5 ways to improve your company's hiring process

If your organization can't seem to attract the right people or fill critical job openings, you're not alone. According to a 2015 Harvard Business Review study, the top concern among CEOs was finding the right talent. And, when the economy is strong and the labor market is tight, hiring talented workers can turn into an epic battle.

To differentiate your organization from the competition, consider carefully evaluating your interviewing and hiring process. Our research has shown that when companies employ a strategic, well-thought-out hiring plan, you are much more likely to land top talent.

Here are 5 simple ways you can improve your company's hiring process:

1. **Write a job description that accurately reflects the activities of the job**
   - It's easy to copy and paste from online job descriptions, but are you really doing your job description justice that way?
   - Take the time to write a simple, clear job description that avoids company jargon and tells candidates why the position is important to your organization
   - Writing a job description forces you to sharpen your thinking about the open position and consider questions such as:
     1. "What skills do I really need for this role?"
     2. What will someone in this role ultimately accomplish for the company?
     3. What are the short and long-term goals for the person we hire?

2. **Establish a clear, easy-to-understand reporting structure**
   - Many organizations recognize a staffing need but don't think through how that position will fit into an organization's structure. Take the time to create a plan for where this position will best fit *before* posting a job
   - One of the first things savvy candidates ask is the reporting structure for an open job. If you don't know who the open position will report to, the best talent will know you don't have a plan for the role and walk away
   - If you don't employ organizational charts, consider making one and even sharing with candidates during interviews

3. **Define a market-based pay range**
   - Many businesses fail to plan for this all-important factor in the hiring process. Don't be one of them! If you don't do your research or, worse, underestimate the market pay range for an opening, the most qualified candidates won't take you seriously
   - Establishing a budget for an open position is critical, but where do you start? If you don't have a compensation expert on your team, turn to some free online resources, such as salary.com, to get a feel for what you will need to pay for qualified candidates

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4. Create an efficient, consistent, and thoughtful interview process
- Don't leave your hiring to chance! A haphazard, ad-hoc interview process sends a message to your candidates that you don't know what you're doing. Instead, create a simple, step-by-step process that candidates will walk through. Remember: creating too many steps in the hiring process will increase the likelihood that candidates will drop out and pursue other opportunities
- Establish a "hiring team," meaning the same employees will be involved in interviews for all candidates. Doing so creates buy-in among the members of the team and ensures consistency to your approach
- Clearly communicate your hiring process to candidates every step of the way. By doing so, you'll establish trust with candidates and let them know you have a handle on the process
- Gone are the days when candidates would beg potential employers for an opportunity to work for your company. Today's job-seekers are savvy and know they have options when looking for positions. To snag top talent, you must "sell" interviewees about the merits of working for your company. Take the time to know candidates and their goals, making sure to articulate why your company is a good match for them

5. Agree on who the key decision-makers are in the hiring process
- Many times, hiring processes stall out and companies lose out on top candidates. Why? Because organizations fail to nominate their decision-makers and one of two things happen:
  1. Several people attempt to assert themselves and have the final word on the hiring decision with no clear path forward
  2. The decision-making responsibility is assumed by no one and, by default, a "hiring by consensus" process is established where unanimous agreement cannot be reached
- Don't let this happen to you! Have a frank, open discussion among key stakeholders before you talk to any candidates about who should be involved in the decision-making process. Remember: "too many cooks spoil the broth," meaning too many voices in a room can lead to lack of clarity, or worse, chaos
- By establishing decision-making authority before the interview process gets underway, you'll ensure your company can make an efficient hiring decision, greatly increasing your chance of snagging the best talent on the market

If you would like to learn more about how to increase your chances of hiring game-changing talent into your organization, contact us at clarkharvey@arrowheadtalentsolutions.com or 330.316.0867.