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The front page

In the front page:

- Put your logo at the top
- Mention the title (i.e. Guidelines for hiring managers)
- Don't forget to align the colors according to your brand's identity colors

Introduction

[This is the introduction of the guide. Feel free to customize it depending on your organization needs and standards. Here is a sample you can use]

If you're reading this then it's likely you are growing your team or someone on your team has recently resigned and you're looking to hire a backfill. The People Team can't wait to get the ball rolling!

This document will walk you through all the steps required to get your new job approved and live.

Also, it will provide you with lots of useful information and advice for making each step of the hiring

process enjoyable and effective which will lead to the best new hires for your team.

And remember, the culture *[Link of your culture at your company webpage. Check an example here]* and ability of *[your company name]* to become a large global market leader all starts from recruiting.

- Every role in the organization matters
- Do not compromise on hiring
- Do not compromise, even under pressure
- Personality and motivation matter a lot
- Look what they have done, not what they say

The process

[Here, you should describe the steps involved in the hiring process for the recruiter. If the recruiter needs to prepare a job requisition, contact the HR manager to agree on terms, or secure approvals from the hiring team and other stakeholders, it should be mentioned here.

Additionally, this is the appropriate place to describe the hiring process, screening procedures, and interview stages]

Step 1: Create a requisition in a hiring plan

[If you have a requisition demand, you must provide guidance regarding the file path, the type of form, and the required fields that your recruiter needs to fill out].

Approvals

[Is there an approval process in place within your company? If so, please provide the contact information of the person or department that the recruiter should contact in order to obtain approval before proceeding to the next steps].

Step 2: A meeting between the hiring manager/team and the recruiter – Posting of the job

[This step may include a meeting with the hiring manager and the job posting terms. You can find below a sample].

The new role will be discussed here. Things that need to be covered in this meeting:

- The process (steps)
- The job description
- The ideal candidate profile
- Assessments (if there is the option to choose some of them)
- What the prescreening call should cover
- Important timelines (updates to candidates)
- Important timelines: when the successful candidate should be in place by, and why, then working back from that, to understand when interviews should be taking place
- Setting expectations – for example, no candidate should wait longer than X days for an update or feedback.
- The scorecards (different members of the hiring team shouldn't ask the same questions in separate interviews)
- The assignment (the assignment should assess the specific skills required for the role)

- The assignment feedback format
- Offer letter details for when the time comes
- The candidate experience surveys and actions in **[your company name]**

The candidate experience survey

[Using a candidate survey is always a good idea. If you choose to use one, it is important to explain how it works, including when it should be administered, whether it is an automated process or if the recruiter needs to send it out, and whether there is a template available for use.

It is also important to identify the questions that are most relevant to the hiring process and provide guidance on how to use the survey effectively. Below you can find a sample survey with relevant questions that could be helpful in this regard].

- Were you well-prepared for the interview?
- Did the information provided by the hiring team give you a good understanding of the role and the team at [your company name]?
- Did you have the chance to highlight your skills and experience during the interview?
- Are you satisfied with the overall interview experience with [your company name]?
- Would you recommend a friend to apply to [your company name]?

Step 3: The screening call or the one-way video interview

[In this step, you need to describe the stages of the process. Who is responsible for shortlisting candidates? How should they handle incoming CVs? How are screening calls scheduled? What should be the key outcome of the screening call? How is a potential one-way video interview organized, and what are the desirable results?]

- Prescreening: *[Your instructions here]*
- The screening call: *[Your instructions here]*
- Video Interview: *[Your instructions here]*

[If everything goes well and the candidate meets the expectations, they proceed to the next step, which may involve an assessment or assignment. In this step, you should describe the process clearly. Will it be an email with an attachment, a link to your site, or a document? Be clear about this with your recruiter].

