

Talented



How To Build High Performing In-House Tech Teams



The Competition For Hiring Top Tech Talent Has Never Been Tougher

In the world of tech, competition for top talent is fierce. Currently, we are seeing established players in the tech industry competing for the best talent, not just with one another, but with the steady flow of fast-growing startups and a wealth of other industries that are just discovering the need for employees in technical roles.

This situation has put technical talent in the driver's seat in an unprecedented way, which means there's more pressure than ever for businesses to implement highly efficient strategies to attract and hire both passive and active candidates. With not enough supply to meet demand, companies are being forced to look beyond traditional hiring methods and think outside the box.

No matter what stage of growth your business is currently in - a startup, scale-up or enterprise - a careful and detailed hiring process is critical to sourcing high-quality candidates and, ultimately, building the best, most innovative tech teams.

Before we dive into the best practices to source, attract and hire top tech talent and create a more efficient recruitment process, let's take a closer look at the data that indicates some of the common challenges businesses face when finding technical candidates.

The Challenges Of Hiring Top Tech Talent

The Demand For Tech Talent Is Continuing To Rise

The demand for tech talent continues to outstrip supply and experts predict that the talent gap will continue to widen at least for the foreseeable future. To put this into perspective, data from Cyberstates shows that there were 585,000 tech businesses established in the US in 2020. The same report states that there were 3.9 million employer job postings for tech roles during 2020 and less than half of the candidates did not have computer science degrees or specific qualifications available to fulfill these positions¹.

Top-Tier Tech Talent Are Already In Employment

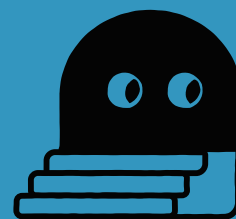
Research shows that 85% of potential hires are passive applicants³. These are candidates that are employed and are not actively looking for new opportunities but could be open to moving for the right opportunity. This often means you won't find these people on job boards and they won't necessarily be targeted by job advertisements. To successfully hire this pool of talent, hiring teams need to rethink strategies on how to enter the targeted audience's line of sight.

Standing Out Amongst The Competition To Attract Talent

According to a LinkedIn survey, 75% of applicants consider the employer's brand before applying to a job and often trust the company's employees more than the company when it comes to credible information on what it's like to work there⁴. As data suggests, a strong employer brand impacts whether qualified candidates will decide to join a team or accept a competitor's offer instead, so it's essential for organisations to build a positive employer brand in today's competitive talent market.



IT professionals receive twice as many LinkedIn InMails versus the average LinkedIn member and software engineers get more than two-and-a-half times as many².



85% of potential hires are actually passive applicants who are already employed.



84% of employees would consider leaving their current job if offered another role with a company that had an excellent employer reputation⁵.

¹ Cyberstates, 2021, Tech Industry Job Market & Salary Trends Analysis
² LinkedIn, How To Attract & Retain Top Technology Talent
³ HR News, 2019, The 5 Biggest Challenges When Hiring Tech Talent
⁴ LinkedIn, The Ultimate List Of Employer Brand Statistics
⁵ Glassdoor, 2015, Why Does Your Company's Reputation Matter?

Relying On Dated Recruitment Practices And Tools To Source Candidates

Traditional recruitment methods are simply not enough to acquire top talent in a technological era. According to a Stack Overflow survey, 69% of developers are self-taught and less than half hold a bachelor's degree⁶. If companies value candidates on their degree alone they risk missing out on quality tech talent. Overlooking CV's and applications because candidates fail to check all of the boxes can result in turning away top-quality talent.

Possessing The Right Skills To Evaluate Tech Talent

A lack of tech hiring expertise or missing relevant skills within the existing recruitment function is often an underestimated hiring challenge. Lacking the required technical proficiency to evaluate talent suitably can result in bad decision-making, poor candidate experience and unsuitable hires. A talent advocate or a professional who understands tech skills is essential for scouting the right tech talent, evaluating candidates appropriately and ensuring the best candidate experiences.

Lack Of Opportunities For Career Advancement

LinkedIn found that the main reason a person leaves and joins an organisation are the same: *career opportunity*⁹. It takes more than offering a bigger salary - there are plenty of other considerations that are just as or even more important. For example, benefits, flexibility, work environment, L&D, progression and career growth.

42%

A Statista survey (2019) suggests the top challenge in recruiting tech-related roles is sourcing, with 42% of respondents citing this as their ultimate hurdle⁷.

69%

69% of candidates would share their negative recruitment experience with their friends and network⁸.

69%

69% of IT professionals said advancing their tech skills would be their top reason for changing roles¹⁰.



