The SMB Guide to Posting Jobs

Write great job descriptions, find the best sourcing channels & build a better employer brand.

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Laying the Groundwork

Plan Your Hiring Path

When your business is growing and you need to bring on new talent, it's tempting to do whatever it takes to fill the vacancies. But, hiring just anyone will not help your company grow or flourish, or even keep pace with your competitors. What your company needs is a good sourcing strategy - or a better way to get the RIGHT candidates. But before you even post your first job opening or begin writing a job description you need to ask yourself - what are the job requirements?

TIP NO. 1:

Before you put your pen to paper, create a task list for each of your job openings. This will help you fine-tune job requirements, and uncover any gaps in your job posting.

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Defining Your Job Requirements

Build Your Task List

Job requirements are what an organization uses to define the work that needs to be performed by each employee. They typically include the information most important to your company's talent management process and should be used in replicable scenarios such as employee development and performance evaluations.

To define your job requirements, start by creating a detailed task list. The best way to brainstorm these elements is by identifying your task in a statement. For example, the task statement should include:

- A description of the identified task

- The task objective

- An active verb describing the task

Here's a sample of a task list for a Marketing Manager:

> *Use data-driven experimentation to constantly improve performance; Develop and implement robust A/B and MVT testing programs to optimize results and drive desired behavior*

As you flesh out these tasks, make sure to include the essentials of the job on a daily basis and long-term. Every job you create should have at least 3-7 basic job requirements founded in specific competencies, functions and/or responsibilities.

Once you've identified your complete task list, you're ready to move onto the next stage: profiling your ideal candidate.

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Develop Your Ideal Candidate Profile

Getting started

Try to find an example of your "ideal" candidate profile from the employees around you. If you're a team of one - don't stress, you came to the right place. If you do find a shining star amongst your employees, pick apart the characteristics that make this person so desirable. Is that person:

- Outgoing/Introverted

- Friendly/Serious

- Reliably Productive/Sporadically Brilliant

- Physical/Sedentary

- Experienced/Entry-level

Run through these attributes and humanize the descriptive qualities by pointing and choosing, not just inventing. You can avoid the "businessy-abstract" language thrown around in so many vague job profiles - as they're mostly just fluff.

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Skillsets

Different professionals have a wide variety of different skillsets. Settle on the particulars of the job you're hiring for and craft your job profile so it reflects what a person actually does. Since many of your applicants will have resumes listing skills and experiences, develop a job profile that assigns value to the attributes you're looking for.
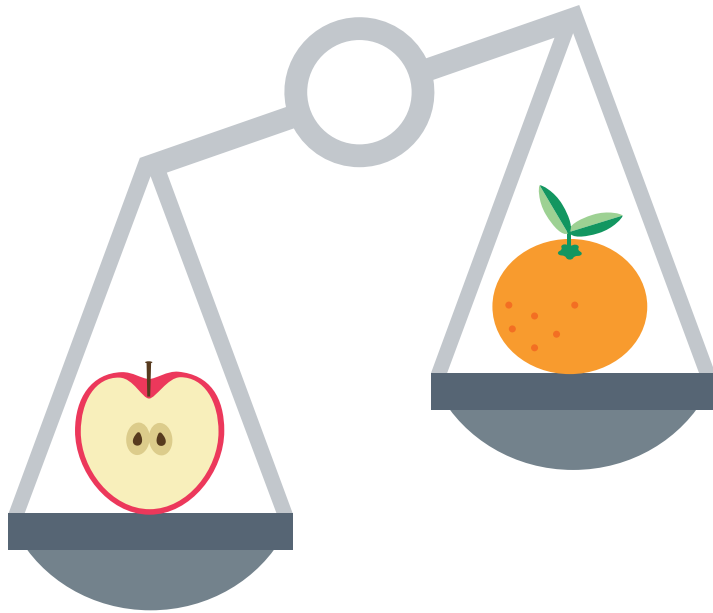
- Excel wizardry

- Data guru

- Quickbooks ninja

- Hands-on automation experience

If you need someone to do something well, make it a valued skill.

