5 Critical Hiring Mistakes Employers Make

Finding top-tier talent is hard on a good day, but with unemployment in the US sitting under 4%, it’s even more challenging than ever.

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Unemployment in the US is sitting under 4%, which means that human capital has become a scarce resource. As an employer, that means that you should be doing everything that you can to attract, develop and retain the best possible employees. There are many mistakes that employer make with hiring that are avoidable are avoidable. Avoid these five mistakes, and you’ll be on your way to finding the right people every time:

1. Avoid “Superstar” and “Ninja” job titles

There is a trend towards companies trying to attract young talent by using job titles like “Ninja,” “Rockstar,” “Superstar” and “Guru” among others. While there is undoubtedly some merit to using these titles to outwardly identify that your workplace culture doesn’t take things too seriously, there are a few downsides. First, the job title doesn’t give any indication what the role is actually like. As an example, Microsoft has a “Viceroy of Galactic Research Excellence” which sounds fun but at a glance gives no impression of what they might do beyond research. Second, most people don’t search these words when looking for jobs and as

such, using one won’t increase the number of people who see your job. In short, it simply confuses people! If you need a further reason to avoid these titles; research shows women, visible minorities and people over 40 are less likely to apply to jobs with these titles which cuts out a significant portion of the talent pool.

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2. Stop ghosting candidates

For the unfamiliar, ghosting refers to finishing a conversation without giving the candidate an update on their application status unless you explicitly indicated that you wouldn’t follow up. While you might think “If they’re not going to work here, why should I care?” it’s essential to maintain effective communication with candidates because an excellent candidate experience is a part of building your employment brand. If someone has a miserable experience, they will potentially share it online, tell their friends and other prospective candidates who may be the right fit for your role.

3. Don’t confuse employer branding with company culture

Letting potential employees know about your workplace culture is an essential part of establishing your employer branding, but it’s not everything. Employer branding is broader, including everything from your Glassdoor reviews to the wording of your job description and your total compensation program. Highlight your engaged team members, funky meeting rooms, and dog-friendly workplace but don’t miss out on the public side of the recruitment process. Respond to reviews on recruitment websites, consider the candidate experience as

they move through the hiring process. It always helps to have other people tell the story of how great you are; consider applying for some ‘Best Workplace’ awards and asking your employees to post reviews online.

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4. Avoid hunting for unicorns

When you post a role, you’re likely to have a rough idea of what the perfect candidate would look like. They’re everything that you want – job skills, interpersonal skills, leadership capability – the whole gamut. However, the ideal candidate doesn’t exist – they’re a unicorn. This is even more important to consider the US’ high unemployment rate. The odds of finding that perfect candidate is extremely low, and you might miss a diamond in the rough if you set your bar too high and your criteria too narrow. If you keep skipping over suitable candidates to find this unicorn, you lose time, productivity, and ultimately take on some of that stress yourself. To avoid this pitfall, make sure to understand the difference between what you want and what you need from candidates and hire people who are excellent with potential – not perfect.

5. Stop wasting time

When you’re planning your interview process, target how many candidates you’d like to interview at each stage, and how long those interviews take, don’t leave it to chance. Scheduling full interviews will all candidates that pass your primary screen wastes a significant amount of time and resources. The best approach is to frontload any parts of your recruitment process that are short or “make-or-break” to make it the most efficient that it can be. Phone screens are a Hiring Manager’s best friend, a 5-10 minute video call will rule out a significant number of candidates, saving you and the candidate

precious time so you can focus on the strong contenders.

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Hiring doesn’t have to be stressful

By avoiding these pitfalls, you will fill your roles more quickly and help build your organization’s reputation as an employer who treats people well, which will attract the candidates you are looking for.

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