify what is truly a concern and help you create action steps to improve this perception. This also helps you adjust your communication with potential employees and applicants. Being self-aware is the first step in making change.

Making these changes is about more than just improving the perception of your organization. A company that treats their employees well, offers work life balance, and listens and communicates well will generally improve employee morale, performance, and reputation. Employees will refer their friends, colleagues, and family because they believe it is a great place to work.



Job Postings

Job postings are marketing material. They should be getting candidates excited to apply. Postings should highlight all the great things about your organization- the benefits, perks, and what the company stands for. Below are some additional considerations for your job postings.

Just the Essentials

When creating your job posting, you want to make sure you are capturing what skills/experience are necessary for the candidate to know/have without overwhelming the potential applicant. Having too many responsibilities/requirements on your job posting may deter potential candidates. When deciding on which job responsibilities are essential, think about which ones you will not have the time or resources to train on when they start and which ones you will need to train on anyways due to your company specific process. It may also be worth encouraging employees who do not meet every requirement to apply anyways (if applicable).

Why You Want to Work Here

Every organization has great things about it and it's important to communicate that in your posting. Provide a summary of your company and what they stand for. Mention major awards or accomplishments. Discuss the great parts about the job (Get to work with every department, room for growth, great training). Consider all your perks and benefits, there is more than just insurance and time off- no nights/weekends, long standing organization (stability), and personal development incentives are all great things to broadcast to potential applicants. This part of the posting should answer "Why do you want to work here?"

Keep it Positive!

Employers want to make it clear about certain requirements, but it is important to keep the posting positive (We want them to apply!). Language on your postings that focuses on don'ts or demands (MUST BE WILLING TO WORK OVERTIME) may send the message that the employer is more focused on rules than having a great work culture. The challenges of the position should be discussed during an introductory phone screen to explain their necessity. Another thing to avoid is using phrases that have gained a reputation of being a red flag for candidates. Phrases like “self-motivated” and “fast-paced environment” when used in place of detailed job duties or explanations may come off as more of a warning to candidates than a description.

Evaluate Based Off Your Applicants

Look for trends or themes in your applicants if you are not getting what you are looking for. The wording/criteria in your posting may be causing the wrong applicants to apply. Below are some common examples:

- 1) Using the word “entry level” when you require a certain level of experience.
- 2) Using certain job titles that are similar across industries. For example, Maintenance can be someone who fixes machinery or someone who cleans or performs custodial work. Consider adding or changing to draw different applicants.
- 3) If you are receiving under-qualified applicants, it may be due to the salary range. Consider lowering the experience requirements or increasing the salary range.

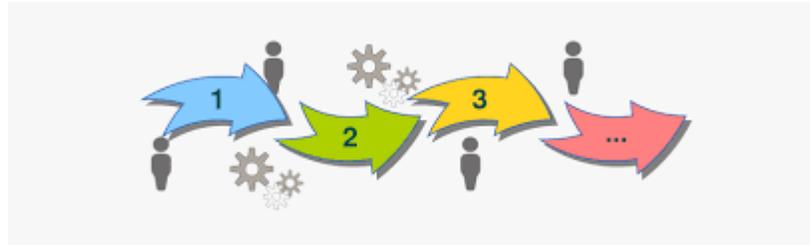


Sourcing Your Candidates

A great job posting will help attract candidates on your current job board but if you are still not reaching the people you are looking for, it may be time to consider additional sourcing opportunities. Getting creative with your candidate pool can give you an advantage in this competitive hiring climate. Some additional sourcing practices are:

- Referral programs
- Local trade schools and colleges.
- Human service organizations
- Trade shows and conventions
- Internal job postings
- Search firms

The Interview Process



Applicant Screening

An application screening process can expedite qualified candidates and save time. It should be quick and informative. Think about the dealbreakers. What things need to be inline before it's even worth discussing further (Salary Range, Schedule Requirement, Key Educational or Certification Standards, Necessary Testing?) A good prescreen should take approximately 10-15 minutes preferably by phone or virtual. This is an opportunity to answer any initial questions or alleviate any initial concerns.