6. Stack Overflow, 2016, Do Developers Need College Degrees?
7. Statista, 2020, Technology Talent Recruitment Challenges For Organizations Worldwide 2019
8. TalentLift, 2020, 5 Eye-Opening Candidate Experience Statistics
9. LinkedIn, Guide: How To Attract & Retain Top Technology Talent
10. Spiceworks, 2017, Tech Career Outlook

Strategic Ways To Successfully Attract & Hire Tech Talent

So, you have a clear idea of the tech capabilities you require, now how do you source or attract the kind of talent you have in mind?

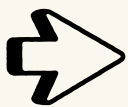
For many companies, tech recruiting can typically be a slow process for multiple reasons, including some of the challenges we have already covered. But if you are an organisation undergoing an aggressive digital transformation, you'll want to source and hire talent quickly and efficiently without compromising on quality. Here are five areas to consider when building a stellar tech team.



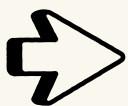
Attracting Top Talent

Build A Positive Employer Brand

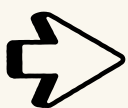
Crafting a solid employer brand helps businesses compete for the best talent and establish credibility. It's essential to differentiate yourself from the crowd and showcase why tech talent should consider joining your organisation, which is why your careers site and social media content need to give candidates a real-life look into your working environment. Here are a few ways you can promote a strong employer brand:



Demonstrate transparency and highlight your company culture by regularly sharing photos, videos and stories of your employees enjoying their roles, company events or learning sessions. Share training and advancement opportunities and encourage people to click through to your company's social channels (Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn pages) to learn more.



Host meetups, workshops and hackathons either virtually or in person and ensure you welcome outside participants too. Tech talent may join for fun or to meet like-minded people and then be drawn into your company through their positive experience and networking with your current employees.

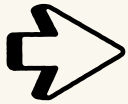


Regularly publish useful and relevant content across online channels that your targeted candidates are likely to be active on in order to position your company as a thought leader and top employer within your industry.

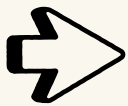
Define And Promote A Strong Employee Value Proposition

Different from employer branding, your Employee Value Proposition (EVP) is essentially what makes your organisation stand out from your competitors. A strong EVP is based around the salary, compensation and benefits you offer your employees in return for their skills, experience and productivity. Combining an EVP with a powerful employer brand is the determining factor in attracting, retaining and losing tech talent.

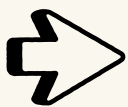
When thinking about your EVP, here are some things to consider that will help differentiate your business from the competition and get candidates excited about working for you:



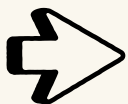
Consider Candidate Expectations: How do the salaries and any other financial offerings like bonuses or stock options compare to your competitors? If you are offering employees average or low pay, you should look into other unique selling points in order to attract skilled employees and talented individuals.



Communicate Opportunities For Growth: Employees who don't believe they can achieve their career goals with a current employer are 12 times more likely to consider leaving¹¹, so it's vital to provide learning opportunities that help careers take off. Be transparent about the support and training you offer as a business to help employees progress and develop their tech abilities.

