

THE COMPLETE HIRING EVENTS PLAYBOOK

Everything you need to know to
hire at scale—in person or online.



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INTRODUCTION TO HIRING EVENTS



Career fairs, or hiring events, have been a go-to for high-volume hiring for decades. In today's talent marketplace, recruitment marketing means that we have to come up with unique ideas to attract qualified candidates and fill open positions. Hiring events are a great way to fill your candidate funnel quickly, as you can set up your event to see many candidates in a short period of time, as well as collect information that allows you to stay in touch with job seekers via recruitment emails and future events.

In the past decade, we've seen an increase in online marketing that allows us to reach candidates through targeted campaigns. Online marketing also allows us the option of holding virtual hiring events in addition to the traditional open-house-style career fairs.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have all had to make adjustments to the way that we hire. One of the major changes involves dropping in-person hiring events from our recruiting plans. Your events strategy doesn't have to be cut completely, however. Online hiring events are still an effective way to gather interested job seekers and make quality hires. They come with their own benefits, like scalability and geographic segmentation. We are hopeful that when the pandemic is over, many of us can go back to the hands-on approach of in-person hiring events. Perhaps we'll even find a way to balance online and in-person hiring events, leveraging both types to find the best hires possible.





BEFORE YOU PLAN YOUR EVENT

Recruiting events can pay off in building your talent pipeline and candidate funnel, making new hires, and promoting your employer brand, but they require lots of time, planning, and effort. Additionally, if you're not prepared to collect information from candidates at the event, or haven't thought through your strategy for targeting the right candidates, a hiring event can be a costly fail.

With the right preparation, you can create an event that not only reaches top talent in your market, but that easily scales for future hiring efforts. Before planning your event, here are some key questions to consider:



WHAT ROLES ARE WE HIRING FOR AND HOW QUICKLY DO WE NEED TO FILL THEM?

Hiring events have always been great for seasonal positions, new location openings, and other fast changes. They also work well for increasing your reach to fill evergreen roles or the same type of positions that you need to hire quickly for.

If your only goal is to raise the profile of your employer brand for positions that may open in the future, a digital campaign is going to have a higher return. If you need to fill X number of positions in one or more departments in a set time frame, hosting a hiring event can be the right strategy for quickly moving qualified candidates into your talent pipeline.



DO WE HAVE THE BUDGET FOR A HIRING EVENT?

Depending on whether or not your office can be turned into an event space with minimal effort, consider the cost of an event space and food/beverage offerings based on the number of expected attendees. Additionally, you'll have to consider the cost of promotional materials, printing, marketing and advertising, signage and branding, AV equipment, decorations, and staffing.

Even a simple \$500–\$1,000 spend can be more than enough to cover food and drinks for a networking event for hiring for business roles or tech talks and hackathons to attract engineers. There's a lot of room for experimentation but leveraging local groups and running interesting events can attract people's attention and result in better awareness of your company, all at a low cost.



ARE WE PREPARED FOR EVENT LOGISTICS?

This includes the capability to have online or on-site registration and candidate information capture, along with presentations, available hiring managers in attendance, on-site application platforms, and anything that will impact the candidate experience at your event. If you properly market your event and have a great turnout, not having the capability to collect candidate data for post-event follow up or enough staff on-site to engage with attendees means wasted time and effort on your part.



CAN WE OFFER A STELLAR CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE?

Along with the items mentioned above, consider whether or not you have the bandwidth to optimize for candidate experience. This could mean giving a knockout presentation, allowing candidates the opportunity to easily interact with recruiters or hiring managers, making immediate job offers, and fast follow-up.

Another thing to keep in mind is that if you optimize the event experience for those you don't hire, they will likely leave your process feeling like they got their fair shot, think highly of your standards for hiring, and come away feeling good about your company as a whole. Now you've created advocates for your company that are more likely to refer their friends, especially if they think they'd be a good fit for you. This can be the simplest way for companies to immediately increase quality candidate flow.

RECRUITMENT MARKETING & HIRING EVENTS

Hiring events are recruitment marketing activities. Recruitment marketing takes many forms and strategies in order for you to reach a variety of job candidates. Using the presentation model, you can then have recruiters “manning your booth” (chat) online and answering candidate questions for a general audience. They can also move conversations into another channel in order to conduct one-on-one virtual interviews.



ONLINE HIRING EVENTS

A virtual career fair, or online hiring event, takes place at a certain time on a specific channel. During the session, which works similarly to how webinars are structured, recruiters and job seekers meet in a virtual space via chat rooms, teleconferencing, webcasts, and/or text and email to exchange information about job postings.

Recruiters that hire at a high volume typically approach hiring with a combination of online and print advertising, as well as through on-site applicant walk-in hours or after-hours events. Considering that many candidates are passive and already work 40 hours a week, digital engagement is what works for a talent marketplace where you're competing for workers. Online hiring events allow you to scale your recruiting efforts by holding multiple online events, segmenting the events by position, or even geographically reaching a candidate audience that is in the process of moving within driving distance of your location.

In the era of COVID, many industries have had their in-person hiring events limited. State-wide closures and safety precautions have caused offices to work from home, limiting your ability to show off your office, too. However, virtual events are still a viable option for hiring, and advanced targeting tools give them the potential to attract even more candidates than in-person ones allow for.



HOW VIRTUAL HIRING EVENTS WORK

The goal of a hiring event is to get “face time” with potential employees. There are a lot of ways you can approach this virtually, but each has one thing in common: establishing a first impression of your company that showcases your employer brand through your recruiting team as representatives of your company, standing by and available to respond in real time. It’s crucial to communicate these events across your locations and involve your hiring managers. Online hiring events are a great way to get curious candidates from different places moving through your talent funnel from awareness to consideration, and – the more they learn about your open positions and benefits – convert them to applicants in a short period of time.

