



Hidden in plain sight – an inefficient hiring process!

Having worked with a host of startups across stages, industries and team sizes in hiring for a multitude of functions and seniority levels, we have realized that the entire talent acquisition value chain, especially the hiring process, is 'inward' focused (or in other words, "we do it this way"). This means that the founders and the hiring teams rarely look at the market dynamics, competitor's hiring processes or other external factors to determine and institute the most efficient hiring process that would help them hire the best in the best timeframe.

A lot of times, there are unnecessary steps in the hiring process, that prima-facie appear to raise the bar but actually are real bottlenecks in smooth hiring. Not many realize but a complicated hiring process is a hurdle in team building to an extent that it may lead to stalled growth or, even worse, failure.

To elaborate this with a simple example - a significant number of tech startups give takeaway assignments to prospective candidates as part of their evaluation process for engineering, product and marketing candidates. Theoretically, giving a take home assignment might be a solution to narrowing the funnel but in reality, this step is a fat bottleneck. The best candidates are usually busy with their current professional commitments and do not have the necessary bandwidth or the right mindset to deliver their best on the assignment. Even if they turn it around, they take a lot of time and are unlikely to have put their best foot forward. Companies argue that candidates can deliver it over the weekend. Without mincing words here, we would like to iterate that after a week of hard work, humans want to unwind and relax rather than restart their mental engine once again for the assignment. Let's be realistic, we are talking humans here and not machines. Consequently, assignments delivered over weekends are unlikely to reflect a candidate's true potential/ability. Moreover, there is no way to ascertain that a candidate has honestly delivered the assignment. There is a possibility that s/he may have copied, taken help from or got it done by someone else altogether. Hence, it is always better to ask a candidate to do smaller assignment over a live interview than a take home assignment. We strongly advise our startup clients not to have a take home assignment in the evaluation process.

Founders and hiring teams need to look outside their organizations to implement an effective hiring process. They should take inputs from their peers, experts and/or their consulting partners to help them devise a process that helps them save time and money per hire instead of directing their HR teams to institute a rigid process that doesn't work. We, at Talent Monitor, believe in taking a consultative approach to talent acquisition rather than a transactional one. We tell our clients what we believe is likely to work for them.