Step 4: The cognitive assessment & the assignment

[If you decide to proceed with the cognitive assessment and the assignment, this is a sample you can use for your recruiter. In any other case, feel free to customize this step according to your hiring procedure]

The cognitive assessment

The online assessment consists of five parts:

1. Abstract Reasoning
2. Numerical Comprehension
3. Verbal Comprehension
4. Attention & focus
5. Workplace personality

Those are some tests that aim at evaluating candidates' cognitive ability and should be sent before the assignment since the threshold is an overall rating of **X**. If the candidate do not pass the assessment we can't

proceed to the assignment. If they pass, the recruiter can send the assignment.

The assignment

The promising candidates typically proceed to the second step of the process which is the assignment and assessments. The assignment is up to the hiring manager to create and decide how long the candidates will have to complete it.

The assignment is meant to emulate the sort of work the candidate would be asked to do in their job. The goal is to explore the way the candidate approaches a problem, test basic skills for the job and reveal the candidate's ability to present their work and thought process clearly.

The assignment is the best chance to examine the candidate's technical skills. The best advice before drafting an assignment is to leave some leeway for more in depth questions during the interview.

Also, remember that many candidates are extremely good communicators. They can sell themselves and we can buy them even after hours of interviewing, so the assignment combined with interviews, helps protect us from making poor hiring decisions.

When the candidate sends their assignment back you need to evaluate it within a couple of days. You should include detailed feedback in **[your company name]** using the **[you decide the procedure]**, including where the candidate has done well and areas they could have done better.

If you don't want the candidate to proceed further, the recruiter needs to send a disqualification email with feedback **X** days after the candidate's submission. The hiring manager's feedback is encouraged to be written as if you were talking to the candidate, in the second singular pronoun (you).

We really appreciate the effort you have put into your application so we'd like to give you some detailed feedback on your candidacy, hoping that it might prove useful to you in the future.

Let's start with what we think are the good points of your solution:
(Hiring managers input)

Things that you could have done better:
(Hiring managers input)

The Recruiter is the person who will move or disqualify candidates.

[This is the time to send a survey to the candidate for their feedback. If you choose to do so, please explain the procedure here].

Step 5: The first Interview with the hiring manager

[In this step, you need to be more thorough about the essence of the interview and the rapport building between the interviewer and the interviewee. Depending on your patterns, you can share your guidelines and points of attention during the interviews. Here is a sample].

Interviews are less formulaic than other parts of the process. There are still some guidelines that you ought to observe:

Review the scorecard

Make sure you are prepared for this and you know how to evaluate the candidate. Spend some time to

prepare a scorecard and discuss with the recruiter which questions can be asked. Scorecards help us ensure that all candidates are evaluated equally allowing us to make the best hiring decisions.

Respect the candidate

The candidate is making an important life decision. They probably prepared extensively, went through several calls and tests and maybe took time off their job to meet us. Whether you like the candidate or not you should respect the effort they are putting into this.

We have all interviewed for a job we wanted so we can all relate to the candidate's situation. Treat them as you would like to be treated yourself.

1. You should be **on time**. A few minutes earlier is ideal. This will help you make sure that everything is working properly (In case of a virtual meeting check mic, headphones, or your background image). If you're late by 5 minutes, apologize. If they are late but sent a message to notify us something happened to them, put them at ease and tell them it's not going to affect their chances. If they are late without good reason, make a mental note, but don't antagonize the candidate about this.
2. You should **be prepared**, meaning you must read the Resume/CV and all **comments/evaluations/scorecards** about the candidate at a minimum. Sometimes it's useful to have a quick chat with the recruiter or whoever has been evaluating the candidate before you.
3. You should be able to describe **what the role is** about in a few sentences, more on this further down.
4. You should demonstrate your preparation by **not asking** candidates about things **that have already been addressed**, or you should explain that you are asking a clarifying question when you do. E.g. "I know you discussed the reasons you are looking for a job with **X**, I'd love to hear more about your objective to be in a more **X**-facing role.
5. You should **be polite** and show appreciation for the candidate as a person and as a professional regardless of their suitability for the job in question. It's a good idea to congratulate the candidate for their education and career so far and thank them for considering working with us.
6. The candidate is here to discuss a job opportunity. It's fine, and often a good idea, to make a bit of small talk or pick up a tangent in the conversation. But make sure that **most of the discussion is about the role in question.**
7. Pay attention to the conversation and be engaged. You should look at the screen all of the time in case of an online interview but make sure **you aren't always typing or taking notes.** You can do this after the interview.