For online hiring events, you’ll want to ensure that you’re optimizing the event for mobile. Many technology companies offer hosting platforms for webinars and chat, and these can be used for an event-specific hosted job fair. You can also set it up via any webinar platform that allows you to present to a group of registered attendees. Using the presentation model, you can then have recruiters “manning your booth” (chat) online and answering candidate questions for a general audience, with the option of moving the conversations into another channel for a one-on-one virtual interview.



**FOCUS ON WHAT’S BEEN
SUCCESSFUL IN THE PAST AT
ATTRACTING THE CANDIDATE
PERSONA YOU’D LIKE TO SEE
AT YOUR EVENT.**

Check out these companies who offer event-hosting platforms:



PRO TIP

Check with your Applicant Tracking System (ATS), as they may have an event-hosting platform feature included as part of their solution.

Now that you're ready to host your online hiring event, here are some things to consider:



Test your platform before you set up registration. You'll want to stage a "mock" hiring event with the technology you're using before you can promote your event. Nothing is more frustrating than finding out at the worst possible moment that your attendees can't see/hear/communicate with you when you're holding your event.



Provide information via email or text message upon registration. This gives attendees alternate ways to communicate with your team in case they have technological issues. It's helpful to offer a method of communication to attendees that might have to miss the event at the last minute.



Start small, then scale. Once you've tested your online hiring event with a small set of candidates, say 10-20 attendees based on a 30-50 registration, have a "postmortem" with your recruiting team. Find out what worked, what didn't, and what you can do better the next time with a larger audience.



THE MORE HIGHLY-TARGETED YOUR CAMPAIGN IS, THE MORE LIKELY YOU ARE TO REACH THE RIGHT TALENT.

TARGETING CANDIDATES FOR YOUR ONLINE HIRING EVENT

This is another advantage of online hiring events. You can use online ads and other tools to reach candidates with your event information. The more highly targeted your campaign is, the more likely you are to reach the right talent your company is looking for and make hires fast.

Your registration can be set up to prequalify only the talent you are targeting – those with specific experience – and then invite them to your event. This means that, unlike an in-person hiring event, you won't have to deal with turning away people at the door, because you can pre-qualify registrants who provide resume and qualification information before the event. You can even segment these events to candidates who are currently working for your competitors (useful if your company's benefits, perks, and salaries are a good reason for a passive candidate to leave their current employer) so you can specifically highlight what makes your company different and better.

DEFINING SUCCESS FOR YOUR ONLINE HIRING EVENT

Finally, when you've identified what format works for your virtual events, this is where you decide what worked and what didn't.

Could you bring in more hiring managers? Present industry-related content with value for your attendees (even if they don't apply, they'll remember you)? Expand your targeting outside of your geographic area? All of this depends on the success of the first few events, the number of registrations (impacted primarily by targeting and reach), the number of attendees (impacted primarily by campaign) and the number of applicants (impacted primarily by the quality and format of your event). Use the data, make the necessary adjustments, and get ready to kick off the next event.



ON-SITE HIRING EVENTS

On-site hiring events aren't simply a matter of handing out flyers, posting to social channels, and having some hiring managers available to meet with whoever shows up. In order to get the most out of your hiring event, planning, execution and follow-up are imperative.

Once you've decided to host a candidate hiring event, the next step is to determine what type of hiring event will work best for you and your company. Whether you set up a booth at a university event or hold your own open house for candidates, the type of event you choose should be based on your open roles, industry, and candidate personas. You'll want an event that gives you and your team the optimal face-to-face engagement with job seekers so you can sell your positions and your company, as well as one that fits into your recruitment marketing budget.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF HIRING EVENTS

PLANNER & CALENDAR						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
			Staff meeting			
		9		10	11	12
			16	17	18	19



ON-SITE JOB FAIR

This is ideal for companies with large and impressive workspaces, as you'll want to show candidates exactly what they'll be showing up to every day. If the top talent you want to recruit can literally picture themselves at a desk or in a cubicle with their new coworkers, it eliminates the need for you and your hiring managers to sell candidates on your location. Another advantage of on-site open houses is that it's convenient for your hiring managers to attend – plus, other staff members can conveniently attend as well and collect information from candidates.

On-site job fairs work really well in industries like tech, call centers, financial services, and others with job openings in multiple verticals. You can integrate office tours during the event, have on-site Q&As with recruiters and hiring managers, and make it as casual as you'd like.



ON-SITE OPEN HOUSES

These work more like meet-and-greet networking events for job seekers. It's a way to showcase your location, meet with candidates, and allow people to connect with career experts, other job seekers, and the company recruiting and leadership team. An open house is also a good opportunity to have an on-site application submission process, face-to-face interviews on the spot, and even job offers extended during the event.



ON-SITE NETWORKING EVENT

Another option for an on-site open house is in the form of a networking group that meets at your location on a regular basis. These are usually industry-specific and offer candidates the opportunity to network within their industry. During these events, strategically placed recruiters are present to casually talk with and answer questions from job seekers. These are really effective in cities known for top talent to drive more traffic to your corporate office and build relationships with sought-after candidates.



HIRING EVENT AT AN OUTSIDE VENUE

These work well for companies that don't have open space plans and want to have events with a large attendance. It does add cost of venue to your spend, but it allows you to get really creative with event planning. These hiring events can be typical meet-and-greet, or you can have themed activities (think bowling, breweries, baseball) that give candidates the opportunity to interact casually with hiring managers and team members. Another advantage of holding your event at an outside venue is that you're paying the venue for event planning services rather than having someone on your team take this on.



COMPETITIVE EVENTS (ON- OR OFF-SITE)

For highly-skilled positions, competitive events can be an effective way to not only attract qualified candidates, but to screen them at the same time.

