



technically speaking

Don't Lose the Best

5 Ways you are sure to lose the Best IT Candidate

In this aggressive IT market, with demand higher than ever, you really can't afford to wait to make your offer or get the interview process going. Standard hiring procedures often take time, but the more things you can take care of before you start interviewing, the better. It is imperative that you act quickly if you want to get the best candidate.

5 Ways to Lose the Best

1. You Move Slowly

One of the surest ways to lose a stellar candidate is by not moving quickly on them. Schedule an interview quickly, keep the process moving, and extend your offer ASAP.

The first resume that comes across your desk might look great. Don't ask for more resumes and wait to interview. Get the person started on the process ASAP. See if he or she is as great in person as they look on paper. The same goes for the first person who interviews. If you've found the person you are looking for, why keep looking?

Use the phone interview to get things moving right away. Once you have the person on-site, capitalize on the time you have with them. Prevent future scheduling conflicts by getting what you need from the candidate the first time he or she is on site.

Have realistic expectations for how much time they can spend in your office interviewing. It is a lot easier for someone to get away for a couple of hours, than take a half or full day off for a first round interview.

Make the offer when you say you are going to and as near the interview as possible. Too often companies wait and lose out. That resume is going to get into someone else's hands. The person will get an offer. Make sure they get yours first.

2. You're Unavailable

Be available. Before you see resumes, make sure your interview team is available to do the interviews within the next few days. Check there are no vacations planned, or other conflicts that might delay the process.

A delay in scheduling the first interview, or big gaps in between a first and second can cause you to lose a candidate either because someone else is acting faster, or because they feel you aren't interested in them.

There are reasons for delays. But arranging things prior to your search ultimately will save you time and allow you to make the offer once you know you've found who you want.

If a candidate is waiting for your offer but has another one in hand, do you think he or she is going to wait for yours? Would you?

3. You Don't Know What You're Looking For

Have a realistic, clearly defined role for which you're hiring. If you don't know what you're looking for, you won't find it and the awesome candidate sitting in front of you might fall short.

Don't use an old description for a new job. Take the time before you start your search to clearly define your core requirements and needs (soft skills and technical) for the position and your team. Then, when you're interviewing, look at how the person fits your criteria, not just ways to weed them out.

Don't expect to get everything. Even the best candidate won't have everything you want. But the best will have the ability to adapt to your environment, learn the skills they don't have, and contribute to your team's success.

4. You Offer Unfair or Unrealistic Compensation

Everyone likes a good deal. In the past few years it has been easy to get one, but the tables have turned for the IT market. Do your research and know what you should be paying.

Don't interview someone outside of your price range unless you plan on offering beyond your price range. Either have approval to do this, or don't waste your time and theirs going through the process and then being unable to make an appropriate offer.

Be prepared to make an offer that is commensurate with experience, within current market standards, and will compete with the other offers your candidate may be receiving.

5. You don't sell your company to the candidate

Candidates are interviewing you as much as you are them. It's your responsibility to sell the job and the company to the potential hire. You want the candidate to work for *you*, not just want a job.

The best candidates will have several exciting opportunities they are pursuing, so make sure you stand out by giving a positive experience to the candidate, and showing them why they want to work for you.

Make sure the people who are giving your interviews are committed to this and represent you well. Every person who interviews, from the hiring managers to those who tech the candidate out, needs to know how to interview, be qualified to interview, and prepare for it and be on board with the goals for a new hire.

The IT market has changed. Qualified IT professionals in high demand technologies are in short supply and the best get several offers for exciting opportunities. You may still be operating under the conditions of the last few years—out of work IT pros happy to get what they can. Those days are gone. You have to be aggressive if you want the best to work for you.