Prepare for a substantial discussion

It's a good idea to have a few specific questions you want to ask. What are the main things you want to learn about the candidate? It is often a good idea to tell the candidate from the beginning that you're hoping to learn more about X, Y and Z in this interview.

Here are a few areas that are often explored in interviews and some ideas on how to think about them:

1. Ice breakers

A useful question that shows respect and opens up the conversation like if we have been prompt and informative in the process so far. Or ask them what they thought about the assignment. If the interview is onsite offer to show them around the office if they wish so they can see where they would be sitting and what amenities we offer.

2. Describe the role and the company

It's good to establish early on that the interview is a two-way street and it's your job to answer any questions the candidate has. Offer to describe the role if the candidate wants to hear it again from you. You

should be able to explain what the company is about, what this team does for the company and what the role is expected to do.

The candidate needs to know what the main duties are, who they'll be working with, who they report to, why the team's role is important/interesting and what success looks like.

[Here, you can include an example of a dialogue that the Hiring Manager can ideally use to explain your product or service in a more engaging manner and put the candidate in the employee's shoes.]

You should be prepared to answer specific questions about the job and the company, about the team's remote work status – always give a straight answer to the best of your knowledge. If you don't know how to answer a question you can always say that you'll **get back to them via email** or that this is a discussion they can have at the next interview.

Make sure you note these questions down so they can be followed up on.

3. Understanding the nature of the candidate's most relevant work experience

This **does not** mean **walking through the CV together**. Simply asking them to describe their current company and the scope of their role tells you a lot about their ability to make sense of what they do. Asking them what **they don't do** is also important.

For example, a product manager does different things in different organizations. By asking them questions like "who develops the pricing?" or "who provides product explainers to marketing?" you can determine whether this is a technical or commercial type of product manager.

Similarly, for managerial positions, you can find out whether a person is hands-on or not. Asking who decides or approves this or that can tell you whether their "director" role is really what it sounds or merely the result of title inflation

4. Exploring specific skills

You should ask about their familiarity with specific tasks or methodologies relevant to the role. You can start by asking things like "are you familiar with Monte Carlo simulations?" and then dive deeper asking if they have used it, asking to describe a problem they used it for, what it's good for, or what its limitations are, etc.

Sometimes this sort of discussion can start from something about the assignment – so you have a common example to work with. You want to understand what the candidate knows, but also how they think and hopefully open up a discussion that reveals their level of expertise about a few topics that matter to you.

Sometimes, the same goal can be accomplished by presenting a **hypothetical** (but realistic) problem and asking the candidate to think **how they would tackle it**.

How would you deal with a customer who's upset about X? What would we need to do to upgrade our security infrastructure? How would you measure the quality of our onboarding process? How would you decide how to prioritize these two projects?

5. Understanding what they are like

Instead of the dreadful "tell me about your weaknesses", you can have a meaningful discussion about the things they like more or less about the job. Why do they like or dislike X?

If the candidate takes the job what would help them be successful? What should you avoid as a manager

with them? This type of questioning is often more productive than lists of strengths and weaknesses.

Sometimes it's more interesting to understand if the candidate **has good knowledge of themselves.** People who **know their strengths and weaknesses can show others how to work best with them.**

6. Understanding how they work with others

This is perhaps the hardest area to explore in an interview. An indirect approach is usually easier here. **Who is someone they enjoyed working with** in the past and **why**? Who is someone they found difficult to work with and why? Can they explain an argument/conflict they had and fairly represent the other side's argument? If this is a leadership/managerial position, what kind of team would they build? What would they look out for in people?