TIP NO. 2:

Avoid using jargon and fluffy language in your writing. Take a page from Shakespeare's book and adopt the mantra, "Brevity is the soul of wit," in all that you compose.

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Culture Club

Saying you need a "team player" sounds great until you realize more people on a team don't care about anyone else's stats. Don't get caught in applying normal hiring logic. Will it really matter if this person performs well with others? Or is it a solitary position that requires quiet, heads-down concentration?

Think about it this way. How often did Kobe Bryant pass the ball? If you were the coach - would you want him to? When you develop a job profile, look around you. Do you need a Kobe-like employee to score or point guard to pass?

Decide if someone must play well with others or grind out hours looking at a screen alone and seriously consider:

- The mold you're making

- The skills you're seeking

- The culture you're fitting

Then once you know what you want - you're ready to begin crafting the Job Description...

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Writing a Job Description

The Nuts and Bolts

Posts on job boards (like Indeed and Monster) are the nightclubs of the hiring world. Each one wants the best and most people to come inside. Your job description can either bounce people at the door, or invite them inside to learn more. Without the right message, the perfect candidate may walk right by, or worse, be encouraged to leave. So how do start attracting the right candidates? Your job description needs to describe a few basic elements:

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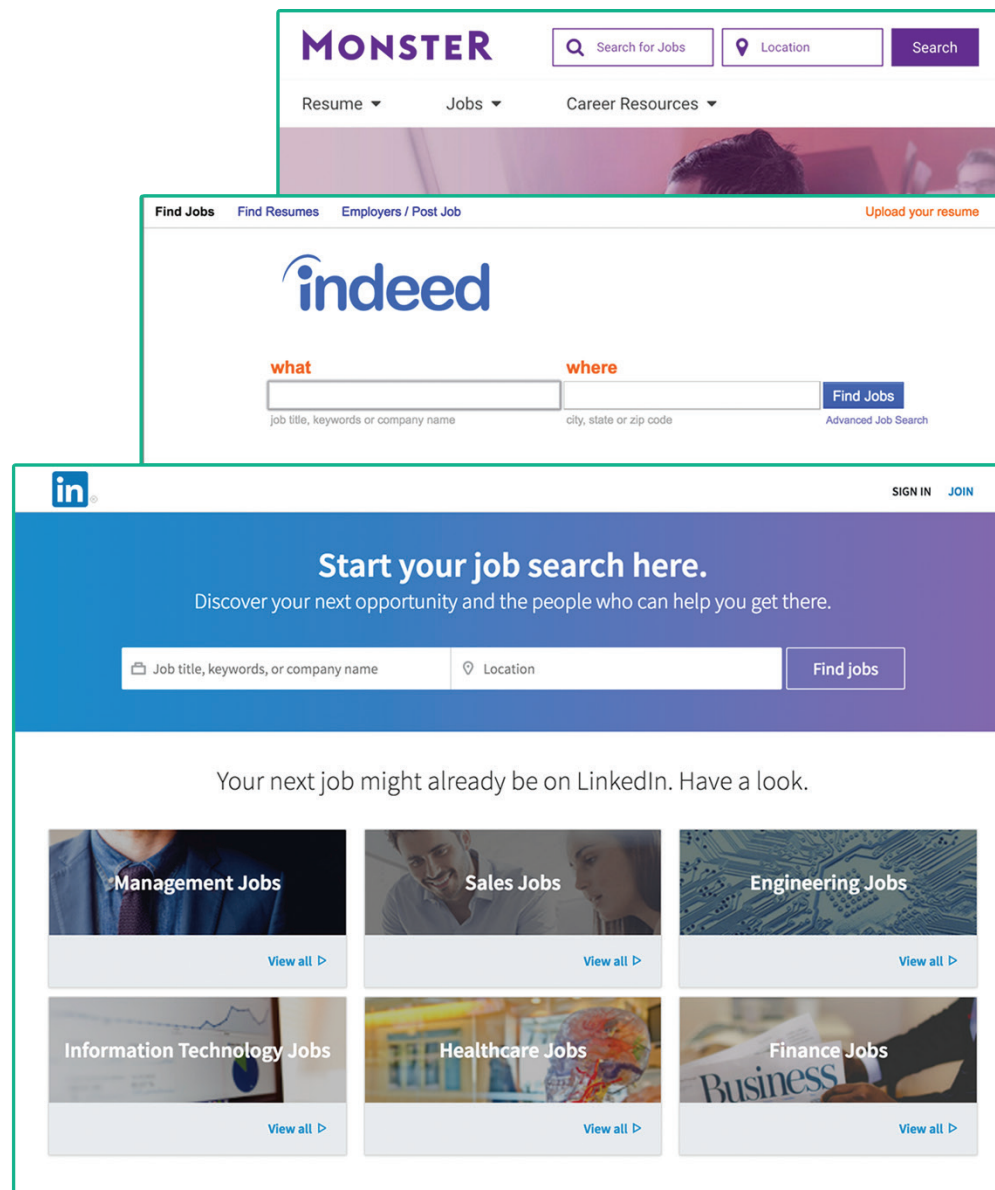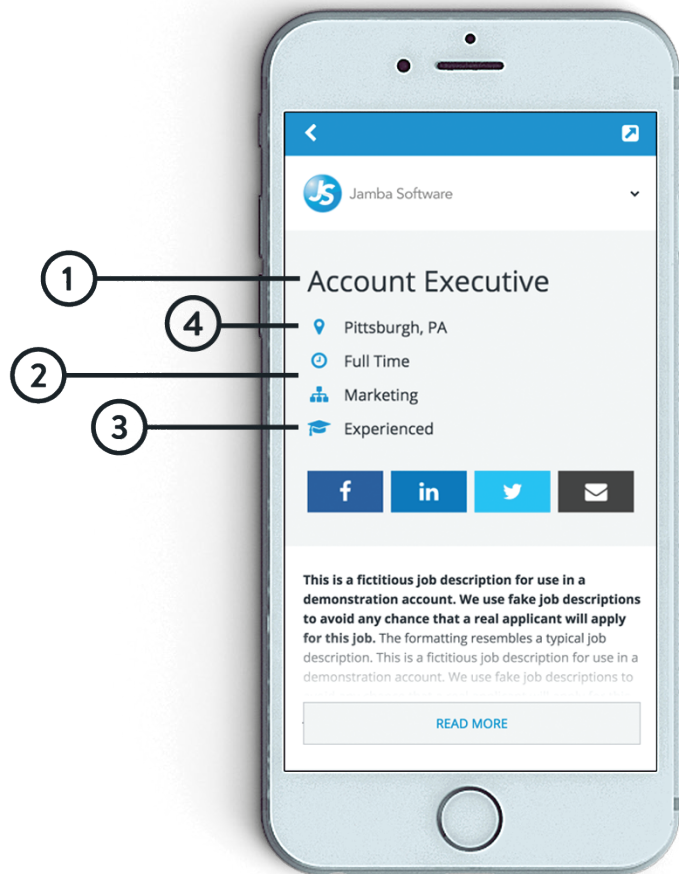
1. Job Title

Develop a title based on the main function of the job you're hiring for. Strike a balance between overly vague, "Director," and obstructively specific, "Finance Director of Marketing Integration and Collaborative Efforts at 34 Sycamore Drive."

2. Department & Paygrade

Different budgets follow different departments. Clearly define this position's department and the pay. A murky pay scale description will quickly scare off great applicants. Don't waste time tiptoeing.

3. Supervisor

You don't need specific names, since those can change abruptly, but give your candidates specific details. Clearly define where the position falls on the corporate ladder.

4. Location & Travel

If your company has multiple offices, state where home base is. For travel expectations, describe the percentage in which you estimate your employee will be on the road, "Travel: 25% of the time."

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5. Education & Experience

If your company requires a certain level of education, be sure to say so in your job description. List the experience that you'd prefer or require, and state if the two can substitute, (i.e., Master's Degree OR 4 years working experience). If you require both, capture it!

