

EVALUATE, ELIMINATE, EMPLOY:

Your Path to Hiring Top-Tier Talent

The path to hire is often everything but a direct route. Unexpected turns and detours can delay your process, guide you to unqualified candidates, and even bring your efforts to a screeching halt. Even the most successful businesses struggle to find the right top talent, regardless of their reputation and experience.

So what is it that makes hiring so difficult, and how can you streamline the process? More importantly, how can you ensure that your candidate of choice is the ideal fit not only for the role, but also for your company and culture?

In this white paper, we detail the three key steps to hiring top-tier talent for your company: evaluation, elimination, and employment. When strategically implemented, you can rely on these steps to lead you to the right candidate. Before getting started, let's first examine the reasons why moving from evaluation to employment in the hiring process proves to be so difficult.

Identifying the Roadblocks

"Shouldn't this be easier?"

You've likely found yourself asking this question at some point in the hiring process. Not only is finding the right candidate an investment of direct and indirect resources but many companies also find it exhausting! When it is not executed properly, a search can become depleting as well as discouraging, leaving you to wonder what it is that makes identifying the perfect hire so difficult.

Too Many Options

For the job seeker, having too many opportunities is hardly an inconvenience. However, as an employer, multiple options makes it even more difficult to identify your ideal candidate.

To stand out in a crowded marketplace, companies need to find a way to rise above the noise to avoid the 90 percent while attracting the 10 percent.

Understanding who you're targeting and how to attract them is still the best — and most successful — way to stand out in a competitive market and land your ideal candidate. To do this, we suggest [creating a candidate profile](#) that highlights a couple of points that set your company apart (why someone would want to work there), discuss your values and unique attributes that form your culture, and the three to five deliverables they will be responsible for in the first year.

Applicants Aren't Always Honest

According to a [2017 study](#) conducted by HireRight, 85 percent of applicants lie on their resume. This sobering statistic means that you cannot put too much faith into a cover letter or resume as candidates may be embellishing their skills, education, and experience to present a version of themselves they think will get your attention.

To combat this, spend the time going in-depth on their experiences and accomplishments and speak with former managers and colleagues to confirm details. Also provide them with situational questions based on the deliverables they will need to achieve in your role - how they would go about accomplishing it, and specific examples of doing it in the past. These activities will allow you to see their strengths as well as their weaknesses, and pinpoint specific skills or experiences that will let you know if they are a fit to your opportunity and culture.



The Ideal Candidate May Not Check Every Box

Don't get us wrong, resumes are important and [shouldn't be neglected](#). However, when hiring, it's vital to look past the resume to who the applicant is and what they have to offer.

On paper, an applicant may not have the years of experience you are looking for, or they may be missing a necessary skill. However, what they lack in experience, they may make up for in emotional intelligence, leadership, and passion for your company and their potential new role. These qualities are [key indicators of success](#) and should be taken into consideration when evaluating each candidate — in some ways, even above what's on their resume.

Overall, overcoming these roadblocks requires additional planning on your part. While it's vital to verify education, experience, and skills, investing the time to target, identify, and understand a candidate's fit to your company and culture is the best way to hire top talent.

To do this effectively, we suggest following these three steps: evaluation, elimination, and employment.

Step One: Evaluation

The path to hiring top-tier talent begins with evaluating potential candidates. Much of the success of the evaluation phase relies heavily on overcoming the aforementioned roadblocks.

In this phase, you have already created a [candidate profile](#) and taken the time to identify who it is you're actually looking for. This will help you develop a pool of potential candidates to screen. However, if you choose not to complete these tasks, you will find yourself spending too much time sifting through a wide range of applications, riddled with unqualified and unrelated job seekers. Unsurprisingly, no hiring manager wants to find themselves in this position.

When you screen your pool of candidates, be sure to thoroughly examine past experiences, and keep an eye out for key performance indicators, or KPIs. Ask each applicant:

- Why did they choose to join the company and what were their goals on hire?
- How was their company positively impacted by this person over the last X years? What specifically did they accomplish?
- How did they accomplish it? Dig, dig, dig in order to fully understand all the details.
- What was the result?
- What did not work, what did they learn, and how will that help them going forward?
- What growth occurred due to the actions of this applicant?

KPIs should be supported by specific numbers and the individual should be able to explain how they achieved the result and how the measure was calculated. If candidates only use their resume to list their job duties, you may want to instead focus on candidates with proven success metrics. In the evaluation phase,

this type of information is all you have to go on, so it's important to efficiently examine it and invest your time and effort on the top 10 percent.