7. Getting problems and objections out in the open

Chances are that you have some potential objections or issues about any candidate at this point. That's really your last chance to address them. If you can't think of a better way, you can ask point-blank. E.g. "You seem to be a good fit in many ways but I have a small concern that you have no experience in a technology company. How do you think this will affect you?"

The recruiting process reveals a lot about a candidate and almost everyone will have some weak/questionable aspects.

Make sure you address them and get to the bottom of them - otherwise you won't be able to make a fair decision.

8. Management role questions

For leadership positions – especially people with a long experience in managerial roles – there are a few topics that will reveal a lot and can easily start a good discussion: how they would organize their team, how they would hire people, how they decide to let go of people, what was great about their best people, what they disliked about the ones who didn't work out, etc.

Ideally, you want to get into a discussion about a difficult situation and see if they can articulate how they thought about a problem, how they thought about the people involved, their motivations, their skills and possible solutions and their implications. People who can't sound interesting or thoughtful in a discussion like this one are probably managers in title only.

9. Compensation

This is usually dealt with by the Recruiting team in their screening call or Video Interview. Unless told otherwise by the Recruiting team or your manager, don't ask about compensation.

It's actually illegal in some jurisdictions, so it's not just our preference but a legal issue. If asked, it's OK to say that it's not your role to discuss or negotiate salaries but the Recruiter will be happy to answer any questions they have.

10. Encourage the candidate to ask questions

Their questions often reveal as much as yours. Plus, it's your duty to make sure that the candidate is making an informed decision. Answer questions truthfully and directly, to the best of your knowledge.

If unsure, say so and offer to get back to them via email or defer to your Manager or the Recruiter.

Here are a few common topics that candidates ask about and how to address them:

1. Questions about life at the company, office culture, etc.

Usually, the candidate will want to know what it's like to work here. Tell them what it's been like for you or for others in the role the candidate has applied for. Maybe you don't know everything about the company but you know your own experience and it's probably close to what they would experience here. Don't take anything for granted.

[You can mention here benefits and amenities of your company.]

You want to sell the role to the candidate but also don't sugarcoat it. If they are bothered by something, **it's better if they know about it before accepting the job.**

For example, you can say things like, "People are friendly and helpful and there's hardly any politics in the workplace – it's very meritocratic" but also things like, "This is a very ambitious company with smart competitors so everyone is expected to be performing at the top of their profession to advance their career here – it is not an easy job".

2. Questions about funding, financing, revenues, investors, etc.

[Customize this text according to your company funding and investors.]

There's a public record for funding and it's fair to say that we are backed by venture capital firms **[if this is the case].**

You should decline to share revenue or other financial metrics. Tell the candidate that your department leader is a better person to tackle those questions in the next interview.

3. Questions about career development

You can tell candidates that the company has a systematic approach to track and encourage career development. You can say a few things about the internal grades system and how performance reviews work. You probably have examples of people in the same job or team that got promoted or moved to a different role and those are often the best way to show a candidate what's possible.

4. Questions about compensation and benefits

For compensation, it's best to defer to the Recruiting team.

[For benefits such as healthcare, maternity leave, etc., you may have documents that can also be shared in the first email to the candidate. These documents may have been discussed with the recruiter and may also be available on your career site.]

5. Questions about the way we work

The smartest candidates will have a few specific questions about the tools and technologies we use, the processes we have, how responsibilities are allocated, how decisions are made, etc. This is the area that you know best, so here's your chance to demonstrate your knowledge.

We probably have some weaknesses too, things we want to improve or hope to do in the future. Talking about them in a thoughtful manner shows that we are not a stagnant organization so don't be afraid to touch this discussion.