For example, Ogilvy's "Search for the World's Greatest Salesperson" asked sales candidates to submit a video of themselves selling a brick. While Ogilvy created a digital experience for candidates, this is also something you can do during an event. In the tech sector, hackathons have been popular events for years and are often held by companies looking to hire top talent. Hackathons require developers to either create something or solve a problem during the event, and they are a great way to see how candidates collaborate within a team to solve real-world problems. You can motivate participation in the challenge with prizes, job offers, and of course, food.



CAMPUS CAREER FAIRS

If you're hiring high-volume for entry-level positions like retail and hospitality, campus career fairs can give you great ROI. Having your best team members and hiring managers at a table or booth alongside many other employers gives you the opportunity to showcase your company's perks and benefits, as well as educate students who may not know your company or what you do. Because your team isn't tasked with planning and executing the event, campus events can be a great way to introduce your company to a large number of potential candidates without a lot of up-front effort.





IN-PERSON HIRING EVENT BEST PRACTICES

Whether you set up a booth at a university event or hold your own open house for candidates, look for the optimal face-to-face engagement with job seekers that gives you the opportunity to sell your positions and your company. Just as you do with other strategies in recruiting, it's important to measure success and test new formats for your hiring events.

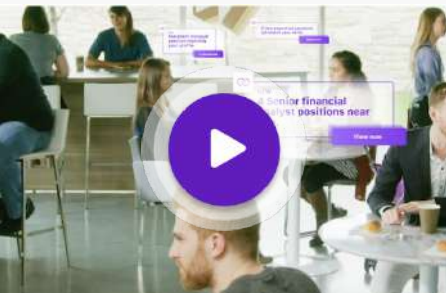
Don't wait until the day of your event to throw anything together. All aspects of planning for your event can be done ahead of time and will help ensure that everything runs smoothly. If your hiring event is at your company HQ, you'll want to decide where (conference room, lobby, etc.) depending on the size of your location. If it's a retail store, you can set aside a section with a table to be staffed by hiring managers and floor employees while making sure the business still has coverage for customers.

Whether in-house or at a campus hiring event, consider branded tablecloths, signs, flyers, handouts, and swag like t-shirts or water bottles. If this is an on-site after work event, you'll want to have light refreshments. You can also get creative with snacks, like having cookies made with your company logo or serving small bites that say something about your brand (e.g., bacon-wrapped jalapenos meaning "we're hot"). This is the time to get creative and a sense of humor appeals to every type of candidate.

Have enough (of the right) staff at your event. If you get buy-in from all teams, it's a good idea to have hiring managers representing each open position at your event, along with senior team members that can engage candidates in conversation during networking. What you don't want is to have candidates wandering around waiting for someone to talk to. Your hiring managers can also perform quick on-site interviews with attendees, allowing you to screen attendees immediately and close your event with a hot list for follow up. This small action can dramatically improve your time to hire.



PROMOTING YOUR EVENT IS ONE THING - GETTING PEOPLE TO SHOW UP IS ANOTHER.



How will your event be structured? It could be very informal – have attendees check in then point them to the snacks and beverage stations – or you could begin with an introduction, point out hiring managers and identify their departments, and explain the process for applying on-site or leaving resumes. For smaller companies, having the CEO in attendance or performing the introduction at the start of the event is helpful to communicate the benefits of working for a start-up. At larger companies, HR leadership can play this role, or you can consider allowing a hiring manager from each department to give a quick intro. The most important part of the event is going to be the interaction with recruiters and candidates, so the structure of your event should focus on how that will happen.

Use technology to help sort attendee information, like scanning resumes and checking off registrants on an iPad. You can also have each attendee sign up as they arrive. This will help you ensure you're collecting information from every attendee for follow-up later.

You can take this a step further and have dedicated laptops on site as portals for job applicants, which will save you and your team tons of time over processing written applications. ATSs with matching technology allow you to scan resumes into your system and allow candidates to create an account in which the fields are auto-populated with their resume information. This doesn't just save you time, it improves your candidate experience because applicants won't have to enter their information twice.

You can also use the iPad to check attendees in as a tool to separate registered attendees from non-attendees if they pre-registered on your landing page. This can help you segment candidates when you market follow-up content to keep them engaged in your hiring funnel.

Finally, it's a good idea to have a "day of" meeting with employees and hiring managers who will be available at the open house. This is to ensure that everyone understands their role, as well as allow you to plan for the unexpected, like having more attendees turn up than you estimated based on registrations or what to do if your registration capture or application portals stop working. You'll want to ensure that employee attendees can be easily identified by candidates. Having them wear branded t-shirts and name tags is helpful, as the candidates attending may meet many people and want to make a note of who they spoke to without having to ask their names a dozen times.

PLANNING AHEAD FOR YOUR HIRING EVENT

In order to reach qualified candidates for your open positions, it's imperative to maximize candidate events like hiring and company career fairs. These events not only showcase your employer brand, but they also give you and your team a valuable opportunity to meet candidates face-to-face in a short period of time. Below are seven things you can do right now to generate buzz and improve your reach for event attendance, as well as to make a positive impression on your attendees.



1

HAVE A SOLID PLAN

Have a project plan that includes a list of activities with assigned duties, responsibilities, and dates for additional needs such as marketing copy, landing pages, graphic design, and other additional follow-up messaging and marketing. This will give you a timeline with specific goals to refer to leading up to, during, and immediately following your event. Mapping this out makes it easy for each member of your team to understand their role and outlines what each should do to achieve team goals for the event.