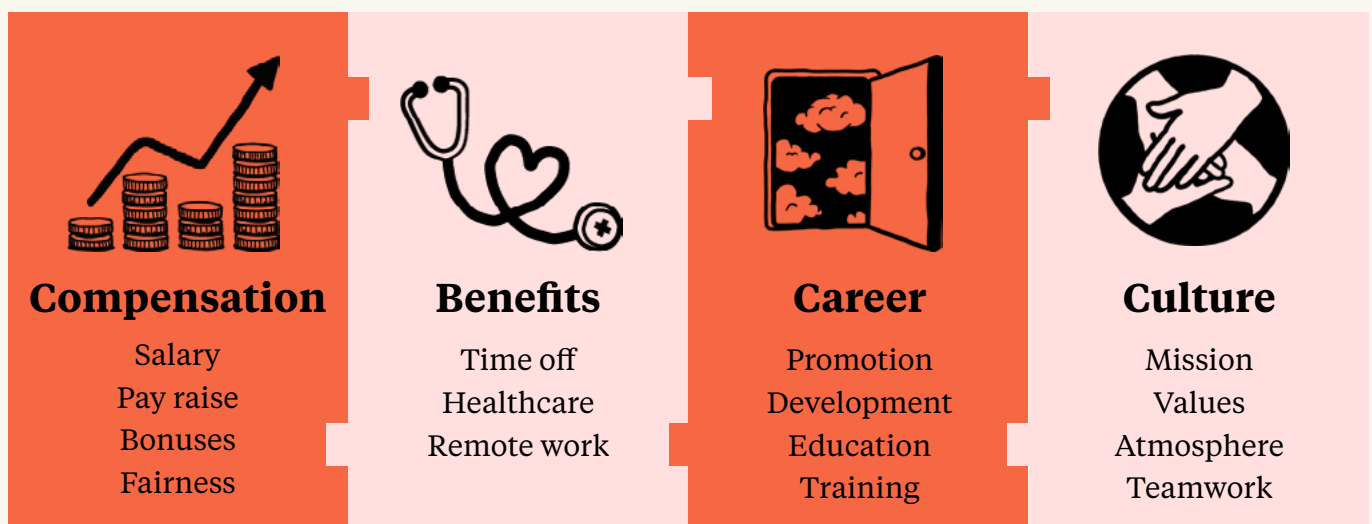


Offer Flexible And Personalised Benefits: Ensure you have flexible benefit options that appeal to diverse groups of people so employees can choose what adds value to their personal and professional lives. Benefits include things like health insurance, retirement benefits, paid leave and wellbeing allowances.



Promote A Thriving Company Culture: It is important that candidates feel they can identify with the company culture, including all the values that a company stands for. Think about what kind of company culture will help your target audience succeed and thrive at work as well as what constitutes an ideal working environment for your target candidates.

Employee Value Proposition



¹¹ LinkedIn, Guide: How To Attract & Retain Top Technology Talent



Finding Tech Talent

Refine Strategies For Sourcing Technical Candidates

As mentioned, what makes hiring tech talent so tricky is that those with the right profiles may not have a traditional CV, be actively searching for employment or engaging with the usual careers sites. Therefore, it's wise to engage talent from elsewhere and tap into international communities via platforms and tools such as Hacker News, Reddit, Google X-Ray, Github, Stackoverflow and Amazing Hiring. If you are not familiar with these, it's worth looking into them and discovering which platforms, tools or plug-ins work best for you.



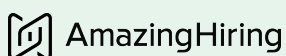
Hacker News is a social news platform focusing on computer science and entrepreneurship with more than three million monthly unique visitors. It's a less traditional way to source tech talent, but if you have the time to dig into topical threads you can find a lot of talented and engaged talent. Communities like Hacker News are full of great potential hires waiting to be discovered.



Also known as Boolean search, Google X-ray is a search engine which allows you to search web pages for specific keyword combinations and information. By using this method, you can target your results without having to comb through thousands of pages of search results. It's an effective way to source tech candidates who have specialised skills and keywords listed on social networks, websites and online databases.



Github is not a sourcing tool, it's a community of developers, collaborating, sharing and building great software. Just like LinkedIn is a recruiter tool, Github is a developer tool, so it's a great idea to access and engage candidates in the places they hang out. The easiest and most familiar way to use Github is through advanced search. You can filter by language, location, number of followers and number of repos. Another good approach is sourcing through "trending".



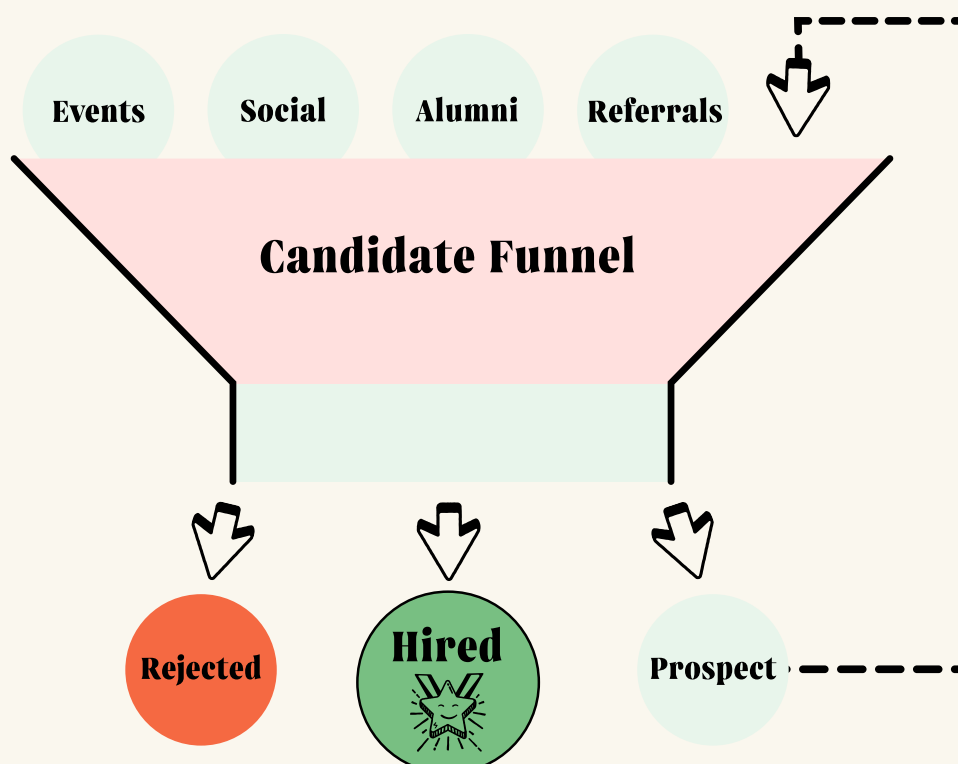
A great alternative to LinkedIn, Amazing Hiring is a robust talent search engine which brings up profiles aggregated from multiple sources. It has an AI powered algorithm which gives you more relevant search results and you can contact candidates via the platform. The Chrome extension opens all the social profiles it can find, plus the person's email address (if it's public) when searching on Github or LinkedIn. This really speeds up the search process and enables you to study candidates' social footprint so you can get a better understanding of who they are and whether they could be a good culture add to the team you are growing.



