

Talent acquisition specialist job description and interview questions

If you're planning to hire a Talent Acquisition Specialist or hoping to become one, take a look at this sample Talent Acquisition Specialist job description to learn about the key responsibilities and requirements of the role. You can also explore some useful questions to ask Talent Acquisition Specialist candidates during interviews.

What is a Talent Acquisition Specialist?

A Talent Acquisition Specialist is an employee that focuses on attracting, sourcing, and screening candidates to find top talent for organizations. They work closely with hiring managers and internal leadership to understand current and future hiring needs. Then they work to find qualified candidates that are the right cultural fit for the team and company.

Talent Acquisition Specialists create and execute ongoing hiring and recruitment strategies to build strong candidate pipelines, improve the company's recruiting practices, and create a strong brand for the company as an employer. This may include things like modernizing the company's hiring process by integrating new recruiting methods like asynchronous video interviews or screeners. It can also include managing employee referral programs, conducting university outreach, or helping the company stay up-to-date on industry trends.

Talent acquisition and recruiting are often used fairly interchangeably. However, a Talent Acquisition Specialist is not a Recruiter. Recruiters typically focus on the immediate hiring needs of the company. Talent Acquisition Specialists also fill immediate roles, but more of their time is spent on long-term planning and goals.

Talent Acquisition Specialist job description template

Overview

The Talent Acquisition Specialist will be responsible for managing the full-cycle recruiting process at [company name]. They will work closely with the human resources department and hiring managers to source, screen, and hire candidates for a variety of roles across the company. The Talent Acquisition Specialist will be able to develop long-term recruiting strategies to meet the company's current and future staffing needs. The ideal candidate will have strong relationship-building skills to create lasting relationships with potential hires.

Qualifications

- Two or more years of experience in talent acquisition or human resources
- Experience conducting interviews virtually and in-person
- Experience utilizing social media, job boards, and resume databases to source talent

- Up-to-date knowledge of industry trends
- Strong communication skills and interpersonal skills
- Experiencing using applicant tracking systems
- Bachelor's degree in business, human resources management, or a similar major.

Job responsibilities

- Coordinate with hiring managers to evaluate staffing needs.
- Collaborate with hiring managers to create job postings, selection criteria, and interview questions tailored to the requirements of each role.
- Source candidates through job boards, professional networks, social media, and other appropriate channels.
- Manage the candidate screening process by coordinating screening calls, interviews, and any extra assessments as needed.
- Regularly review candidate information in our Applicant Tracking System.
- Develop and contribute to employer branding initiatives.
- Lead university recruiting efforts, including on-campus job fairs.
- Forecast quarterly and annual hiring needs.
- Maintain lasting relationships with past applicants and potential candidates.
- Provide support to new hires throughout the onboarding process.

Talent Acquisition Specialist interview questions

Here are some helpful questions to ask when interviewing Talent Acquisition Specialist candidates.

Which applicant tracking systems have you used in the past?

Talent Acquisition Specialists spend a lot of their time working with applicant tracking systems (ATS). Asking about their past experience with ATS systems can help you better understand their technical skills. It also helps

you assess how quickly they will be able to pick up your company's system, as the learning curve with a new ATS is a lot lower if the candidate has prior experience utilizing a similar system.

How do you prepare for candidate interviews?

A lot of emphasis is placed on how prepared candidates are for interviews. However, companies need to remember that the candidate is also interviewing and evaluating them. An interviewer that does not adequately prepare for a candidate interview will leave a bad impression and can ultimately harm your brand as an employer. Therefore, it's important to ask about the steps that they take to prepare for interviews.

Employers can also follow up by asking how the process differs for different types of interviews or candidate interactions such as phone screenings, in-person interviews, panel interviews, recruitment events, or virtual interviews. Tailor this to the types of interviews that your company regularly utilizes.

How do you decide between two candidates with similar qualifications?

This is a question that can help you unpack how the interviewee makes decisions. There isn't necessarily one universal right answer to this question, but you should seek to hire a Talent Acquisition Specialist whose hiring strategy aligns with your company's. Some companies prioritize cultural fit and potential over past work experience, while others always aim to pick the candidate that most closely meets the job requirements.

There are also times when two candidates both seem perfect for the role, but you want your Talent Acquisition Specialist to be decisive and be able to choose just one. Dig into how this Talent Acquisition Specialist candidate weighs the different factors and chooses between candidates.

Tell us about a time that you missed out on a really great candidate. What could you have done better?

There are a lot of small mistakes that recruiters can make that can cause them to miss out on amazing candidates. Perhaps they didn't provide a timely update when the hiring process was taking too long and their top candidate took another offer and now they are more diligent in providing updates.

Asking this question allows the candidate to reflect on their past experiences and challenges and demonstrate self-awareness. You don't want to hire the candidate that says they've never made a mistake or that it was always someone else's fault. You want a candidate that is able to grow and learn when something did not go their way.

How do you stay connected with candidates?

It is important to stay connected with candidates during and after the recruitment process. You don't want to hire a Talent Acquisition Specialist that is going to ghost candidates or take too long to provide updates. They should be communicating with current candidates about any delays or changes in the hiring process. They should also be communicating with those who were not selected in a timely and respectful manner and staying connected with them for future opportunities.

One of the main goals of a Talent Acquisition Specialist is also to develop long-term candidate relationships and maintain an ongoing candidate pipeline. Sometimes a candidate that doesn't get picked for a particular role can be a great fit for a different role that opens up later. There may also be job inquiries that come in when there isn't a role on the right team open right now, but taking down their information and keeping in contact with these candidates can help you stay prepared for future openings.