

Get Ready to Scale in 2020

**What You Should Be Doing Now
to Get Ready for a Season of
Explosive Hiring Growth**



Get Ready for 2020

As we hurdle towards Q1 of 2020, now's the time to optimize your hiring so that your team can be ready for a faster, better, smarter season of growth.

This guide outlines a five-step approach to refreshing and redefining the functions of your talent acquisition practices. Inside, you'll find tips to help your team prepare for explosive growth in the new year by scaling your hiring initiatives now.

Inside, you'll learn how to:

1. Rejuvenate your employer brand
2. Get serious about your recruiting data
3. Breathe new life into your candidate experience
4. Develop your 2020 Hiring Playbook
5. Audit your technology stack

WHY NOW?

“You know all those talent acquisition programs and initiatives you’ve been putting off? Do them,” says Michael Hale, Manager of Talent Acquisition at Dave.com.

“It’s hard because we all feel the urgency to hire, hire, hire! Most of us feel like we’re behind in hiring and if hiring is paramount, the top priority, then we need to focus our energies there. But a lot of those programs and initiatives will not only affect your hiring, they could very well be a catalyst for it.”

“And the real key is to do this as early as possible. The longer you wait, the more hiring needs build up and become too heavy to try and establish the foundations for your hiring practice,” adds Hale.



1. Rejuvenate Your Employer Brand

Employer branding is a central pillar of recruiting and hiring. [According to LinkedIn](#), 72% of recruiting leaders worldwide agree it has a significant impact on hiring. LinkedIn also found that a strong, healthy employer brand reduces the risks of declined interview requests, rejected offers, and of course, employee turnover.

Q4 is the perfect time of the year to revisit your employer brand and give it a refresh. Revisit your employer branding messaging to incorporate all of your organization's shared successes from the current year into your hiring narrative.

Start with your employer story. Essentially, it's the pitch that you give to candidates as to why they should come work for your organization.

"It is quite crucial to develop a convincing story about your organization. Focus on the storytelling of the importance of the technology, showing how big the total addressable market is, and the 'what' that the organization stands for when it comes to culture, including diversity and inclusion," says Luan Lam, VP Global Talent at Harness.

Creating an intentional story like this provides a useful framework for all recruitment marketing messaging you'll ever craft about your company. Having this type of story as part of your overarching employer branding makes it easier to humanize your candidate journey.

Once established, you can then revisit other aspects of your employer brand to make sure your company's story is woven throughout the fabric of your employer marketing.

A strong employer brand really pays off:

↓ **28%** reduction in the organization's turnover

↓ **50%** cost-per-hire reduction

↑ **50%** more qualified applicants

↑ **1-2x** faster time-to-hire

Source: [LinkedIn](#)



Your Employer Brand: Do You Have Room for Improvement?

Social Media

Did you know that [83% of companies are using social media for recruiting purposes](#)? Such a high adoption as a recruiting tool means that if you're not leveraging social media to promote your employer brand, you're missing out to your competition, who is likely is using it to scale their own growth.

Your Reqs

Do you follow a template over and over again for writing job descriptions? It's time to mix things up and try out different variations of your copy. Pat Morey, a recruiter at LevelUp, explains that their recruiting team [uses a method known as A/B testing to compare the performance](#) of two versions of the same job description. They “write two versions of a job description, measure which delivers the most quality candidates and stick with the most effective.” she says.

Your Website

Regularly evaluating your employer branding across your career site is key to ensuring an accurate picture of your company's culture.

Yet, despite the power of a strong career page, a whopping [95% of career sites fail to provide relevant and personalized content to visitors](#).

That's why it's a best practice to evaluate your page's copy and visuals at least once a year, to ensure you're highlighting your organization's benefits, professional development opportunities, and more.

Your Employees

“Embed hiring in your DNA, and make it a part of your culture,” says SurveyMonkey CMO Leela Srinivasan. Empower recruiters to share hiring wins with the whole organization, like what it was about your company that made them say 'yes.' It's a hat tip to the team-wide endeavor of culture-building and it ensures that hiring remains top of mind for your employees, who can be one of your most valuable sources of referrals.

