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Strategic recruiting plan is important for growth

You've just landed the company's largest contract ever, requiring customization of your software that needs to be developed ASAP. Three more major contracts are looking like they'll close by the end of the quarter, and your people are strapped. Investors are anxious to see the growth, and pressure is on human resources to fill 72 new positions by mid year.

Piece of cake for a large company with great name recognition and the infrastructure and internal support in place to help get your hiring done. But for an emerging company with limited resources, you need to be a whole lot more resourceful.

Before you jump in and start placing dozens of canned job descriptions on your job search website of choice, you must think strategically about the hiring process. Without a strong process, you risk some unnerving outcomes: lengthy time to hire, increased cost per hire, hiring of unqualified candidates, lower retention rates for new employees, higher percentage of candidates turning down offers, positions left unfilled, and a frustrated management team.

The proper strategy will help you avoid these problems. Moreover, candidates who view your interview process as a positive experience will be more inclined to want to work for your firm. They will see your firm

as thorough, efficient and focused, a first impression that goes a long way in your being perceived as an employer of choice.

A-Level talent can only be attracted with A-Level recruiting efforts. So, even though you are under the gun to perform, take the time to do it right.

PRIORITIZE OPENINGS AND ESTABLISH PROCESS

Initially, you need to estimate your hiring timeline and break down the best order in which to address your openings for this round of hiring.

Once you have developed your strategy and prioritized your focus, only then should you begin your search.

While there are tactics to be employed to support your success in recruiting throughout the process, one thing often overlooked is the very first impression potential candidates will have of your opportunity — the job description. Write your job description in a way that helps the potential candidate envision her participation in your company's success. Let it tell your story in a compelling way. How does this position fit into the big picture? Where is the company headed? Why is the rapid growth occurring? Everyone loves a success story, so use yours to your advantage when trying to attract top talent.

Once the sourcing and interviewing begins, remember that every point of contact matters.

Do not underestimate the value of treating candidates with the utmost respect at every

point of interaction. Be efficient in your processes — most companies can stand a lot of room for improvement in their processes — and clear about your expectations.

It's easy to get overwhelmed when the company's growth is dependent upon finding the right people to add to your team. Without a roadmap, it's easy to take a wrong turn.

Consider your hiring strategy your global positioning system (GPS), and you'll have the confidence of knowing that, while the road may be bumpy at times, you're always headed in the right direction.

BEGIN BY ASKING YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- Which positions will have the strongest impact on our company's bottom line?
- Which openings will provide the most relief to our current employees?
- Who internally needs to be involved in the process? What will be their role and responsibility? What is their availability to take part?
- Which positions will require the most lead time to locate qualified candidates?
- Which positions are easiest to fill?
- How many new employees can we effectively take on and train at the same time?

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GUEST COLUMN



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