2

PARTNER WITH MARKETING

Not all companies have a marketing department, but if you do, use their resources and strategies to give you an advantage in the social and digital space. Have a brainstorming session or two with key marketing team members and find out a) which campaigns have been the most successful overall and b) how the same principles can be applied to your hiring event. For example, a digital display campaign created by marketing with specific audience demographics may have been successful because it hit the right tone or had the right messaging for that demographic. Your counterparts in marketing can support your efforts to mirror their campaign's success by identifying which advertising method and type of content are likely to bring in more warm leads (i.e., candidates that register for your event online).

3

LEVERAGE YOUR HIRING MANAGERS

Have your hiring managers on site to do face-to-face interviews and answer candidate questions. Your hiring managers can also perform quick on-site interviews with attendees, allowing you to screen attendees immediately and close your event with a list for follow-up.

4

CREATE A WAR BOARD

It's often helpful to get everything in writing, in one place where all stakeholders can see it. Make sure to list all openings and who was pending in the pipeline in terms of offers and accepts. You can use a conference room or even giant post-it notes on an easel if whiteboards are in short supply. The point is to have a visual snapshot at any given time of the progress from your event.

5

CREATE OFFER PACKETS IN ADVANCE

Be prepared to make on-the-spot offers on site during your event. Have offer packets ready so a member of your team can handle this immediately. This could be a fillable offer letter or file to print, any drug testing or background check information, and other resources related to benefits, perks and start date. If an interested and qualified candidate is ready to move, why wait to get the ball rolling?

6

HAVE AN EVENT COORDINATOR

You need a single person who is the main point of contact and can move and flow with the event. This is the equivalent of a project manager, and this person will have a master timeline, schedule, and assignments list to follow to ensure everything is running smoothly and on schedule.

7

USE CREATIVE ADVERTISING AND TARGETING

Use your email database to reach out to previous candidates and those who have signed up for your talent newsletter for the event. On the landing page for your event registration, have buttons that make it easy to share the event for both talent community and your current employees. Your employees are your best resource for sharing open positions.



Finally, consider what makes your company different and be sure to highlight these things during your open house hiring event. Candidate experience can be the defining factor between being able to fill these positions easily and struggling to fill them past your ideal deadline. An on-site event is one of the best ways to showcase what your company has to offer that your competitors don't.

All aspects of planning for your event can be done ahead of time and will ensure that everything you've planned will run smoothly. Ideally, you'll have several weeks ahead of your hiring event date to create a project management timeline, assign tasks and responsibilities, and hold weekly status update meetings with your team.

CHECKLIST:

BEFORE YOUR HIRING EVENT

Here's what you need to do to host a successful hiring event.

- ☐ Know the number and type of jobs your company needs to fill.
- ☐ Write job descriptions for each position (created with hiring manager).
- ☐ Determine the type of hiring event (on-site open house, networking event, etc.).
- ☐ Pick a time and date for your event. Do your research and be as sure as possible that there are no conflicting local events, holidays, or even sports games or television shows.
- ☐ Create a timeline with dates and plan out your budget.
- ☐ Determine the format (Q&A, speed round interviews, on-site application method, etc.).
- ☐ Choose a venue (on-site at your office or an off-site venue).
- ☐ Estimate your expected attendance.
- ☐ Create personas for the candidates you'd like to see at the event.
- ☐ Decide on your event marketing channels (includes display ads, social media, and meetup listings).
- ☐ Prepare a budget for marketing, event, and follow-up.
- ☐ Promote your event internally and make sure your colleagues invite their friends, roommates, and former coworkers.
- ☐ Consider creating a unique hashtag for the event for all social media.
- ☐ Create shareable invite links for employee referrals for your event.
- ☐ Have a list of hiring managers and other staff that will attend the event.
- ☐ Use a registration method (like a landing page for advanced registration or an iPad to check in attendees) that allows you to collect candidate data.
- ☐ Know the media your event requires – video, signage, and application technology.
- ☐ Prepare for office tours during the event (for on-site).
- ☐ Track registrations and the success of your online event campaign.
- ☐ Establish the paperwork, nametags, branded swag bags, etc. needed.
- ☐ Have a plan and messaging ready to communicate to registrants via event reminders.
- ☐ Make sure the people you're inviting know how to get to your venue, including specific directions, available public transportation, and parking information.
- ☐ Decide on the food and beverage options you'll have.
- ☐ Schedule enough company representatives to mingle and chat with potential job candidates that show up at your booth, table, or space.
- ☐ Get executive team buy-in.

PROMOTE YOUR HIRING EVENTS

There are several important things to consider when you're promoting your event. If you're working your recruitment marketing strategy, you'll want to focus on what's been successful in the past at attracting the candidate persona you'd like to see at your event. You should market the event via multiple channels, including your previous applicant or previous attendee email segments, your social channels, targeted digital display, and anywhere your candidate persona spends time online.



ADVERTISING

Promoting your event on social media as well as with geo-targeted advertising on sites like Facebook and Instagram are great ways to let prospective candidates know where you will be and when. One easy way to get the most mileage out of event promotion is through creating a campaign for your event on a programmatic advertising platform like Talroo. This allows you to automate and optimize where your ads are shown and to whom, as well as get the most out of your ad spend. Programmatic allows you to feature your online landing page (see example) to capture attendee leads and conversions (registrations) for your event.

VIDEO

Using live or prepared videos to introduce your company and hiring managers to prospective attendees is a great way to make an impression and build on those relationships. A quick live video on Instagram, Facebook, or LinkedIn helps put a face to a name and humanize your brand and recruiting process. This is also a great way to get engagement on your event registration landing page. Having a lead capture form with a video about your open house event increases the chance that a candidate who gets to your page will register, as video allows you to personalize your event invitation and talk more about what the event will include.

REGISTRATION

Having a landing page with more information about your company is useful information for potential candidates, but you can also use this as a lead capture opportunity so candidates provide an email address and other contact information. This way, you have it whether or not they show up for the event. Your event announcement video can live on the registration page, along with a form for registration.