When employees leverage their own networks and refer qualified candidates, you create a passive sourcing pool. “Double down on any candidate referral that comes your way. Don't take a ‘we'll get to them if they're qualified’ mentality. Call and coffee them.” says Jer Langhans, founder of Paired Sourcing.

2. Get Serious About Your Data Heading into the New Year

In a recent survey by Deloitte, [the number one most common challenge](#) with the talent acquisition process is “finding experienced qualified hires” as indicated by 61% of survey respondents.

For many organizations, a strong focus on refining and evolving talent acquisition strategies is key for preparing for growth in 2020. The only way to do that is to get serious about your recruiting and hiring data.



“The best piece of advice I can give any organization in scaling their headcount in 2020 is to focus on putting the science behind their talent acquisition strategy,” says Lam.

Andrew Levy, an employer branding expert who is a consultant at Employera (and has paved the way for employer branding strategies at Uber, WeWork, and Autodesk), suggests starting by “getting control of the funnel and how your channels perform first.” That means getting a strong grip on your acquisition funnel and individual channels' performance as they relate to your big picture metrics.

According to Lam, that funnel is “a measurable talent acquisition process where you can track conversion rates at every stage (candidate pipeline → phone interview → onsite → offer → hire). Having an outlined process allows your organization to recognize success and identify gaps/bottlenecks with concrete data sets to improve upon the process.”

From there, you can refine and expand your approach to leveraging new channels to fill your talent pipeline.

Levy recommends that organizations who need to scale quickly look at ‘unexpected’ platforms like Facebook Live, paid ads on Facebook, and pay-per-click advertising, which can help broaden your reach.



3. Breathe New Life Into Your Organization's Candidate Experience

You might attract and engage prime candidates for your requisitions but you may risk losing them if your candidate experience isn't dialed in, leaving a candidate with a lukewarm first impression of what it's like to work with your organization.

Heading into a new year, it may be time to re-evaluate how you approach the candidate experience. One way to do so is by performing a 360° candidate experience review.

The goal of this exercise is to help you to look at the candidate experience objectively, from all angles – before, during, and after, as well as from your team's POV so that they're able to present a strong impression throughout every person's touchpoints with the candidate.



Step-By-Step: Performing A 360° Candidate Experience Audit



THE BEGINNING OF THE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

Begin at the start of the candidate experience – the application process. CEB “found that over 60% of job candidates still found the application process frustrating and stressful” and that “application processes that are considered high-effort will see 30 percent fewer candidates move to the interview stage.” (What does your application process look like? How is the experience of submitting an application?)



DURING THE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

Does your candidate experience focus solely on vetting the candidate – or do you empower them to vet your organization, too? When candidates are invited to get to know the organization they’re interviewing with, they can make a better decision on areas like culture-fit, role responsibilities, expectations, etc.



AFTER: FROM CANDIDATE TO NEW HIRE

Build a well-oiled onboarding process. Those first few weeks are a high-risk period of time for your new hire who is now developing their first impressions of what it’s like to actually work for your organization.

“Ensure to bridge the gap between the candidate journey into the employee journey with a smooth onboarding process and a career progression track in place to nurture, develop, and retain the talent,” advises Lam.



INTERNALLY: YOUR TEAM'S ROLE IN THE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

Don't forget to look inward, too. Make sure everyone is clear about who owns what responsibilities, touch points, and deadlines within both the recruiting and hiring processes. By mapping out these workflows, it enables crystal-clear ownership and ensures everyone is on the same page at all times.

PRO TIP

Lastly, remember that recruiting is “a brutal job because it’s thankless and repetitive” according to Levy. Allowing recruiters to work on passion projects can recharge their batteries – which enables them to bring their energy to candidates and can help recruiter retention.

4. Develop Your 2020 Hiring Playbook

A commitment to documentation is an investment in the productivity and success of your team members.

Anneli Scopazzi, Head of Recruiting at Figma, believes that early startups should “spend countless hours building intention into their companies and recruiting processes.”