6. Family and work-life balance questions

Some candidates are concerned about how a job can interfere with their family obligations. If the job requires shift work make sure you clarify what it's like and how much.

Remember, **it's OK to say you don't know something,** or "**I can't speak for the company about this, but here's how I understand it**". Good candidates appreciate honest and forthcoming interviewers.

Things to avoid

Interviews are sensitive. You're in front of a stranger and you are both trying to make an important decision, so you each want to learn more about the other. But there's an asymmetry of power. Even if we don't see it that way, many people will see you as the gatekeeper for a job that may be very important to them.

They feel obliged to go where you want to go and act as if it's totally OK, even if it makes them uncomfortable.

It is your responsibility to **stay within the boundaries of acceptable conversation.** Here are a few common mistakes and topics to avoid:

1. Discussions about other people or previous employers

It's OK to discuss what they didn't like about their previous job or why they were let go. Some candidates will badmouth employers or trash talk this or that. Don't participate in it and gently bring back the conversation to **what's strictly professional.**

For example, if they lost faith in the success of their current employer, that's something useful to know and it may suggest that this is something important to them.

If they want to go on for 20 minutes about why their boss was a terrible person to work with, we don't want to hear this and it doesn't make the candidate look very good either.

2. Personal matters

This is not the time to discuss their family, health or other personal matters. If it's offered by the candidate and relevant to their resume/CV, it's OK. E.g. "I quit my job a year ago to look after my baby and now I want to go back to work" or "My wife is a doctor who works 80-hour weeks so I need a job that allows me to pick up my children from school in the evenings".

A simple rule of thumb here is **if you wouldn't talk about something in a professional meeting with people you don't know (e.g. a customer) then you probably shouldn't do it in an interview either.**

3. Politics, religion and any controversial non-work topic.

These have no place in interviews.

4. Too casual

The meeting should focus on professional matters and be conducted in the same manner as any other professional meeting with strangers. It's OK to spend some time building rapport, talking about some common interests or making small talk but remember that this is not a social occasion and the candidate expects you to discuss substantial work-related matters.

Personable and confident people may appear pleased to have casual conversation and both of you may be

enjoying this, but it's your job to make this a discussion about the role in question.

5. Arguments in general

If you do enough interviews you'll get to meet someone who's rude, late, aggressive, trash talking this or that, etc. Don't let them drag you into an argument, don't be judgemental, always stay polite and steer the conversation on topic even if they infuriate you and you are 100% right.

If we don't like someone **we don't have to hire them** but we **must behave professionally** even if they don't.

Evaluation

Now you need to write down your opinion about the candidate. Here are a few tips on writing evaluations:

1. **Use a scorecard.** This way the entire hiring team knows what has been covered in the previous step.
2. Your role is to **form an opinion,** not just to write a transcript of what happened in the interview. Use notes and facts from the interview to document your opinion, don't just list them.
3. Your opinion should have a **specific bearing** on things we care about: Can the candidate do the job? Do they bring skills we don't have? Will we learn something from the candidate? Are they missing skills you wish they had? Will they work well with our team? Will they function well in our processes and style of work? Will they be happy with the job?
4. Use **facts from the CV** and the interview to support your opinion. Past achievements demonstrate skills, intelligence or work ethic. Specific statements in the interview suggest motivations or interests. Personality and demeanor suggest how the candidate would fit in a team.
5. There's always room for "gut" or undocumented reactions. If you really liked or disliked someone you should mention it in the evaluation. But do take the effort to inquire why. E.g. "**I had a hard time making good conversation because the candidate was dominating air time and interrupting all the time – it will be tough to deal with customers without better conversational skills." Don't just say, "I didn't like him."**
6. Write the evaluation right after the interview. A Pro Tip: block 15 minutes after each interview for overruns or completing your scorecard right away. A day later you will forget important points and you'll only remember your impressions not the facts. Also, if you see other candidates in-between the interview and the evaluation then it becomes a comparison game. If you find yourself writing things like "John is great, but not as good as Liz" then you're doing it wrong. We'll get to do this thinking later when we have an individual evaluation for everyone.