Outlining the Entire Process

Employers should communicate to applicants what the entire hiring process looks like. It should outline the number of interviews, what tests or assessments will be taken, and what other requirements there are (Background checks, educational or motor vehicle checks, drug testing requirements, personal references, etc.) This does two things for you- it gives the applicant a clear outline of next steps and it also helps them decide if they want to or are able to commit to the whole process.

Remember, an employer does have an obligation to reasonably accommodate individuals who have physical, mental or other impairments under the Americans With

Disabilities Act (ADA). This includes also providing reasonable accommodations to applicants that remove barriers that impede their ability to partake in the hiring process. Examples of accommodations may include:

- ✓ Providing written materials in accessible formats, such as large print, braille, or audiotape
- ✓ Providing readers or sign language interpreters
- ✓ Ensuring that recruitment, interviews, tests, and other components of the application process are held in accessible locations.
- ✓ Providing or modifying equipment or devices
- ✓ Adjusting or modifying application policies and procedures

Similarly, for employers that use online resources (such as online applications, third party assessments or other online tests) as a part of their process, employers should similarly consider alternative formats if the applicant cannot interact with those online resources due to their disability. Thus, employers need to make applicants aware of the steps in the screening process and that reasonable accommodations are available for individuals with disabilities and provide clear instructions for how they can request such accommodations.

For employers that work with third party resources who provide testing or assessment services to applicants, employers should likewise make arrangements with those vendors to have the vendors forward to them accommodation requests so that the employer can follow up and provide alternatives.

The Interview Process

How many interviews are you doing? How long is the process taking? (LinkedIn reports that top candidates are off the market in 2 weeks). It is important to have multiple interviews with multiple people, but the process needs to be efficient. Consider who needs to participate in the interview process - direct managers, 2nd level managers, owners (if applicable) and don't include people who do not need to be there (More isn't always better). Also, consider the sequence or order of who conducts the interview and the timing or scheduling of them. If possible, see if the interviews can happen on the same day so the applicant doesn't not need to take multiple days off from work. The goal is to be thorough but to also move quickly, especially when you have a great candidate.

The interview process is another big part of the applicant's experience. The potential employee needs to be able to see themselves working with the people they are interviewing with. It is important that your interviewers are friendly and informative. The interview should not be an interrogation. You want the applicant to feel welcomed and excited about the people they spoke with. The interviewers are a representative of the company. Remember the 80-20 rule? It plays out here too! You shouldn't be doing all

the talking. Rather it should be your applicants. As discussed later in this toolkit, your questions should position your applicants to open up and do most of the talking.

Reading the Resume

A candidate's resume can give you more than just years of experience and skills. It can help create some great points of discussion in the interview. Consider the following:

- Tenures at jobs/positions- Applicants with very short tenures or a lot of jobs in a short period of time could be demonstrating a pattern of unreliability or performance issues. Long tenures in positions may imply the candidate is more reliable. It is worth discussing in either situation.
- Gaps in employment- it is important to investigate why. Could be that the employee was terminated or quit without a new job. It could also be due to circumstances out of their control. Never assume, ask.
- Upward growth on resume. Applicants with increasing job responsibilities often demonstrate high performance and motivation. It is important to be aware of these indicators. On the reverse, an employee who has seemed to take a reduction in responsibility in their work history may be looking to do less or was promoted past their capabilities.
- Discrepancies in dates or missing information- Resumes with incorrect information or missing information could indicate the candidate is trying to conceal information or embellish information. Consider clarifying with the applicant as it could have been a simple mistake.



