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How to Attract the Right Job Candidates

Following these practical and easy-to-implement suggestions will help you improve your hiring process and attract talented and motivated individuals to your business.

1. Write it Down. Pass it Around. Repeat.

Hiring is too important to just throw together a vague job posting and show up for an interview. It requires a "process" -- a series of actions which, step-by-step, lead to a desired end. Implementing a written and repeatable procedure helps to ensure that everyone involved understands how the hiring process works and knows his or her role. It makes the task of hiring a new employee more time- and cost-efficient. It also ensures that every candidate is given the same



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opportunity and the same level of scrutiny.

There is no set process required by law, so you can design one that best serves your company's needs. Whatever that process is, write it down, distribute it to everyone involved, and follow it with every new hire. As your business grows, revisit your hiring process from time to time to make sure that it remains efficient and productive.

2. Project a Positive Company Image.

Project a positive image of your workplace in the community and online. This is an easy means of “passive” recruiting – i.e., attracting high-quality talent to your workplace, even when you are not actively hiring and/or the talented individual is not actively looking for a job. Here are few ideas you can implement to project a positive company image:

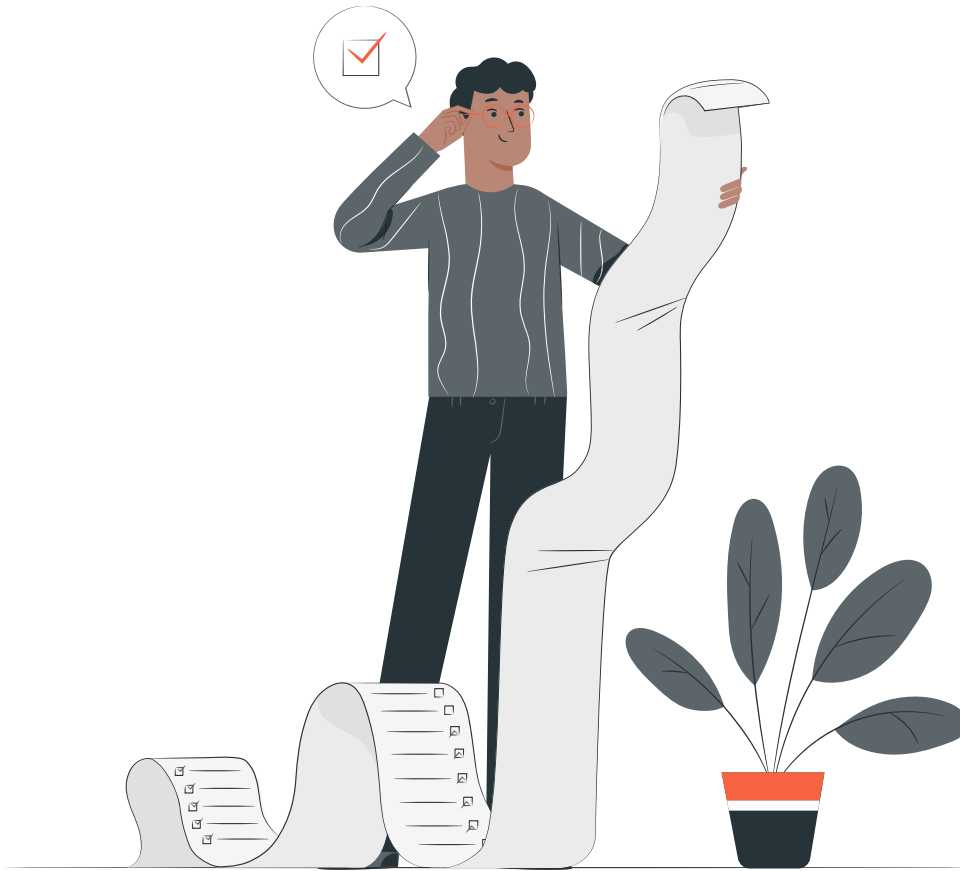
Keep your website current. If your website has an “employment”



or “careers” page, make sure that page is current. Even if you have no job openings at the time, this page can work to attract qualified individuals to your business if it reflects your company’s “personality.” Include photos, videos, and/or testimonials from current employees or customers about what it’s like to work at and with your business.