6. Time & Physical Requirements

Clearly state if the position is full-time, part-time, contracting or an internship. If you're promoting an internship - be sure to state whether or not it's a paid gig. If it isn't, double check that you're following legal guidelines.

Describe the physical demands of the position but consciously use impersonal language (a good rule for the entire job description). Talk through the position's requirements, "lifting 30lbs, sitting, etc," not the capabilities of an individual.

7. FLSA

The Fair Labor Standards Act covers a number of employment issues from minimum wage to child labor. Exemptions to each piece of legislation do exist, so make sure you carefully review and understand your employer AND employee rights.

COMMON QUESTIONS

✔ Included   ✱ Required

✔	✱		✔	✱	
☑	☑	Resume	☐	☐	Desired Salary
☑	☑	Cover Letter	☐	☐	Earliest Start Date
☑	☑	Address	☐	☐	Work Weekends
☐	☐	LinkedIn Profile	☐	☐	Work Evenings
☐	☐	Twitter Username	☐	☐	Work Overtime
☑	☐	What Makes You Unique?	☐	☐	Willing to Relocate
☑	☐	Website, blog, or portfolio	☐	☐	Valid Driver's License
☐	☐	References	☐	☐	Commercial Driver's License
☐	☐	Referral Name	☐	☐	Languages Spoken
☐	☐	Highest Education Obtained	☐	☐	Felony Conviction
☑	☐	College/University	☐	☐	Felony Explanation
☐	☐	Grade Point Average (GPA)	☐	☐	Pilot — Flight Hours
☐	☐	Citizen/Employment Status	☐	☐	Pilot — Grade/Ratings
☐	☐	Age 18 or Older			

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8. Job Summary and Purpose

The job summary may still qualify as a nut or a bolt, but it also allows you to describe the position with some personality. Here's a brief example:

"We are looking for a high-energy, innovative marketing guru to join our rapidly-growing team as a dedicated Marketing Manager. Reporting to the Vice President of Marketing, the Marketing Manager will be a key player in our team's marketing strategy, with responsibility for the planning, execution, and optimization of all marketing programs across the funnel. We are looking for a 'doer' who loves a challenge, can learn quickly, and is as passionate about technology and B2B SaaS marketing as we are."

This is the place where you can bring some life to the job description. Choose your style and vocabulary to match the culture of your company (or the culture that you're imminently building). The best plan of attack for writing the summary is to use one, two or three paragraphs to detail everyday routines, functions, and responsibilities. Be sure to throw in a couple of umbrella sentences that allow the position to change as it grows with the company.

Save Time (and Headaches)

Your job description can be the difference between attracting talent and an employee lawsuit. Do your research ahead of time, cover your bases and honestly describe the position in a succinct manner. Spending the extra time on a well-written job description will save you time and effort.

TIP NO. 3:

Spend extra time on a well-written job description now, to save headaches later. Your job description can be the difference between attracting talent and an employee lawsuit.

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Creating a Careers Page

Create a Lasting First Impression

No passive job seeker will take the time to browse through your website if you force them through clunky pages with vague posts. In the off chance they decide to stick around, they're forced into page after page of tedious HR applications.

Stop scaring off great talent with obstacles, and create an engaging careers page that attracts and keeps top candidates.

Clarity

Make your careers page clean, clear and easy to use. If you have an area to search open positions, make sure it returns valid responses and lacks posts that don't fit the query. That means crafting concise job descriptions matching the job seeker's skills and qualifications.

