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# WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

# *THE DEFENSE DIGITAL SERVICE IS A SWAT TEAM OF NERDS WORKING TO IMPROVE TECHNOLOGY ACROSS THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.*

We hire world-class engineers, designers, product managers, and data scientists from diverse backgrounds to work on high-impact projects at the Pentagon and across the globe. During the DDS "Nerd Tour of Duty", we advance the DoD's most important initiatives that are critical to the well-being of service members, civilians, and core operations of the Department. We develop code, manage technical projects and product releases, and rewire outdated IT approaches.

**DEFENSE DIGITAL SERVICE (DDS)**
**Director, Brett Goldstein**

# HOW WE RECRUIT

# RECRUIT ING TECH.

**THE TALENT THE DOD WANTS EXISTS IN PLACES WHERE THE DOD IS NOT ENGAGED.**

With technologists in demand by employers across the globe, the federal government must obtain the right candidates to move its mission forward.

## DID YOU KNOW:

Technologists do not look for jobs on USAJobs.gov. The DoD should seek tech talent in spaces commonly used for tech job vacancies.

## THINGS YOU CAN DO:

☑ Attend tech conferences

☑ Participate in hackathons and other coding challenges

☑ Seek to hire tech entrepreneurs

***SERVING OUR COUNTRY AS
A FEDERAL CIVIL SERVANT
IS REWARDING.***

To attract tech talent, organizations should share their mission and identify how the candidate will contribute to and impact that mission. Organizations also need to incorporate common tech tools and culture into their workspace.

*TALENT
&
MISSION*

## THINGS YOU CAN DO:

☑ Share your mission through tech talks

☑ Leverage your tech workforce to define job requirements

☑ Create inviting and civilian-friendly website features

## DID YOU KNOW:

Often your organization is a candidate's first introduction to the DoD and the federal government. The DoD mission captivates tech talent.

# TECH TALENT IS NOT JUST...

## ENGINEERS ARE THE BACKBONE OF TECH ORGANIZATIONS.

Data scientists, product managers, and designers are key roles that enable product development.

## DID YOU KNOW:

The most desired tech talent does not attend job fairs, they attend tech conferences.

## THINGS YOU CAN DO:

☑ Ask people in tech roles to write and review your job descriptions (Speak Nerd)

☑ Add non-engineer tech talent to your organization

☑ Place job announcements on platforms outside of USAJobs.gov

# POLICY

# BONUS FOR REFER RALS

## GIVE EMPLOYEES A REFERRAL BONUS FOR RECRUITING AND HIRING

Good technical talent is often referred by peers and if a referral is hired, the employee who gave the referral can be rewarded by the organization for this strong hire. This is a common practice used in the private sector. It is also a team morale booster.

## DID YOU KNOW:

According to OPM, a government agency is allowed to implement a referral bonus for hard-to-fill positions.*

*https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/
performance-management/performance-management-
cycle/rewarding/using-referral-bonuses/

## THINGS YOU CAN DO:

☑ Allow employees to be part of the hiring process

☑ Provide incentives for employees who refer strong technical talent

☑ Make hiring a team effort

## OFFER RETENTION INCENTIVES TO EMPLOYEES

The average DDS team member stays with the organization for 2-3 years, which is comparable to the time an employee stays with a tech company. After the first 6-12 months in a position, an employee begins to think about the next position; a retention incentive is a great way to retain talent for an additional year or two after the first year of employment.

RETEN TION INCEN TIVES

## THINGS YOU CAN DO:

☑ Include the 3Rs (Recruitment, Relocation and Retention) and student loan repayment programs as a benefits package with salaries

☑ Do not retain tech talent for more than 5 consecutive years (this is not a good return on investment)

☑ Consider term limits for tech positions

### DID YOU KNOW:

According to OPM, the 3Rs are available to help federal agencies offer attractive options for alternative compensation.*

*https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/recruitment-relocation-retention-incentives/

# REMOTE WORK IS OK

## COVID-19 HAS PROVEN THAT REMOTE WORK IS THE NEW NORMAL.

Remote work is the new normal. For a technologist, it is not simply a preference, but a work style that is highly negotiated with potential employers. There are several studies that have proven that employees who work remotely are often more engaged with their team.

## THINGS YOU CAN DO:

☑ Allow team members to work remotely (not only during emergencies)

☑ Use technology as a tool for your organization to support distributed work

☑ Have weekly meetings that require the team members to use tech tools to participate

### DID YOU KNOW:

According to OPM, an organization can provide telework agreements to its team members.*

*https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/worklife/telework/

# DIVERSITY DRIVES TALENT

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# CREATE AN INVITING SPACE

*IN THE 21ST CENTURY, TECHNOLOGY IS A DRIVING FORCE FOR ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS.*

To obtain success, it is important to have a diverse talent pool that is inviting to all races, genders, ages, and experiences.

## DID YOU KNOW:

A candidate's hair, tattoos, fingernails, or other personal grooming characteristics can sometimes conflict with a company's status quo. However, a candidate should be evaluated on the merit of their talent and work ethic, and states are quickly moving to make discrimination based on appearance illegal.

## THINGS YOU CAN DO:

☑ Define talent for your team and put any underlying biases in check

☑ Review your team's hiring practices to eliminate conscious or unconscious discrimination

☑ Ensure your organization is inviting to all people

# WAIT, THERE IS MORE

## *ADDITIONAL RECRUITING APPROACHES TO CONSIDER:*

☑ Establish an account with an online employment marketplace (ie: LinkedIn).

☑ Establish an indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contract vehicle to closely mirror how the private sector acquires recruiting services. The IDIQ contract can be structured so that the organization does not pay a finders fee until the selected candidate is on board.

☑ Host a tech talk with tech employees at universities and colleges to discuss your organization.

☑ Work with key stakeholders from security and drug testing offices to identify how to onboard candidates quickly. For example: Drug testing staff agreed that candidates hired by DDS no longer need to have a drug test before onboarding, and each drug test is now administered 48 hours after the candidate onboards. With this single change, we removed 1-2 weeks from the candidate's start date.

☑ Consider requesting delegation to approve the 3Rs (Recruiting, Relocation, and Retention) and a delegation to approve superior qualifications for all new hires. These delegations can potentially remove weeks from the candidate's start date.

☑ Engage with hired candidates on a weekly basis.

# TALENT IS EVERYWHERE, MAY YOU ALWAYS BE RECRUITING

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# THANK YOU

## QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

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