You can also include features like a chatbot so potential attendees can ask questions ahead of the event (along with contact information), or so candidates can reach out in the event that they will not be able to attend your open house. You can later segment the registration list to separate attendees from non-attendees and use your content marketing emails to engage both.

TARGETING

When you market your event, target groups on social media with an interest in jobs in your industry, your industry in general, and your competitors. You can use online ads and other tools to reach candidates with your event information. If you already have a robust and engaged audience on Facebook, that might be a great place to promote your event. As mentioned above, programmatic advertising targeting can be a very efficient and budget-friendly way to promote your event online, and you can identify your target audience before setting up your ad spend. Because this type of online advertising automatically adjusts delivery of ads based on engagement (or clicks, depending on which you have identified as success for the campaign), it maximizes your online ad budget.

PERSONAL INVITATIONS

You can increase awareness for your event by asking your current employees to share personalized online invitations. This ranges from a recruiter reaching out to past prospects with an invite link to holding a contest to see how many invitations your employees can share via email or on their own social media platforms. With an event landing page, you can provide each employee with a personal unique invitation link so you're able to track how many registrations each link gets and reward the employee with the most with a gift card, bonus, or additional PTO. This also helps personalize your event and reach an audience similar to what you would get from employee referrals.



**ON-SITE HIRING EVENTS
AREN'T SIMPLY A MATTER
OF HANDING OUT FLYERS.**



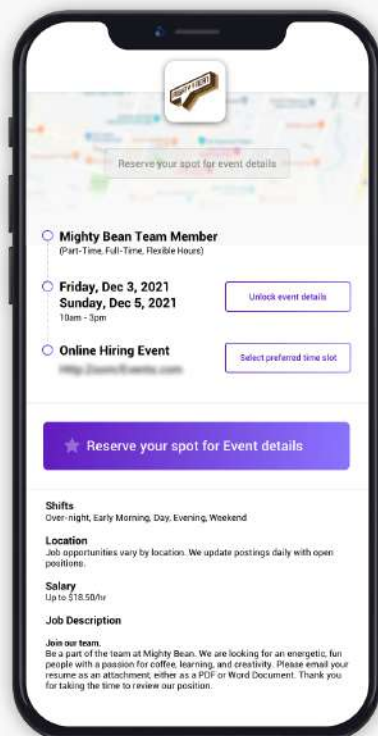
TURNING RSVPS INTO ATTENDEES

Promoting your event is one thing – getting people to show up is another. Even if it's for a career opportunity, people have busy lives and will need encouragement to attend. Make sure that once you have your RSVP list, you keep in touch with your candidates as the event draws closer.

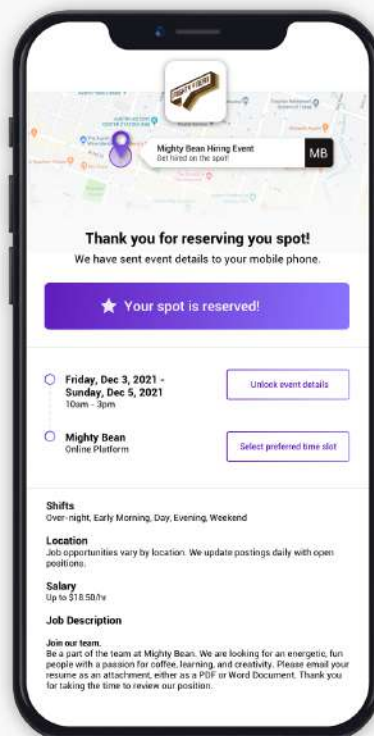
Talroo's Events solution includes automated communication with candidates. When a candidate RSVPs, Talroo sends a confirmation via both email and text message. Then, the candidates are reminded of the event three days before, and one day before, both by email and text message.

The candidates also receive a link through Talroo's Google Maps integration, so they know exactly where to go. This is especially helpful on large campuses with multiple entrances that may be tough to navigate on a first visit. There will always be RSVPs that don't turn into attendees, and Talroo gives you the full contact info of these candidates, so you can follow up later or add them to your nurture programs.

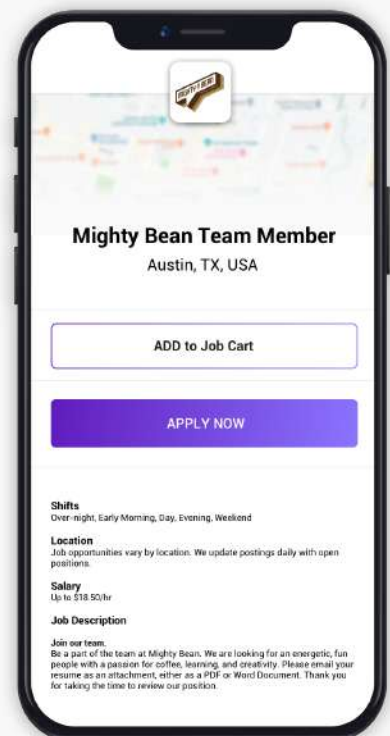
Whether you choose Talroo Events to automate the process, or if you promote the event through your own channels, it's always important to remember to make things as easy as possible for the candidate. Remove friction at every point possible to see your attendance rate increase. These steps will set you up for success when you hold your events.



View event and RSVP



RSVP confirmation



Redirect to ATS to finish application

CHECKLIST: DURING YOUR HIRING EVENT

During the event, use technology to help sort attendee information, like scanning resumes and checking off registrants on an iPad. You can also have each attendee sign up as they arrive. This will help you ensure you're collecting information from every attendee for follow-up later.

Here is a checklist of what to do on the day of and during your hiring event.