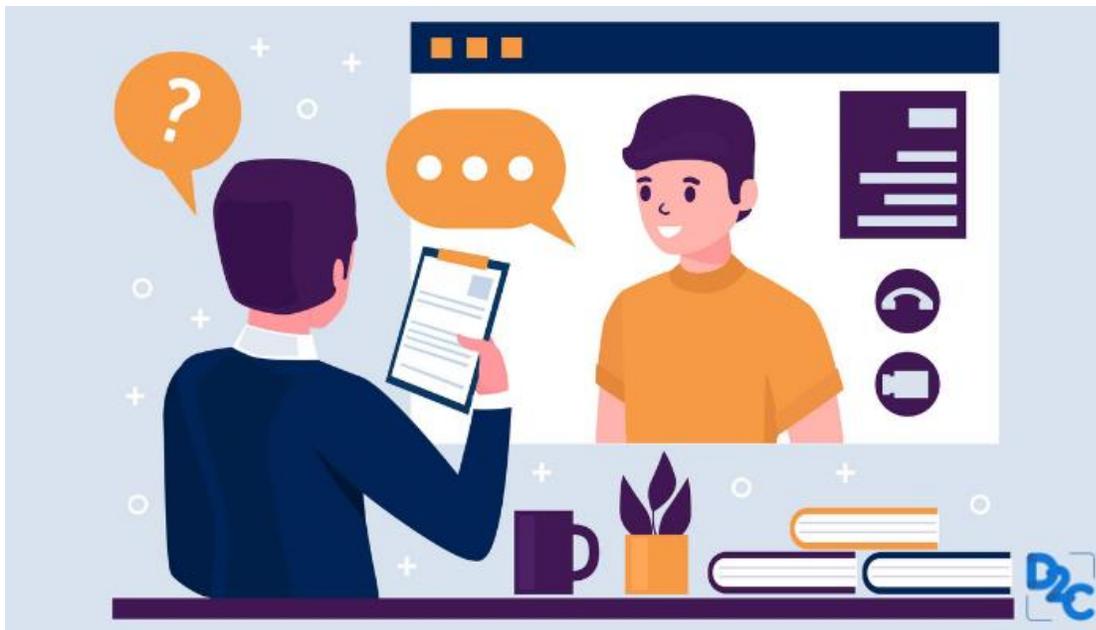
Interviewing and Evaluating Your Candidates

Many employees responsible for recruiting still struggle with how to find out if a candidate is a "fit" for the position. They are often asking the wrong questions or asking them in a way that does not get the information they need. Another issue is often the questions they are asking merely verify what is on the applicant's application or resume and nothing more. On the evaluation side, they are often not using the information they were given or making assumptions about what they can or cannot do. Aside from this

putting you into potential legal issues, you could be potentially hiring candidates who are a bad fit for the organization or missing out on great candidates.

Interview Questions

Interview questions should be behaviorally based when you are trying to certify if an applicant can perform a desired skill or has the experience. Asking yes or no questions can only get you so much information. You should also avoid asking leading questions as you may inadvertently guide the candidate to give the answer you were looking for without it being necessarily true. Make sure to ask follow up questions to help provide clarity.



Example 1:

Basic Question Framing: Are you able to lead a team of engineers?

Better Question Framing: Have you ever led a team of engineers and if so, when?

Best Question Framing: Tell me about a time you led a team or department? What goals were achieved? How did you manage them?

Example 2

Basic Question Framing: Can you do payroll?

Better Question Framing: What experience do you have doing payroll for a company?

Best Question Framing: Can you elaborate on your background in payroll and give us examples of how you have managed the process in your current or previous roles?

Compliant Recruiting

Companies must be careful with their hiring practices to ensure they are not being discriminatory, even if it is unintentional. Discriminatory practices could arise in any part of the process including the application, interview questions, or evaluation process. Consider the following state and federal laws when creating your hiring process.

What Questions Should I Ask?

To decide which questions you should ask in the interview, you should do an analysis of your job description. It is important to identify what skills the candidate simply must have. These skills either take too long to train or require too much experience to learn in a reasonable timeframe. Additional questions can go around skills and experience you would prefer but not need. It is important to understand what skills are essential and what are “nice to have”. Other considerations:

- 1) Have we talked with someone in the department or job recently about the position? Are the job duties up to date?
- 2) Are there processes that need to be trained your company’s way anyways?
- 3) Can someone else help with a portion part of the job until they learn it?

Which Questions Should I Avoid?

Avoid asking questions that would be designed to illicit information that may be protected by law. Do not ask questions that would cause an applicant to disclose information that would pertain to a “protected class” as defined under a federal or state law. Examples of questions to avoid would include:

Questions about race, religion, or ethnicity, such as:

- 1) Are you biracial?
- 2) Which church do you attend?
- 3) What language(s) do you speak at home?

Questions about age, unless used to verify that applicants meet any age-related legal requirements for the job.

Questions about an applicant's pregnancy or plans to start a family, such as:

- 1) Are you pregnant?
- 2) Do you plan to have children within the next year?

