

What your hiring process should look like in 2022

Long gone are the days when adding staff meant posting a “help wanted” sign today and bringing aboard a new employee tomorrow. The modern hiring process, especially in times of low unemployment, involves numerous steps.

Businesses must spend time figuring out what type of talent they need and how to attract qualified candidates. Then, they need to evaluate resumes received, decide who merits an interview, and verify the credentials of individuals they might want to hire. Once extending an offer letter, the employer may still need to go through negotiations with the prospective hire to arrive on mutually satisfactory terms. Lastly, HR departments should onboard with intention to ensure legal compliance, cover all important matters, and give the new employee confidence that he made a wise career decision.

Sound complicated? Below, we break down these actions into manageable steps to make the hiring process as straightforward and organized as possible.

Identify needs

The hiring process starts with human resources and management determining if a need exists to fill a vacant position or expand the current workforce. When the answer is “yes,” they then focus on job requirements in order to create a job posting that attracts the right candidates.

Issues to consider include:

- What are the key responsibilities of the position?
- Is the position remote, on-site, or some combination?
- What are the daily tasks for which the person will be responsible?
- What are the “must-have” skills to include in the job description?
- What qualities or abilities would be desirable in a job applicant but not necessarily required?
- What degrees, certifications, or licenses are pertinent?
- What type of work history, including years of experience, should we require?

- What traits might make someone a good cultural fit with our organization?

Hiring managers often rely on templates to ensure their new job listings cover everything they should. Make sure, too, that the final version addresses what every candidate wants to know, “What’s in it for me?” Present a salary range. Tout benefits, especially unique or exceptional ones, such as choice of healthcare plans, unlimited time off, or flexible schedules. Use action verbs that create energy and help readers visualize themselves in the role. Standing out during a labor shortage can mean the difference between a strong talent pool and a lack of interest.

Recruit qualified candidates

Options abound as to where human resources can advertise a job opening. The careers page on the company website is an obvious starting place in the recruitment process, as people interested in the organization likely check there regularly.

Other methods of getting the word out about a new job include:

- Job boards, general and/or niche
- Social media
- Job fairs
- Employee referral programs
- Networking with area colleges

It also can pay to check applications you already have on hand. Someone who sent a blind cover letter and resume earlier in the year or a person who previously interviewed for a position but did not get offered the job may prove a good match for this new job.



Evaluate applications

While some hiring managers still glance at every cover letter and resume that comes their way, many rely on Applicant Tracking Systems. ATS technology identifies the most promising candidates based on the occurrence of predetermined keywords in their submission. Such pinpointing provides a great starting place as to which cover letters and resumes to read in full.

Interview the most promising applicants

After you review applications to determine the best candidates, start the interview process. Conducting a phone interview first often proves a great way to learn more about selected job applicants. Since many workplaces still have pandemic-related limitations on who can come into the building, phone interviews also assist in reducing the number of on-site interviews.

Schedule interviews with candidates deemed promising based on the phone interview. Depending on your organization's hiring process, this might involve applicants conversing one-to-one with a human resources rep, chatting with departmental leaders, or interacting with a whole hiring team. These formal rounds of interviews may take place in person, via Zoom, or some combination thereof.

To give every candidate a fair chance and to ensure legal boundaries do not get overstepped, interviewers generally come up with (and stick to) a predetermined list of interview questions. Such consistency keeps the interview focused on relevant matters and gathers the same type of info from each interviewee.

While interviewers may pose yes/no questions to verify statements made on a person's resume or LinkedIn profile, try to ask questions that require a greater answer. Open-ended questions reveal more about the potential new hire, and they provide the opportunity for the interviewee to showcase communication skills.

And while you will undoubtedly want to spend time highlighting the merits of your organization, avoid dominating the conversation. Carefully listening to an interviewee's responses and providing ample time for the candidate to ask questions offers valuable insight into the person's qualifications, personality, and cultural fit.

Conduct a thorough check

When you have narrowed the hiring decision down to one or two top candidates, scrutinize before hiring. Perform reference checks. Verify educational attainment and work history. Run background checks. Now is the time to discover a lie or a criminal record, not later when your new employee underperforms or causes trouble.

Hiring managers also often look carefully at a person's online presence. A lack of judgment or professionalism on social media, for instance, should raise red flags.

Make an offer

When all relevant parties in the selection process agree on who they wish to hire, extend an offer of employment. A human resources representative typically performs this action through a phone call or email. In either case, the rep should make it clear that this is an actual offer of employment, not more interviewing.

Job offers generally include specifics such as:

- The name of the position being offered, its main responsibilities, and who it reports to.
- The start date.
- The position's salary.
- Benefits for which the person is eligible.
- A breakdown of vacation, sick days, and other paid time off.
- Where the work will be performed (on-site, remote, hybrid).
- A schedule of hours or how many hours will be worked per week.
- Any other conditions of employment.
- The length of time a candidate has to respond to the offer.

Sometimes a candidate will accept the terms presented, and HR can move on to spelling out everything in a formal offer letter for the new employee to sign. Other potential new hires choose to negotiate. They may jockey for, perhaps, higher pay or an adjustment to the schedule. Hiring teams often discuss what they will or will not budge on before contacting a candidate. Or, the HR rep may reconvene the hiring team after being presented with candidate concerns to decide if changes can be made. Back and forth may occur between all sides involved until parties agree on terms or the final job offer expires.

Onboard with care

A new employee spells plenty of activity for the human resources department. Using a checklist ensures nothing

inadvertently gets overlooked.

While the items on such a list vary by organization, some of the most common things needing completion include:

- Issuing an ID badge, parking pass, keys, and other company equipment.
- Setting up a company email address and providing login information.
- Handing out an employee handbook, answering related questions, and obtaining a signature from the new hire confirming she has reviewed it.
- Distributing and ensuring receipt of federal and state W-4 forms.
- Verifying employment eligibility through examination of personal identification documents and completing an I-9 form appropriately.
- Explaining various company benefits, answering questions about them, and assisting with related paperwork.
- Obtaining emergency contact information.
- Collecting direct deposit information for payroll.
- Setting up the individual for applicable videos and modules covering topics such as safety, expectations, office procedures, and company history.
- Introducing the new employee to appropriate staff members within the organization and perhaps assigning a mentor.
- Presenting “welcome” swag such as a company-logo shirt or keychain.

HR also alerts appropriate departments to the new arrival. Maintenance may need to prepare a workstation before the person’s first day, or IT might require a heads-up to issue database access.

Perhaps most importantly, human resources should notify the new hire’s immediate supervisor of the start date. The two sides can coordinate activities so that HR-related matters get accomplished while the person also begins contributing to his new team. The first days of employment make a huge, lasting impression. Make them as welcoming, interesting, and seamless as possible. You’ll solidify in the new employee’s mind that this is a great place to work!