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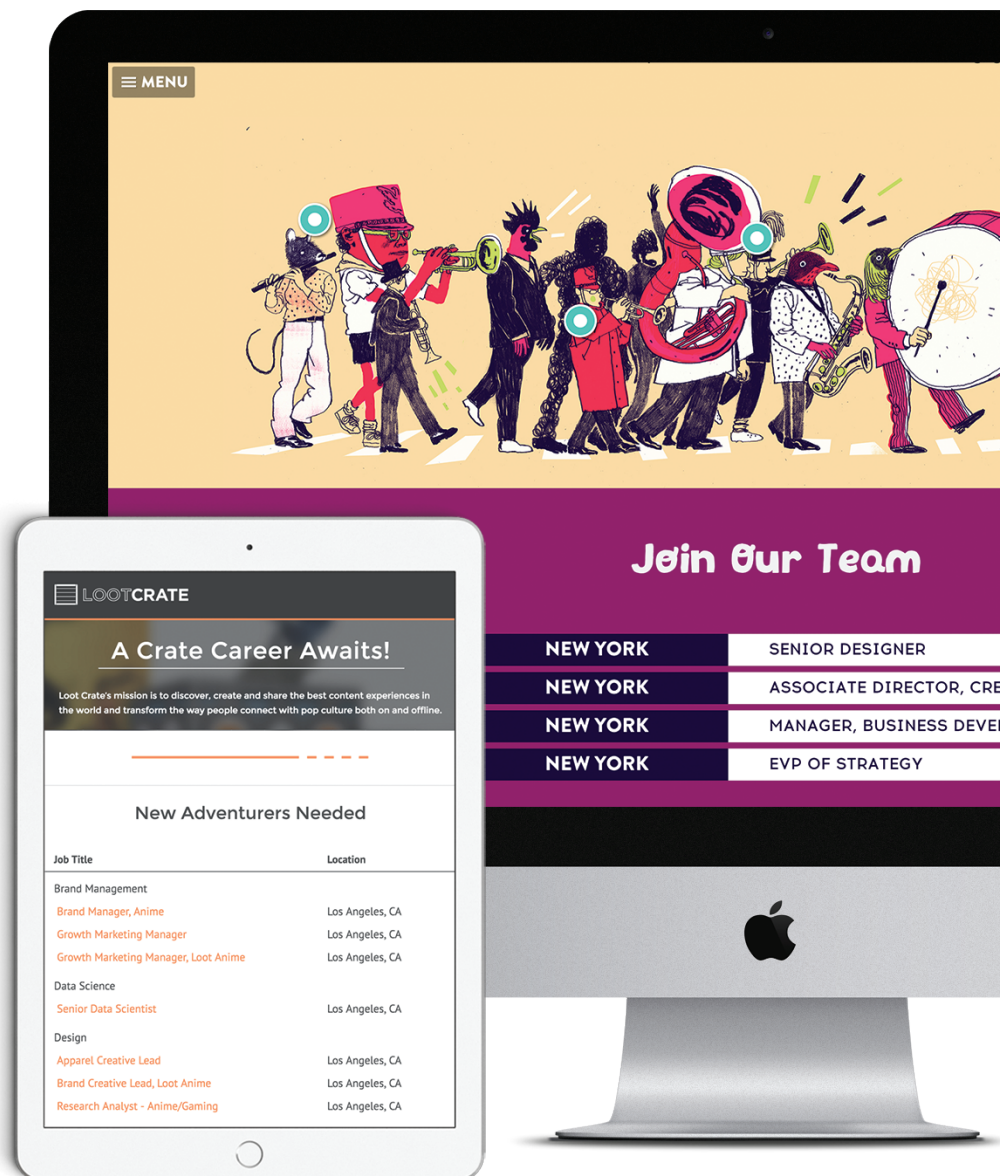
TIP NO. 4:

Make sure your careers page is authentically you! Applicants want to see the real deal before they take the time to submit an application.

Content

Applicants should want to visit your careers page for more than just jobs. It should be a place that provides compelling information that lets visitors get to know the true you. Some things to consider including:

- Videos

- Blogs

- Pictures

- Embarrassing finger paintings by employees

You can advertise your awesome company culture while subtly poking the visitor in the side saying, "Here's why you should want to work here!"

Choose whatever format and style reflects your employer brand, and make sure it's authentic. Not hiring right now? No problem. This is a place where you're constantly building relationships so that when you do have an open position, you've already enticed some great prospects.

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Getting Social

So now that your careers page provides content and interaction, make it easy for people to share your jobs everywhere top talent is looking. To start, link your jobs to your company's social profiles (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook) with recruiting tools. Post the heavy job descriptions on your company's website and spread the word through your online presence, colleagues and friends.