Questions about a person's current or past medical condition, disability, or illness such as:

- 1) Have you ever filed for workers compensation benefits or short-term disability benefits in the past?
- 2) Do you have any medical conditions that may impede your ability to do the job?
- 3) Have you taken sick time?
- 4) What medications are you currently taking?
- 5) Do you have a disability?

Questions about a person's genetic information or family medical history such as:

- 1) Have any of your close relatives been diagnosed with cancer?
- 2) Do any mental health conditions (such as depression) run in your family?

Criminal History and Recruiting:

When it comes to recruiting, interviewing and/or selection, employers need to be mindful of the patchwork of federal and state laws about criminal background that come into play at various stages. For instance, several states have adopted "Ban the Box" legislation that prohibits asking questions on an employment application about criminal history (including arrests and convictions) unless otherwise exempt from those obligations. Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island have all enacted such legislation.

Beyond the employment application, employers need to further beware of asking questions about criminal history in the interviewing process. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has extensive information on the subject of the use of criminal information in making employment decisions

(<https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidance-consideration-arrest-and-conviction-records-employment-decisions>). In short:

- 1) Avoid asking questions about arrest history (as an arrest does not mean that an applicant has in fact committed a criminal offense.
- 2) Avoid asking overbroad questions about conviction history.

Where possible, questions that probe conviction history should be tailored to criminal convictions that are job related and consistent with business necessity. In doing so, factors to consider are:

- 1) The nature and gravity of the offense or conduct.
- 2) The time that has passed since the offense, conduct and/or completion of the sentence; and
- 3) The nature of the job held or sought.

When criminal history is uncovered, an employer is to make an individualized assessment of the information to evaluate whether the information should or should not disqualify the candidate from further consideration. Such information to consider may include:

- ✓ The facts or circumstances surrounding the offense or conduct.
- ✓ The number of offenses for which the individual was convicted.
- ✓ Age at the time of conviction, or release from prison.
- ✓ Evidence that the individual performed the same type of work, post-conviction, with the same or a different employer, with no known incidents of criminal conduct.
- ✓ The length and consistency of employment history before and after the offense or conduct.
- ✓ Rehabilitation efforts, e.g., education/training.
- ✓ Employment or character references and any other information regarding fitness for the position; and
- ✓ Whether the individual is bonded under a federal, state, or local bonding program.

Other Key Questions

Besides questions about the job and the candidate's qualifications. It is important to know where an applicant stands with their job search as a whole:

- Is the candidate interviewing elsewhere?
- How far along are they in other interview processes?
- Is there a current job they are interviewing for that they are really excited for?
- What is their interest level in this position (Just because they applied doesn't mean they are.)
- Would this employee accept a counteroffer from their current employer if one was made?

Addressing these questions early in the interview process can potentially reduce the risk of wasting time and help employers decide if they want to continue to pursue a candidate.

Interview Templates

To ensure a fair and consistent interview process, employers should create interview templates with the same questions for each candidate. These can be customized by the job. The notes from these interviews should be recorded and stored by posting. This also allows for consistency when you have multiple recruiters or hiring managers working on a position.

Evaluating Your Candidates

After you complete your interviews, it is important to evaluate your candidates effectively. Using a consistent method of evaluating candidates allows you to compare candidates effectively and rate them based on the necessary skills and experience. Evaluations should be job based only. Hiring managers and recruiters should not be recording anything that is not directly related to the job.

CANDIDATE EVALUATION SUMMARY

CANDIDATE NAME

POSITION TITLE:

INTERVIEW DATE:

RATING KEY: 1 (Does not appear to exhibit/align with competency)
 2 (Appears to exhibit/align with competency)
 3 (Appears to strongly exhibit/align with competency)

Competency	Rating 1	Rating 2	Rating 3	Comments
EDUCATION				
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE				
INDUSTRY KNOWLEDGE				
COMMUNICATION SKILLS				
TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE APPLICABLE TO POSITION				
• TECHNICAL SKILL 1				
• TECHNICAL SKILL 1				
• TECHNICAL SKILL 1				
• TECHNICAL SKILL 1				
•				
•				
BEHAVIORAL COMPETENCY REQUIRED BY POSITION				
• COMPETENCY 1				
• COMPETENCY 1				
• COMPETENCY 1				

Having a great candidate evaluation process not only helps you make better hiring decisions, but it also has other benefits from a liability and future hiring standpoint. Being able to pinpoint why you chose one candidate over another from job-related criteria can help refute claims of discrimination or unfair hiring practices. It is also a way to look back at previous applicants for future positions and have detailed information about their interview.

