

6 common hiring mistakes to avoid

No employer wants to make a bad hiring decision. Bringing aboard someone who ends up performing inadequately or proving a poor cultural fit affects productivity and office morale. Whether you end up firing the new person or the individual realizes on his own that this job isn't for him and leaves, the company is back to square one in the hiring process — plus time and money wasted.

The labor shortages many industries face at the present time make hiring mistakes easier than ever to commit. Hiring managers desperate to fill roles may cut corners in the hiring process, only to discover down the line that they selected the wrong person.

While there's no way to guarantee whoever you hire will end up as a perfect match, employers can take action that increases the odds of not hiring the wrong candidate. Monitor your behavior to ensure you don't fall prey to these six common hiring mistakes.

Writing an inaccurate job description

Finding talent truly in line with your needs begins with crafting a spot-on, thorough job description. Don't just dust off the last job ad you wrote for that role and deem it sufficient. Identifying the essence of the job opening as it stands now brings forward ideal candidates with the background and skill set necessary for success. You can't really blame a new hire for not living up to current expectations if you advertised for old qualifications.

Spend time figuring out key responsibilities. Think about essential characteristics for a top performer. Create a job posting that clearly outlines what the person who gets hired will be doing on a day-to-day basis and how that fits into the overall operation of the company.

In your quest to get noticed, watch that you still remain truthful. Yes, you want to present the opportunity in the best possible light. However, omitting unattractive yet important parts of the job does not help anyone in the long term. If your new hire quits after learning during onboarding that she's expected to work every other Saturday, that's on you.

Speeding through the hiring process

Unfilled positions mean less productivity. Thus, in an effort to fill them quickly, hiring managers may cut corners. Instead of conducting phone interviews with several potential great candidates, they may jump to inviting just a few in for formal conversations. This haste could exclude individuals who might have proven a better match. It also can lead to "settling" for someone who was interviewed because of not wanting to waste the effort expended.

During a hurried interview process, job candidates may meet with fewer employees of the company. They might, perhaps, talk with someone in human resources and the immediate supervisor in the department that's hiring but not interact with any other team members. The result is that fewer people weigh in on hiring decisions. This lack of interaction means less to go on. Eyes and ears that may have spotted potential problems with the job candidate never had the opportunity to notice.

Skipping the background check

It would be nice to think of all job seekers as professionals who present a truthful resume. Research shows, however, that 85% of employers have caught [candidates lying](#) on their applications.

The repercussions of these fibs vary. You may bring aboard someone who lacks the education, licensure, and skill set to perform the tasks for which he was hired. Worse yet, you could endanger your company's funds, staff, and reputation by employing a person with a criminal history. The bit of extra time it takes to run a background check, contact references, and verify information is a drop in the bucket compared to the trouble that could ensue by neglecting those safeguards.



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Ignoring company culture

The best candidate for an open position is not always the one with the most credentials or experience. Hiring a new employee who is not a good cultural fit can cause problems. First, the new hire may feel out of place. This dissatisfaction can impact performance and retention. Second, she may not bond well with others on staff, which could affect communication, teamwork, and morale.

Try to evaluate cultural fit during the interview process. Ask questions about how the candidate has approached various work situations in the past. How does their style and behavior mesh with your office's vibe? A non-competitive person, for instance, may feel uncomfortable in an assertive environment. Or, a person who thrives on having a clear outline of individual job responsibilities may not enjoy a looser, more collaborative workplace.

Since job seekers want to be happy in the role they accept, they often scrutinize job postings and social media for information on a prospective company. Provide a vivid, truthful picture. You'll attract candidates who can envision themselves working at your organization and deter those looking for something different.

Failing to listen

Is it possible that an interviewee dropped clues that he would not be a good match for the role, but you didn't catch them? From overworked human resources staff determined to stay on schedule to well-intentioned hiring managers spending too much time touting the company, those involved in the hiring process often make the common mistake of not listening.

Letting candidates talk reveals many things. It demonstrates their ability to communicate and conveys their

enthusiasm (or lack of it) for the job at hand. It offers insight into their past, their personality, and their priorities. Sometimes, what they say contradicts what's on their resume or LinkedIn profile — and you need to catch that to get at the correct information.

Watch that your interviews do not focus too heavily on questions requiring a simple yes or no answer. Rather, formulate open-ended questions that force the applicant to think and talk. And when they do respond, stay silent and take in what they are saying.

Settling because you feel limited

Lastly, employers under pressure sometimes ignore their qualms about a candidate. They hire and hope for the best because they don't see a better alternative. Unfortunately, too often the result is a bad hire.

Altering your mindset can be a more effective strategy. Perhaps you are overlooking highly teachable candidates with a solid work history in another industry who possess soft skills transferable to your field. Maybe you are too busy looking for someone who fits a certain mold to give proper consideration to an energetic older candidate. Take a serious look at the “musts” for the position and at your own possible biases.

If lack of applicants truly is the problem, consider casting a wider net. As remote work during the pandemic demonstrated, many jobs can be performed off-site. Without geographical boundaries, more potentially perfect candidates can apply.

Also, consider shaking up your talent acquisition methods. If job boards aren't generating the pool you want, maybe a hiring strategy centered around an employee referral system or a targeted social media campaign would lead to better outcomes.

Or, take a look at how your best employees came to the company. Maybe internships led to great hires or an ad on a certain industry website proved profitable. Invest resources in what has worked rather than wasting money on efforts that have not paid off.