Be a positive presence on social media. Share your company’s good works and examples of your employees doing good work in the community. Actively promote other local businesses. For example, if your company is celebrating ten years

in the community, and a local baker makes a beautiful cake for the party, post a picture of the cake on your company Facebook page and give the bakery a shout-out and a well-deserved “thank you.” Small gestures like these can have a big impact on active and passive job seekers (not to mention potential customers or clients). **Monitor your company’s online reviews.** Keep an eye on Glassdoor, Nextdoor, Yelp, and similar sites that may have reviews of your business. Answer any questions



Tips to be a Smarter Shopper

If you ask ten friends, “What is your best tip for saving money at the grocery store?” you are likely to get ten different answers.

That’s because there is no single best way to save money on groceries. On the contrary, the most effective strategy is to have a wide variety of money-saving tips and tricks at the ready, and to use as many of them as you can, as often as you can.

Here's what you can do to save money when you get to the grocery store.

Take your list with you and stick to it.

Enough said.

Buy seasonal produce.

Buy berries and melons in the summer, and apples and pears in the fall. If you must have strawberries in the winter, go for the frozen kind.

Make smart choices about buying organic.

For some produce (e.g., spinach) it might make sense to spend the extra money for organic; for other produce (e.g., avocados), it may not. Review the Environmental Working Group’s “Shopper’s Guide to Pesticides in Produce” [<https://www.ewg.org/foodnews/full-list.php>] to help inform your decisions.

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Building the Perfect Charcuterie Board for the Holidays

Who says you need to make an entire meal for a holiday party?

Sometimes it's fun—and feels fancier—to simply indulge in some tasty (and budget-friendly) appetizers in the form of a charcuterie board. If you're still set on serving a meal, mixing and matching different meats and cheeses is a fun way to

allow your guests to choose their own mouth-watering adventure in addition to your main course. Take a look at this step-by-step guide to building the best charcuterie board ever:

Presentation

The actual charcuterie board doesn't have to be fancy—you might have multiple boards—or one large

one; whether it's round or rectangular, just make sure it looks presentable! You might go with a theme for your board, such as Italian, or even the current season; just make sure there is a unifying element to all of your ingredients. Include bowls for different dips, multiple cheese knives for spreading, and toothpicks for grabbing cubes of cheese.

Choose your cheese

For variety, choose at least three or more different types of cheese to satisfy any palate. First, make sure there is an assortment of both soft cheeses and hard cheeses (don't forget to cut the harder cheeses into cubes!). Then, select cheeses with different levels or savoriness—both mild and bold—whether it's the sharpness of cheddar, the sweet, nuttiness of gouda, or the milder flavor of brie—the options are endless. Just don't forget, you'll want to keep in mind which cheese flavors pair well with your meat selections.

Pick your Meats

For meats, choose an assortment of cured or cooked meats that pair well




with the specific cheeses you've chosen. For example, you might pair the saltiness of parmesan with prosciutto, or the smokiness of gouda with salami. Other great choices for your meats include calabrese, mortadella, and soppressata. Again, just make sure there are a variety of meat choices and that they pair well with the cheeses you've chosen!

Add Crackers and Bread

For crackers and bread, when it comes to a charcuterie board, sometimes simpler is better. Since you won't want to overpower the different flavors of cheeses and meats you've chosen, it's best to choose milder crackers and breads for spreading and dipping.

Finish with Spreads, Fruits, and Veggies

This is where you can get creative! Again, when it comes to spreads and other sides such as fruits, you'll want to choose different varieties and make sure they pair well with the cheeses and meats you've selected. For example, gouda cheese pairs deliciously with apples, while brie goes well with raspberry jam. You can even pair dried apricots with cheddar! Other spread options include hummus, mustard, and basil pesto. For other zesty sides to adorn your board, try olives, honey, jam, sun-dried tomatoes or even nuts. Have fun! 

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promptly. Always politely address negative comments. If someone had a bad experience, make it right if you can.