Communication is Key

During the hiring process, it is important to stay in communication with your applicants. This outreach keeps them engaged and it also helps you stay informed on their level of interest. If there is some waiting time between interviews or decisions, touching base with the candidate just to keep them in the loop leaves them with a great impression about the company. It also may allow you to confirm if the applicant is still interested or in the interview process with another company.



Rejecting Candidates

We often get so busy trying to find the right candidates, we forget to alert and thank our candidates that we will not be moving forward with. Failing to notify or thank a candidate for their time can negatively affect your employer's brand or jeopardize future opportunities with those candidates. This applicant may talk to other applicants or people in your industry about their experience. It is possible you could lose the applicant as a customer in the future. A previous candidate may not have been a fit for the current position but may be for a position in the future. Being considerate of their time and sending them a message could make a huge difference and it is the right thing to do.

Sample Rejection Letter

Date

John Smith

999 Main St.

Small Town, Virginia 24577

Dear John:

The Company interview team wants to thank you for taking the time to participate in our hiring process through the second interview stage. This letter is to let you know that we have selected another candidate.

You were an exceptional candidate for our job and we hope that you apply for openings at Company for which you qualify in the future. While you were not selected for the current opening, the interview team did not make this decision lightly. We will keep your application on file for possible future consideration.

Again, thank you for taking the time to come to Company to meet our interview team. We enjoyed meeting you and our discussions indicated that you have much to offer your next employer.

We wish you both personal and professional success in your job search and in the future. We appreciate your interest in our organization.

Regards,

Real Person's Name and Signature

NOTE: This is just a sample letter and your organization should adjust the language accordingly to meet your company's communication objective. Do not commit to any future actions if you are not planning to follow through on those commitments as this could negatively affect the candidate's perception of your organization or create an expectation that the applicant is still being considered.

Restructuring Your Jobs

Even with the best hiring practices, it still may be difficult to find the right candidates. This is a great opportunity to look further into the job and see what can change. Below are some considerations that could potentially help you get the candidates you need:

- Can some of the job responsibilities be moved to someone else or a different department? Adversely, could a new position be created to take on some of these responsibilities and others from other departments?
- Can the schedule change or be made flexible? Alternative or flexible schedules may be more appealing to candidates.
- Can the job be done remotely? Having a remote job opens up your candidate pool and is more appealing to applicants.
- Do I really need all the requirements I have listed (Degree/ years of experience)
- Can the job be pieced together by part time workers instead?



In these modern hiring climates, employers need to get creative with their hiring methods. By looking at your work in a new perspective you may find ways to save money, improve efficiency, and make your positions more attractive to both internal employees and potential ones.

Offering Candidates

Great news! You found an amazing candidate and it is now time to make an offer. The offer should be an opportunity to express excitement and again highlight why the applicant should join your team. Below are some considerations when making your offer:

- Does the offer express excitement and reassurance that they have joined an amazing team?
- Does the offer outline the job title, schedule, and salary?
- Are the conditions of the offer clear? Background/Drug screen etc.?
- Does it outline the schedule and hours?
- Does it discuss all the benefits and eligibility around them?
- Where required by state law, does the offer provide the wage or salary range for the position?

Salary Negotiations and Counteroffers

In this competitive market, it is important to move quickly with great candidates. Great candidates are off the market in weeks. Candidates will expect transparency so be prepared to explain how the offer compares to their experience and skill level. It is also important to prepare for salary negotiations and potential counter offers from their current employer. Ensure you have enough flexibility in your pay structure to be able to work with these candidates if you feel they are worth it.

Recruiting As Ongoing Process

As the business world continues to digitalize and globalize, attracting and hiring talented employees will continue to be a challenge. Employers will need to continue to focus on great recruiting practices as well as their company's brand and culture. Staying up to date with the latest employee trends and technologies will also be essential in ensuring employers are staying connected with their applicants. Recruiting is and will continue to be an ongoing process and having the right people and tools in place will help ensure your organization is ready for top talent!