- ☐ Host a "day of" meeting with staff and hiring managers who will attend the event.
- ☐ Communicate backup scenario plans in the event something does not go as planned (technology issues, etc.)
- ☐ Show up to the venue early to make sure everything is in place and ready to go. If not, you'll have enough time to fix things before attendees show up.
- ☐ Ensure staff members are identified with name tags and logo shirts.
- ☐ Make sure you have all necessary equipment, such as screens, projectors, lights, speakers, music playlists, and microphones, set up and ready to go.
- ☐ If you're having a panel or a presentation, put it in the middle of the event to give people enough time to show up.
- ☐ Have an iPad (or written list) to check in attendees.
- ☐ Test on-site portals for applications, quick assessments, and any other functions that are part of your screening process.
- ☐ Make sure someone is tasked to greet every person as they arrive to make them feel welcome.
- ☐ Don't force attendees to network – they'll do so if interested.
- ☐ Give attendees a clear point of contact to reach out to if they want more information after the event, especially if they really clicked with one of your team members or recruiters.

RECOMMENDED TECHNOLOGIES AND TOOLS



Hiring events are a great way to fill your candidate funnel quickly because they allow you to set up an event to see a lot of candidates in a short period of time, personalize the experience, and collect information that lets you stay in touch with candidates via recruitment emails and future events.

Doing all of these things manually can take a lot of time for an HR team, and if you want to scale the events, you have to automate and streamline what works. In order to have a successful event, from planning to follow up, there is technology available to maximize each step along the way.



PLANNING YOUR HIRING EVENT WITH PROJECT MANAGEMENT

If your company already has project management software, this would be an excellent time to use it. If not, you can use a free project tool like Airtable, or something as simple as Trello, so your team can update their tasks in a shared resource. Project management tools also allow you to work on multiple events simultaneously and track which tasks you should spend more or less time on.



EVENT PROMOTION AND TARGETED ADVERTISING

If you don't have attendees at your in-person hiring event, your ROI is going to be low. Consider where and how to promote your event. Some companies have large and robust audiences on Facebook, so targeting candidate audiences with social media event advertising can be effective.

For those of you who want to reach a lot of active and passive job seekers, programmatic advertising can be a very efficient and budget-friendly way to promote an event online, and you can identify your target audience before setting up your ad spend. Because this type of online advertising automatically adjusts delivery of ads based on engagement (or clicks, depending on which you have identified as success for the campaign), it allows you to maximize your online ad budget.



HIRING EVENT REGISTRATION

Having an optimized event registration landing page is important. The key functions of the landing page are to give candidates information about your company (through text or video) and to get contact information from your candidates, whether they come to the event or not. On the event page, consider including features like a chatbot or contact information for recruiters so interested job seekers can get their event questions answered before they go.

During the event, you can use technology to help sort attendee information, like scanning resumes and checking off registrants on an iPad. You can also have each attendee sign up as they arrive. This will help you ensure you're collecting information from every attendee for follow-up later. There is some manual effort involved, but having candidate contact information is imperative to your team's event goals.



COMMUNICATING WITH ATTENDEES AND APPLICANTS

Using segmentation for registrants and attendees can help you target your email content, such as event reminders, FAQs, and event follow-up. If your email platform integrates with your registration database or ATS, this can be a fairly seamless process.

Using a platform like Talroo Events can help streamline all of the above. In one platform, you get event promotion and targeting, landing page, registration, candidate tracking, email/text updates to candidates before and after the event, and even a Google Maps integration to help attendees find your location.



APPLICATION TECHNOLOGY AT YOUR HIRING EVENT

Save time for your team by having dedicated laptops on site as portals for job applicants. If your ATS has matching technology, you can scan resumes for the candidates into your system, then allow them to create an account in which the fields are auto-populated by their scanned resume, making for a faster and better overall candidate experience.

On-site portals can also perform quick assessments and any other functions that are part of your screening process. Consider your expected attendance, the length of your event, and how time-consuming it would be to have interested candidates apply on site, then give them the opportunity to do so.



HOW TECH MAKES HIRING EVENT METRICS WORK FOR YOU

Using technology for your hiring event helps tick off a lot of your expected KPIs. When budgeting for the promotion and marketing for your event, your goal is to keep your cost per attendee low. Having a dedicated platform to reach the right candidates for your event and targeting this audience efficiently will increase your quality of hire, which also increased your rate of hire from the event (your source of hire in this case). A seamless method of registration and communication with registrants and attendees, along with application technology on-site, will improve your candidate experience. And finally, automating reminder emails and text messages, plus sending helpful information about your location and company, will increase the rate of attendance for your event.

AFTER YOUR HIRING EVENT



**YOUR FOLLOW-UP DOESN'T
HAVE TO BE PERFECT; IT JUST
HAS TO BE FASTER THAN YOUR
COMPETITORS'.**



Because the attendees at your hiring event are not just applying for your jobs, it's important to be able to act swiftly once you've identified your top applicants. Your follow up doesn't have to be perfect; it just has to be faster than your competitors'. Planning ahead can help you perfect this process.

Be up front with attendees. Before the end of your event, or by email immediately after, let candidates know the length of your process and when they can expect to hear from you to schedule an interview.

Follow-up email segments. You'll want to have content prepared for emails to attendees to send out immediately following your hiring event. By immediately, this means that the candidates you want to know more about should receive an email by the time they get home. If you're using tech to register and check in your attendees, along with a designated team member collecting feedback from hiring managers, you can have a segmented list of top candidates ready to go as soon as your event is over.