Many of these platforms we have touched on are alternatives or plug-ins to LinkedIn, but there are, of course, many ways to get the most out of LinkedIn Recruiter too if you use this. With 575+ million users on LinkedIn and more than 260 million monthly active users, the social platform shouldn't be neglected even if you feel you've overused it.

LinkedIn has several features that are sometimes forgotten by talent professionals. For example, using saved searches so that LinkedIn is essentially sourcing in the background and depositing candidate lists into your inbox as routinely as you request it. Or, checking out your notifications every day so that you can see if candidates in your projects become open to opportunities, then you can be the first to message. Custom filters are also a great way to source candidates from underrepresented groups and should be used often to run your searches more efficiently.

Build Effective Talent Pools To Pursue Passive Candidates

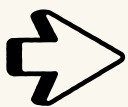


Talent pooling can sometimes be challenging to keep on top of but it's an incredibly valuable asset for a recruitment team to focus on.



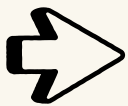
A talent pool is a group of high-quality, qualified candidates interested in working for your company. These groups of people are not your active pipeline of candidates but talent you may have engaged with at some point and have the potential for future roles.

Building a strong talent pool is one of the most effective methods for proactive recruiting. It allows you to organise and segment anyone who has ever engaged with your brand, so instead of starting from scratch with each role you open, you can surface the best candidate for your job when you need to form your own database—in turn, reducing time to hire and cost per hire.



How can I build pools of talent?

Most applicant tracking systems (ATSs) have talent pooling functions or an integrated CRM system to manage this. Alternatively, creating your own spreadsheets is a great solution if you are starting out and are wary of cost. However, as soon as you start to deal with any volume of candidates, spreadsheets become manual and cumbersome, so it's worth looking into your ATS features or CRM software.



What are the different types of talent pools?

As you can see in the Candidate Funnel diagram above, there are various types of talent pools. The most obvious one is “former candidates”, who can be your quick wins. This applies to any candidate you've spoken with who was strong but didn't get the job for whatever reason. They may include “silver medalist” candidates who made it to the final interview stages but didn't get offers or candidates who were promising but maybe needed to develop a specific skill before they'd be the right fit for the role.

Another pool is “passive candidates” from your sourcing efforts, who you have reached out to previously and they've expressed some interest, but the timing wasn't right. Or they simply haven't responded and they are due a follow up. “Opportunistics” are candidates with promising skill sets who've expressed some form of interest in your company – at an event, over coffee, through an email, via a referrer, etc. but aren't a fit for a particular role today.

Hiring Tech Talent

Acquire Or Retrain New Recruiting Capabilities



To effectively engage with candidates in these new tech environments, companies should either retrain their current talent professionals, acquire new recruiting capabilities or use external hiring partners to connect with candidates about relevant (and often very niche) tech topics. It is vital that recruiters know what they are talking about when it comes to pitching open roles to talent as well as assessing whether a candidate would be a good fit. The required skill sets should be crystal clear for both the hiring team and candidate.

Partner with Talented



Hundreds of ambitious businesses have opted for our recruitment model as a solution to overcome their tech hiring challenges. Embedded within the heart of businesses, our experts act as a flexible onsite extension of in-house recruitment functions to ensure the best cultural matches and hiring experiences for both top talent and companies.

Our team has the expertise and in-depth knowledge to set businesses up for success, from tech hiring to process reviews, employer brand content, events strategy and diversity workshops - we offer our partners support wherever needed the most.



Talented is on a mission to reinvent recruitment and accelerate the growth of tech companies at every stage, through expert, embedded talent acquisition.

Whether you're a startup, scale-up or enterprise business, our talent experts can help scale your team.

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