Amplify your jobs by posting to the big job board aggregators like Indeed, Monster and CareerBuilder. You can do this manually, or adopt a recruiting tool that allows for seamless syndication to the most popular free and premium job boards. This is a great way to cast a wider applicant net and navigate the competitive talent landscape.
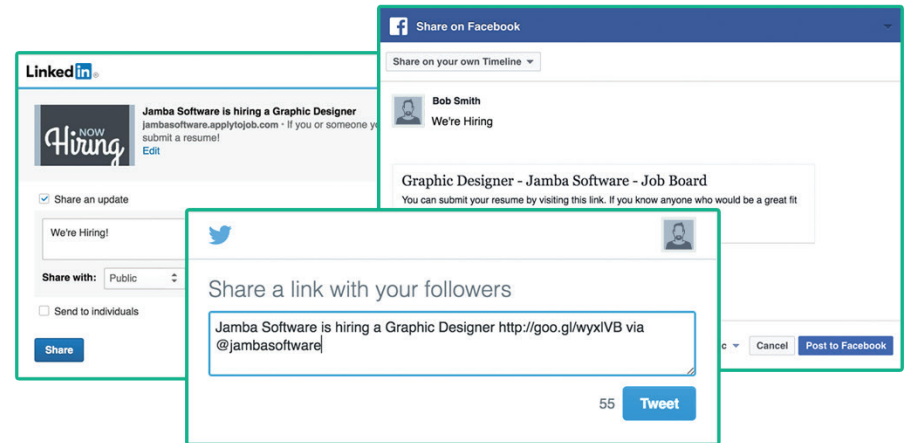
TIP NO. 5:

The first place most candidates look is your company's social handles. Make sure they're up-to-date and amplify your culture to attract (and keep) their attention.

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Encouraging Employee Applications & Referrals

Recruit From the Inside Out

A bird in hand is worth two in the bush. We think someone said this about hiring, but who knows? We're not anthropologists ☺

Open positions need to be filled (and fast). Why not look within your own talent pool, first? There's serious merit to sourcing from within and many benefits to encouraging current employees to apply:

- They already fit the culture

- They could already understand the position

- A change in roles could provide a boost in morale and energy.

Vertical promotion rewards dedication and skill. Horizontal movement could surprisingly put someone in a better work fit. You just need to get their attention, and then explore options. To get current employees aware and interested in your open positions you need to ensure the following:

- They know about the job

- They understand how the job compares and contrasts to their current duties

- They understand the scope of the position, differences in pay and company position

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As a hiring manager, HR leader or small business owner, it's your job to clarify the application process. If you have access to them, use a digital system to notify employees when positions open up. These platforms can help you easily track, manage and organize the application process.

If using your own employees to fill a job opening simply won't work, don't feel cornered by job boards and social media. More often than not, employee referrals are the best method for finding talent. Seriously, we mean it.

Innovative software engineers, fantastic graphic designers, or inexplicably talented marketing managers have places to go, and things to do. They don't have time and don't need to browse job boards - and they probably don't follow your company on Facebook or Twitter, either.