Thank them for attending, personalize the email with their name, have an easy contact (or easy apply button for candidates that didn't apply during the event), and express your interest in bringing them back for a formal interview. You'll want to include a link to your career site or landing page with an FAQ that candidates can easily access – basically addressing any questions or concerns they might see as an obstacle to considering your company for a job. This is also an area where video could be useful. Have a "thanks for attending, contact us!" video from one of your hiring managers or senior staff ready to send via email that extends an offer to apply or ask questions. You can also go beyond content and give candidates an offer or something of direct value in your follow up messaging, like an e-book on your company culture or a discount on your consumer goods or services.



There will be candidates you're not going to move through the application process, but who might be right for a future opening. Candidate experience matters to your brand, as well as for keeping a robust list of potential candidates in your hiring funnel and engaged with your content. Provide resources and support for those who don't get the job in the same personalized way you would follow up with the candidates you plan to hire.

For people who choose not to apply, retain them on a segment of attendees and include them in your content marketing efforts. Not applying doesn't mean your company wasn't right for them – it could be anything from the job description (not a good fit right now) to location to the candidate having another offer on the table. By including them in your candidate newsletter, you can share future job openings and other information about your company as your staffing needs change.

Personalization wins. This is where you can get creative with your offers and increase the chances of winning over candidates, especially the passive ones. A favorite example is when Nike would ask candidates their shoe size and send offer letters with a custom shoe – only one. The candidate received the other shoe when they accepted the offer. Work with your team to come up with some ideas that will help your company stand out from your competitors and delight the candidate.

Finally, in order to repeat the success of your event (or make the next one even better), you'll want to set effectiveness metrics for your open house. This can be as simple as sending short surveys via email to attendees to assess how they perceived the event, or you can carry it through the talent pipeline and set benchmarks based on performance level and retention rate of your open house hires versus other sources.

HIRING EVENT FOLLOW-UP THAT ENGAGES NO-SHOWS

Your no-show segment should be treated differently than the attendees after your event. Candidates that registered and showed up have made it through the awareness and consideration stage of your hiring funnel and into consideration and intent (applying for your open jobs). Your no-shows remain at the awareness and consideration stage – moving them further into your hiring funnel requires engagement and relationship-building. They're interested in you because they registered, so they're not a "cold" segment.

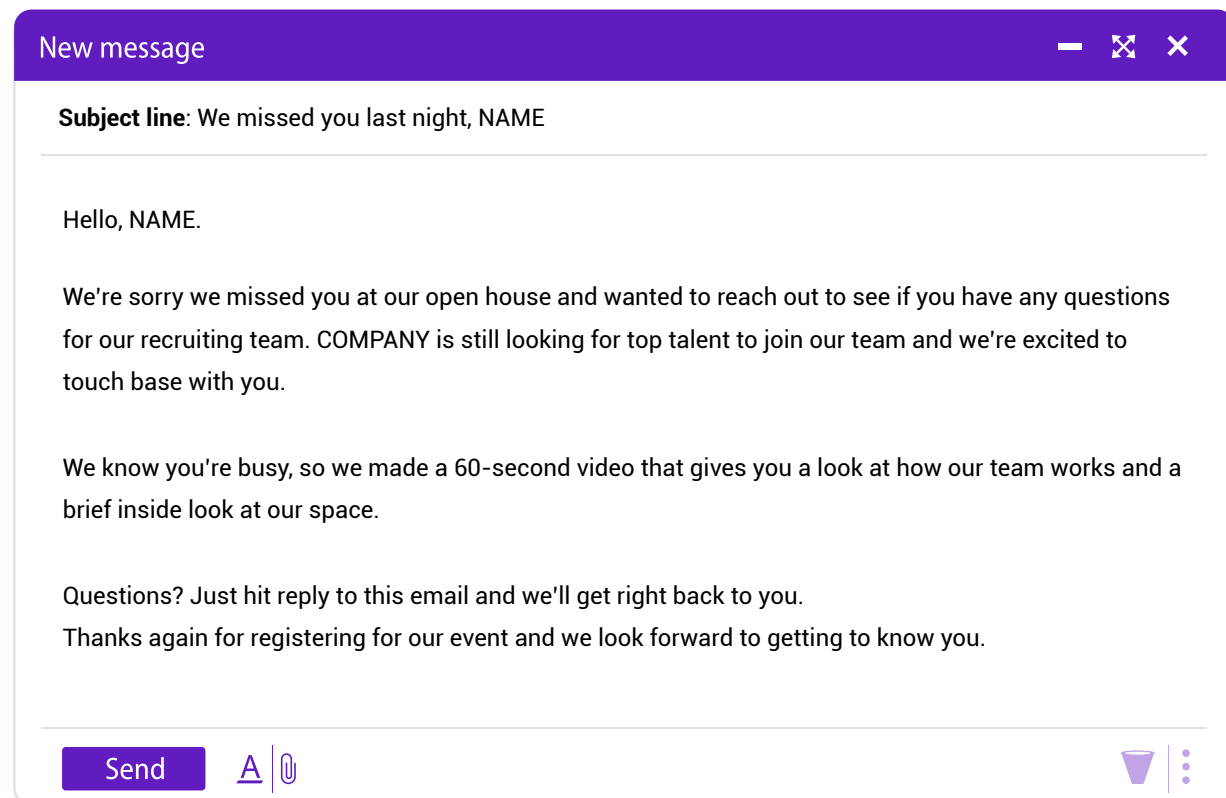
The key with no-shows is to continue to build relationships with them by adding them to your talent community. This means creating a content and resource strategy to keep your employer brand relevant to them as potential talent for your future open positions. They are leads, and nurture campaigns are perfect for them.

Just as with your event attendees, you'll want to have content prepared for emails to send out to no-shows immediately following your hiring event. Because you used a landing page for registration and a check in process at your event, you have the email addresses you need to segment your no-shows at the ready.