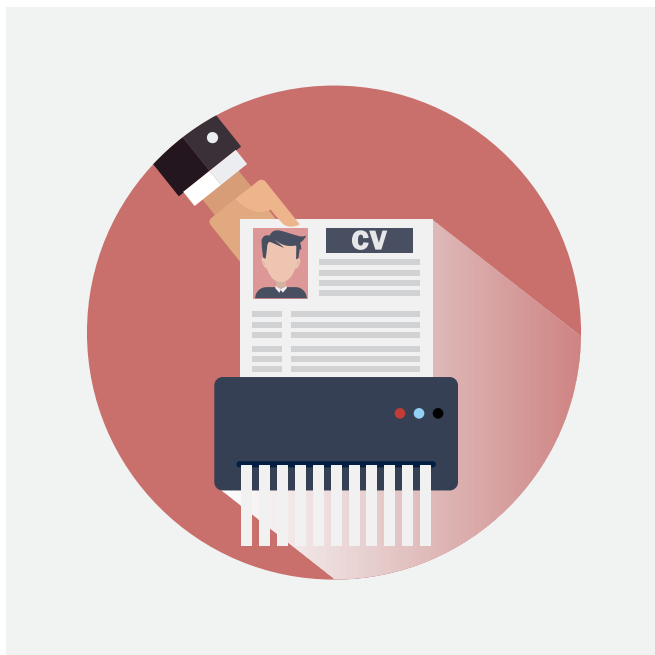
Once you have evaluated all applicants and narrowed your pool to the top three to five candidates, it's time to move on to the elimination phase.

Step Two: Elimination

Establishing up-front criteria and decision points for candidates is critical to identifying and selecting top-tier talent. For example, you need to have clarity and consensus on the following situations:

- Will you hire a candidate that has the experiences you want but does not share your vision?
- Will you hire a candidate that does not have the experience but is a quick learner and fits your culture?
- What experiences will you compromise on if all the other attributes fit?
- How would you scale up or down the position for strong candidates?

Decisions like these aren't easy, but they are inevitable, so it's important to set the criteria at the start.



Deciding Between Top-Tier Candidates

Up to this point, you've likely eliminated a number of candidates for various reasons. Maybe they didn't have the experience they noted on their resume, weren't responsive enough during the interview, wouldn't be a positive addition to your culture, or simply didn't possess the qualities you're looking for. Or, maybe you just had a [gut feeling](#) and decided to remove them from consideration.

Your next step is the most critical decision in this process: among the remaining applicants, who should I hire?

To help you decide, we recommend answering the following questions:

- Is the candidate a good fit, or a strong addition? Meaning, will they merely "fit" into your culture, or will they enhance it with new perspectives, ideas, and experiences?
- What soft skills does the candidate bring to the table? Soft skills such as communication, creativity, and empathy are all strong indicators of a successful hire. Ask questions to further evaluate these skills and analyze their response.
- Think about where your company is headed. Which candidate has the experiences and competencies to get you there? Does either candidate present potential stumbling blocks that may prevent you from reaching your goal?
- Does the candidate have potential beyond the role you are considering them for? How can they impact the company in both the short and long term?

If you're still struggling to choose, subject candidates to an experiential interview where they are asked to perform tasks within the job profile and interact with other employees who do not know the candidate's background. Based on the results, you should be able to move forward with a sole candidate, thus completing the elimination phase.



Step 3: Employment

Congratulations; by this point in the process, you have successfully chosen the ideal candidate for your position. All that's left now is to formalize the offer, correct? Well, not exactly.

Your job doesn't stop when employment begins. In fact, it's only just beginning. To ensure the success of your newest employee, you must take the time to properly assimilate them into your company. This goes beyond traditional "onboarding", and requires you to put more emphasis on investing the time, energy, and resources into helping a new hire become fully integrated.

How do you do this? With a well-structured and thorough integration or transition program. In our white paper, [Don't Stop at "Hired"! Transition Services are Critical for Candidate Success](#), we demonstrate the value of transition services in comparison to traditional onboarding techniques. Not only do transition services improve the productivity and functionality of your new hire, but also ensure their longevity at your company. [You can download your copy here.](#)

At Kinsley Sarn, we understand that finding the right hire can be difficult, and keeping that hire even more so. As an Executive Search and Placement company, we address both sides of the hiring process, first by [presenting you with highly qualified candidates](#), and second by successfully [transitioning the hire into their new role](#). Our success is your success, which is why we want to help you identify, select, hire, and transition the top-tier talent your company deserves.

To learn more about our executive search services and process, reach out to us. We're happy to help you in any way that we can. Happy hiring!

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