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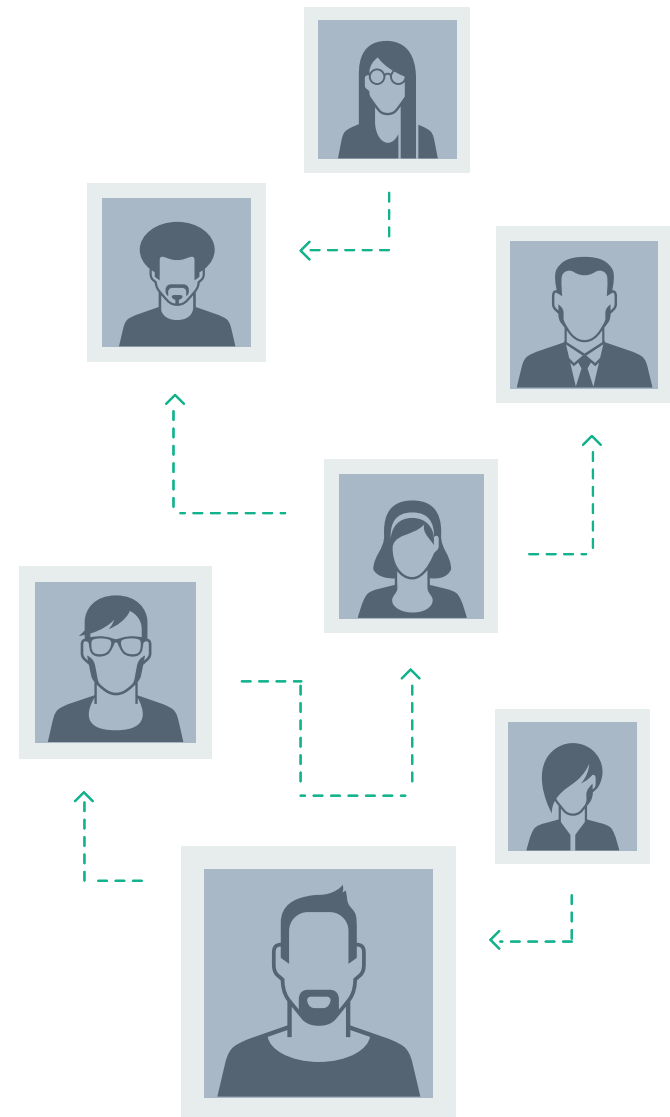
TIP NO. 6:

The best hires come from referrals. Build an internal candidate referral engine using incentives to drive participation in your company.

Passive job seekers do have friends though, and you may already employ some of those friends. Use them to your advantage.

- Develop an employee referral program for the entire company. Don't just limit it to particular positions or management levels.

- Incentivize your employees (but don't stop there). Many HR experts agree that paying employees per referral doesn't work as well as it used to. You'll see better results and a happier workforce if you place greater importance on creating a valuable team, where everyone values each other.

Just remember, all the employee referrals in the world won't help you if your employees have a negative outlook of your company. This could be apparent through company review sites like Glassdoor, or even on social media. That means, most of your referral power will come from having a company worth referring.

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Your Job Posting Checklist:

☐ Lay the groundwork for your job posting by identifying key job requirements. Make sure to include between 3-7 requirements so candidates have a holistic view of your job.

☐ Develop a list of ideal candidate attributes for your job posting. You can do this by profiling a colleague who exemplifies the characteristics you're looking for.

☐ Settle on the particulars of the job you're hiring for and craft your job profile using skillsets that apply to the candidate's experience.

☐ Identify your candidate's work style. Will he/she be collaborating with others? Or will this hire require quiet, heads-down concentration?

☐ Ensure your job descriptions are compliant by including

- Job Title
- Department & Paygrade
- Supervisor
- Location & Travel

- Education and Experience
- Time Commitment & Physical Requirements
- FLSA (The Fair Labor Standards Act)
- Job Summary & Purpose

☐ Take time to research the components of your job description now, to avoid legal action later.

☐ Design a careers page that is authentic, inviting, and succinct. Since many job seekers use mobile devices or tablets, ensure your page is optimized for multiple experiences.

☐ Include unique content on your careers page like company news, perks, and employee photos to build rapport with your talent pool.

☐ Link your careers page to your company's social channels, and syndicate all jobs to the most popular job boards to cast a wide candidate net.

☐ Establish an internal candidate referral engine to extend your reach into new (and solid) sourcing channels.

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Next Steps

Get Hiring

The hiring process comes down to one thing: finding the right candidate. To do this effectively, a balance must be struck. Cast your net too wide, and you risk getting a ton of applicants with no real candidates. Narrow your gaze too much and you could miss the perfect passive job seeker.

Hiring is a journey and it all starts with sourcing. Job boards, company websites, and referrals are only paths. Like any path, it helps to start in the right direction.

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1. Requesting a free Employer Brand Audit: **www.talentcmo.com/free-audit**
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