Thank them for registering, personalize the email with their name, and tell them you're sorry to have missed them at the event. It's important to use passive wording here and not something that could sound accusatory ("sorry you missed our event"). Include an easy contact method (email reply is great) so they can reach out to your recruiters, as well as a link to your career site with an FAQ that addresses any questions or concerns they might see as an obstacle to considering your company for a job, regardless of their reason for not showing up. This is another area where video could be useful.



An example no-show email:



Once you've started your email nurture campaign, you'll further segment your no-show list by those who replied to your first email and those who didn't. The candidates who respond can then be moved to a specific recruiter to personally answer questions or offer resources. Those who didn't reply will remain in your nurture campaign to receive future emails. These emails can include invitations to your next hiring event, a longer video with an office tour or a message from a hiring manager, a rundown of your company culture and why it's so great, and resources like industry-specific articles or invites to your Facebook group.

A nurture campaign for no-shows is scalable and repeatable, which is the point of holding a hiring event: moving a large number of new candidates into your hiring funnel.

CHECKLIST:

AFTER YOUR HIRING EVENT

Your hiring event doesn't end when your attendees leave the building. There is still work to be done in terms of following up with promising candidates, tracking the data you collected, and learning from the event, possibly to host better ones in the future.

Follow this checklist for success after your hiring events.

- ☐ Track your data (applicants, candidates, hires, etc.) so that you can measure ROI.
- ☐ Trigger "thanks for attending" emails to attendees that includes messaging on how soon they should expect to hear from a hiring manager or your team.
- ☐ Send a "sorry you couldn't make it" email to those who RSVP'd but did not attend, just to leave the line of communication open.
- ☐ Ask members of your team to personally follow up with any promising candidates.
- ☐ If you held interviews during the event, have a meeting to review notes while the information is still top of mind.

NOTES:

HIRING EVENT METRICS TO MEASURE

The first step in planning your next hiring event is evaluating the success of your first. The evaluation process starts when you're setting up your first event and allows you to understand what worked and what didn't, as well as establishing a benchmark to measure improved ROI for future events.

If you have collected data on the number of candidates you interacted with at the event, the number of applications/resumes received, the number of qualified applications/resumes received, the number of interviews scheduled, the number of resulting hires, and so on, you can measure the event's success against benchmarks or prior events. This also allows you to identify areas for improvement so you can scale your next hiring event.

HIRING EVENT METRICS THAT MATTER

When planning for your hiring event, you set event goals that established a foundation for best practices in collecting candidate data, event ad targeting, employee referrals (event invitations), and calculating expected attendance versus actual attendance. You can now use these to calculate your cost per hire and optimize the ROI for your next hiring event.

The great thing about holding hiring events is that you know your source of hire. This is a difficult metric to track in general, as many ATS programs use self-selection (the candidate chooses from a list of options to tell you where they found out about your position), which is not the most accurate method. Digital campaigns with tracking codes for applicants are much more accurate, and those numbers can be included in your assessment of your event, as you are likely to have applicants for your open jobs who heard about the event but were unable to attend. You'll want to ensure that your event advertising URLs include a tracking code that lets you aggregate this information.





1. ATTENDANCE RATE

This is the number of registrations (on your event landing page or Facebook event invites) versus the number of attendees at your event. Attendance rate gives you insight into how well your event ad campaign performed, if the type of event appealed to the demographics you targeted, or even the time, location, and day of the event.



2. APPLICATION RATE

This is the percentage of in-person attendees who applied for open positions. Again, this could be impacted by your event ad targeting and general audience. For example, if your application rate for retail positions is lower than that of other open positions highlighted at your event, you may have not selected the best targeting for retail candidates.



3. OFFER RATE

This is the number of offers made to candidates who applied for your open positions at your event (or immediately following as a result of your event).



4. ACCEPTANCE RATE

The calculation for an offer acceptance rate is straightforward. Just take the number of accepted job offers divided by the total number of job offers given to your hiring event attendees.



5. HIRE RATE

This is the number of applicants who attended your event that accepted an offer following your event.



6. LONG-TERM TURNOVER BY SOURCE

The source of hire, as mentioned above, is your hiring event. You'll want to set up tracking for candidates who accepted your offer, onboarded, and began working for your company. One of the crucial data points for this source of hire is going to be whether or not your company met candidate expectations for what was culture and benefits, but candidates who were hired ended up leaving your company within 90 days, there may be a disconnect between your event and candidate expectations.



7. COST PER ATTENDEE AND COST PER HIRE

Your attendance numbers divided by the amount you spent on your event and paid promotions will give you a cost per attendee. The number of hires made as a result of your event divided by the same data points will give you cost per hire. These can be measured against the same metrics for your other hiring campaigns, giving you an idea of whether or not your event ROI is better or worse than online campaigns.

All of these metrics will give you the data you need to determine if investing in live events offers the best ROI for your recruitment marketing budget. Individually, they can help you assess what to change for your next event. If your attendance was low, you'll want to take a look at your targeting. The number of registrations (impacted primarily by targeting and reach), the number of attendees (impacted primarily by campaign) and the number of applicants (primarily impacted by the quality and format of your event) will give you the data you need to make specific adjustments before you begin planning your next hiring event.

Finally, you can make each of these data points more robust by sending quick candidate experience surveys via email to everyone who registered for your event. Segment these by attendees and no-shows so that you can gather information directly from candidates.

Holding hiring events can be labor intensive, but when done right, they're well worth the effort. Planning ahead and using checklists will help ensure you offer the best possible candidate experience and achieve a great ROI. A well-attended hiring event can bring many qualified candidates into your hiring funnel and a memorable event could be the deciding point for potential applicants between pursuing a role with your company and looking elsewhere.

Hire at scale with Talroo Events

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Seeking "Nursing" Position

Carol Smith
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