Also, people tend to like people who are similar to them. We tend to be biased towards someone who has the same hobby as us, or went to the same university or has the same age or in general has something similar. If we know it before an interview we eliminate the chances of liking someone regardless of the actual technical skills or interview performance.

Please avoid using **subjective assumptions** for candidates' personalities or **attitudes** and be based on those to make a final decision. Eg: Sophia, was communicative, smiley but seems an introvert and too arrogant so, I believe she won't fit in our culture.

Try to give data from the interview and before using those words to **back them up.** So why couldn't a non-smiley, introvert and arrogant person add value to the team? Back up your opinion in a correct way.

Also, the term **"culture fit"** can lead to several misconceptions. A lack of diversity is the biggest drawback of hiring for cultural fit. If like-minded people are hiring folks who are similar to them, it's not likely the organization is diversifying its workforce. We prefer to use the term "culture add" instead.

A **culture add** is someone who brings diverse experiences, perspectives, and ideas to the workplace. A

culture add is someone who enhances the company culture, a missing piece that changes the picture. A culture add models desired behaviors and values while empowering growth.

Experienced interviewers know what they want to learn about a candidate before the interview and they make sure they use the interview to provide them with the facts they need to write a comprehensive evaluation. Thinking about the evaluation before the interview is the best way to figure out what you want to discuss in the interview itself.

Step 6: The executive interview

This is the last interview of the process. The department Head will make the final call for the candidate. If you've done a good job selecting and evaluating candidates, the executive interviewer should know what areas are unclear or potentially problematic so they can focus more of their attention there and make a decision.

Step 7: Reference calls

The reference call is done by the Recruiter to two cases. The first is for roles that are [grade **X]** and above. The second is to anyone for whom we have slight doubts personality wise.

1. We only make reference calls for people we intend to hire as a last step before the offer letter. A reference call reveals that the candidate is looking for a job to a third person so we should never do this earlier in the process. The guiding principle here is that you should be prepared to make an offer tomorrow if the reference turns out positive.
2. Ask the candidate to provide contact information for their suggested references. Make a note of the candidate's relationship to their reference. Were they reporting to this person? Were they peers? Is it some other senior member of their previous organization?
3. References will rarely be negative about the candidate. The way to get to the truth is by asking indirect but specific questions. Instead of "which are the candidate's weaknesses", ask "how can I get the most about this person?", "how do you advise me to manage this person?" or "what should I know or avoid?". This line of questioning is usually more revealing.
4. Sometimes the best references are ones the candidate didn't offer. If you know someone you trust who knows the candidate this is the best way to learn about them. There is nothing unethical about back-references if done correctly. As with normal references we only do them at the end of the process when we know we want to hire that person. We don't do back-references with the candidate's current employer under any circumstances. We do them only with people we know and trust to be discreet. The general principle here is that we don't want to reveal the fact that the candidate is looking for a job to anyone we can't trust to keep it confidential.

Step 8: The Offer Letter

[Customize this to meet the standards and flow of approvals of your organization]

When the Hiring Team agrees on the ideal candidate and decides to move on to an offer, the following steps should be followed.

The VP mails to the Recruiter and SVP or C-level Executive the offer details, which include:

1. Candidate Name:
2. Position title:
3. Grade:
4. Salary:

5. Bonus:
6. Starting Date:
7. Team:
8. Reports to

Process

1. The SVP or C-level Executive approves by replying back.
2. The Recruiter prepares the approved offer letter and shares it with their manager for final approval.
3. The Recruiter sends the email with the offer letter to the candidate while on phone with them and cc's the Hiring Manager/VP.

As soon as the candidate accepts then HR takes over for the pre-boarding process.

Happy Hiring!