At this stage, she says that all of the people who have to support explosive hiring will benefit from documentation: company values, interview questions, scoring rubrics, and recruiting processes; at this stage, you must get zealous about updating statuses in Lever for routine, quick, and accurate reporting.

Hiring processes and information isn't just limited to your recruiting and HR teams. One of the most overlooked but significant aspects of hiring is the role that employees outside of HR and recruiting play within the process. Consider how much of an impact interviewers play in the candidate experience, and even more so, the hiring manager.

That's why Srinivasan asks, “So why do we spend so little time prepping hiring managers and interviewers?”

You'll see huge returns in the coming year by investing some time now into creating a specific resource that can be shared with external hiring stakeholders like interviewers and/or hiring managers. It should cover any relevant workflows, processes, and guidelines as they relate to those roles in the hiring process.

Take it a step further by recording video trainings that can be shared with both interviewers and/or hiring managers to help them get (and deliver) the most value out of the process of hiring a new team member.



What To Include In Your Recruiting & Hiring Playbook for 2020

A recruiting and hiring playbook can take many forms (a shared folder with individual documents, a slide presentation, a wiki) — but the important part is that you use it to carefully document key messaging, templates, and record standard operating procedures.

Your hiring playbook might include...

- Job description templates and kickoff materials
- Workflows and candidate experience steps
- Resources to source (email templates, offer letter and rejection templates)
- Interview guides, guidelines, and questions
- Structured interview guides or rubrics
- Onboarding plan and procedures

As you scale and your pipeline expands with candidate volume, sticking to the game plan becomes much easier for everyone involved.

5. Audit Your Technology Stack

The right technology solutions make life easier – and, unfortunately, the wrong tools can make life harder. Now is an opportune time to review your team’s tech stack and have an open conversation about what’s working and what’s not working.

Sarah Smith, VP of Human Resources at Quora, [shared that finding the ‘right’ tech platform can make a huge difference in adoption](#) within your organization. She says, "In my career of five or six ATS systems, I had never heard of people, especially engineers and designers, raving about an ATS, but they did about Lever. In the past it wouldn’t be uncommon for engineers to just not want to log into the tool."

Adoption is critical when it comes to recruiting and HR tech because it’s not just your internal team that needs to embrace the tool – but your whole organization since anyone who ‘touches’ hiring will likely need to engage with your selected technology platforms, such as in the case of Quora's engineers.

“By getting employees to actively engage in a cohesive system that streamlines our communications,” says Sarah, “we’ve experienced a tremendous spike in the returns we're seeing from proactive sourcing. This quarter, over 40% of our offer accepts were sourced, top-tier passive candidates, which is 5-6 times what it used to be.”



Closing Remarks

Planning to scale your hiring efforts requires focus and foresight into the pending challenges that accompany growth.

By revisiting and “re-optimizing” the framework of elements that support your recruiting and hiring initiatives, such as your employer brand, candidate experience, hiring playbook, and technology stack, you’ll be ready to empower your team to hire faster, better, smarter in 2020.



Transforming the way companies hire



About Lever

Lever’s mission is to help the world hire with more predictability. Recruiting today is more about numbers than ever before. But having the right numbers at your fingertips can help you uncover hidden sources of talent, create greater efficiency in your processes, and align everyone on your team with what’s needed to hire the right people. Lever offers the ability to streamline your process and keep track of the numbers, so that you can have greater success in bringing the right people on and at a lower cost.

Lever is transforming the way companies hire through an approach that allows talent leaders to attract candidates like a marketing leader, forecast like a sales leader, and have the insights of a finance leader. Lever was founded in 2012 and supports the hiring needs of over 2,500 leading companies around the globe, including the teams at Netflix, KPMG NZ, Hot Topic, and Cirque du Soleil. With an overall gender ratio of 50:50, Lever is also fiercely committed to building a team culture that celebrates diversity and inclusion.

For more information, visit lever.co.

Streamline your hiring process with Lever. Your hiring plan can’t wait.

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