3. Get Out of Your Office.

While there is nothing inherently wrong with promoting from within or encouraging current employees to recruit new employees, this should not be your only means of recruiting new talent. Aside from limiting your prospects, you may unintentionally run afoul of state or federal anti-discrimination laws. Moreover, you will get better results in the long-run if you expand the pool of potential applicants. How do you do this? You have to get out of your office. Go to trade shows or seminars or the annual “big event” in your industry; take classes; teach classes; join the local chamber of commerce or small business association; shop at local businesses and get to know the owners. These types of activities are great ways to make business connections and meet new



people, including prospective employees.

4. Write Better Job Postings.

As with your other recruiting efforts, your goal with a job posting is to have highly qualified candidates think, “That would be a great place to work.” Most job postings fail in this regard because they are nothing more than a laundry list of what the employer demands from anyone who dares to apply. To make your job posting more appealing to top-tier talent, include information about the things that matter to prospective employees: why this job is important to your company; the opportunities for growth; the unique benefits of working

for your company; and the ways in which your company promotes work/life balance.

Other ways to improve your job postings include:

Use plain-English descriptors, not clichés like “comfortable working in a fast-paced environment.” Provide a detailed job description. Focus on the mandatory skills a candidate “must have” in order to be considered for employment; omit secondary skills, behaviors, or intangibles that can be acquired over time, with experience on the job. 📌

Illustrations by Storyset

Slice it yourself.

Avoid pre-packaged fruits and vegetables, and bagged salads. While it may be convenient, you pay a steep mark-up for that convenience. For example, a bagged salad for dinner will cost you almost \$4. You can get a head of lettuce and a full bottle of salad dressing for about the same price, and eat salad all week.

The same principle applies to deli meat. Check the labels. Pre-packaged turkey breast is likely to be significantly more expensive per pound than a whole, uncooked turkey breast. Cooking it and slicing it yourself will save you money (and, as an added bonus, allow you to control the amount of salt that goes into your turkey sandwich).

Buy spices in bulk.

You can buy a wide range of spices – anything from anise to Spanish paprika to yellow mustard seeds – in bulk, and the savings are significant. Plus, because you only buy what you need, your spices will be fresh, making the

dishes you cook with them taste better. If your go-to supermarket doesn't have a bulk aisle with spices, it will be worth your time and effort to make a trip to a store near you that does. Once you try this, you will never buy jarred spices again.

Buy generic.

Most of the time, the ingredients in the generic brand are the same or essentially the same as in the name brand (but you should always compare the labels to make sure), and there is no difference in taste or quality. If you just can't go generic, then make sure you:



Stock up when the name-brand item is on sale; and

Get rewarded for your loyalty. Visit the manufacturer's website for coupons and sign up to receive special offers by email.

Pay with cash.

If you can only spend the cash you have in hand, it's easier to limit yourself and avoid the little splurges that will bust your budget. 📌

Illustrations by Storyset

Beginner's Guide to Reducing Your Waste

In a world where everyone produces waste, going entirely zero waste sounds completely unfathomable.

However, becoming environmentally friendly is a journey, and there's no overnight solution. Producing less waste doesn't have to be an enormous undertaking! Sometimes, there are quick and easy solutions to reducing your waste. Take a look at some of these eco-friendly swaps for some common items you throw in the trash:

Eliminate plastic bags.

These days, it goes without saying that plastic bags are wasteful and damaging to the environment. Try investing in a fun assortment of reusable bags with your favorite images or quotes—just don't forget to keep a couple in your car for your next shopping trip!

Brush with Bamboo. Every



time you throw out an old plastic toothbrush, you are throwing more plastic into the environment—plastic that does not decompose for a thousand years. Try swapping out your plastic toothbrush for a bamboo brush—your teeth will be happy, and so will the environment!

Ditch the plastic bottle.

Invest in a long-lasting reusable water bottle in your favorite color. Likewise, invest in a thermos for those early-morning coffee-shop runs.

Forego the straw. Or, bring your own bamboo or

stainless steel straw to sip your beverage.

Use a safety razor. In lieu of tossing a used disposable plastic razor that can't be recycled, try using a stainless steel safety razor. Safety razors are made to last a lifetime, and while there may be a small learning curve, you'll be saving tons of plastic from going into more landfills. 📌

Illustrations by Storyset