

## Attracting Talent with a Lower Budget

Attracting the right employees is, without a doubt, essential for any organization. Without an active and collaborative team, companies will struggle to run efficient operations. Here are multiple ways a company can attract talent while also managing a tight budget.



### **Have a marketable job posting.**

The first thing a potential employee will be doing if he/she is looking for a job is search for job postings on the internet. However, anyone who has ever looked online knows that there are thousands of job postings out there. So, it is very important for a company to differentiate itself and make the potential employees feel like they want to be part of their team.



### **First impressions are crucial.**

What a potential employee sees about an organization online will determine if he/she decides to apply for the job. The company's website should be up to date, professional, yet not boring either. Setting up a career section to call to applications can be a very important asset.



### **Be able to adapt to employee's commitments.**

Long gone are the days where everyone works 9-5 Monday through Friday. Being open to flexible work hours can open doors for candidates who have other important commitments that they cannot simply ignore (such as children). Providing compressed work weeks, or offering some flexibility for employee work schedules will motivate them to work more efficiently.



### **Let them be autonomous.**

No one enjoys a boss who is always looking over their shoulder and micromanaging everything they do. Although some managers feel they have to control every aspect of the business, it should be noted that it makes employees feel undervalued. Instead, managers should delegate responsibilities to employees in order to make them feel like they have a purpose in the company.



### **Create a company culture.**

Having a team of employees who are close, compatible, and collaborative is a huge asset for any company. Make sure to promote social events on the company's website and social media platforms. For instance, have your team get together to celebrate birthdays, milestones, and happy hour.



### **Last but not least, try recruiting at a university.**

Although most employers tend to want more experienced employees, recruiting at a university is definitely an option. Do not automatically deny new graduates an opportunity on the basis of experience. University graduates carry many advantages. Not only will their fresh outlook make for a better cultural fit, they are also more coachable and open to constructive criticism.

## Pre-screening Questions: Basic Questions for Phone Interviews

As a hiring manager or recruiter it is incredibly important to find an employee who is the right fit for your business. Not only must they be qualified for the position they are applying for, they must also be compatible with the work environment and team.

When hiring, the number of resumes you go through can become a lot to handle. Therefore, when calling in a candidate for an interview, you want to make sure that this candidate is right for the role they are applying for. To ensure this, spending just a quick 10 minutes phone-screening the candidate can give you a better idea as to whether this person is worth meeting in-person.

Phone screening a candidate is an important step to ensure that the person applying for a position is deserving of an interview. Although phone-screening is vitally important, what is more important is knowing what to ask the applicant, as well as what cues to look out for during the process.

Upon calling an applicant for an interview, begin with introducing yourself and letting them know why you are calling them. It is important to ask the candidate whether or not they recall applying for the position. This simple question can determine a lot about the candidate, like whether they are genuinely interested in the position or just looking for any job. If the applicant does recall applying for the position and seems enthusiastic about the call, you are off to a good start.



### Common Pre-Screening Questions:

- 1. What was it that attracted you to apply for the position?** This question can help determine if the applicant read the job description and tests their knowledge on the company overall.
- 2. What is your career plan?** Asking an applicant about their career plan can help break the ice and gives the applicant a chance to talk about themselves. This also gives you a better idea of exactly who your candidate is. Are they motivated to work? Do they have career goals and a plan?
- 3. What are some of your strengths and weaknesses?** Begin by asking the applicant about their strengths. This question should be answered with any skill pertaining to the industry. Examples can include being a team player, open-minded, etc. When asking about a weakness, the question should be answered with a weakness that does not contradict the values and beliefs of the organization. It must also be a weakness that can be worked on and improved over time, for instance a fear of oral presentation, stress management, etc.
- 4. Job history.** Asking specific questions about previous work positions is very important. These questions can include what kind of tasks they performed, as well as who previously employed them. Also ask about what a previous employer may have to say about them.
- 5. Why did you leave your previous position?** Understanding why the candidate left their previous position can help uncover different characteristics about the candidate as well as potential 'red flags' or reasons you may not want them to work for your company. It can help you understand whether the applicant has resentment towards their past employer, or even shed some light on the degree of loyalty they would have toward the organization.
- 6. What is their ideal work environment?** Discovering what the candidate is looking for in terms of their work environment can help determine whether or not they are a good fit for your company. If the applicant is looking for a work environment that resembles the way in which your company functions, they may be a good fit. In general, if an employee is happy with their environment they tend to perform better overall.
- 7. What do they know about the company?** Asking the applicant if they have any background knowledge about the company can help determine whether or not they did their homework and if they know what to expect from the position. Knowing about a company's values, mission, performance, and operations is incredibly important. Holding the same values is what often brings an employee close to a company.

**8. Do you have any questions for me?** It is important to ask the applicant if they have any questions regarding the position or the company. It can help you determine whether the applicant is enthusiastic to work for the company.

Be sure to wrap up the phone interview by giving the applicant a recap about the position for which they are applying. Let the candidate know that you will contact them in the following days. If you believe that the candidate is a good match for the company and should move on to having a face-to-face interview, be sure to ask them about their potential availabilities.

## Interview Questions



### Basic Questions

- Are you still looking for work?
- Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?
- How did you hear about this position?
- Why do you think you would be the best candidate for this job?
- What do you know about this job?
- Why should we hire you?
- Name three strengths
- Name three weaknesses
- What is your greatest professional achievement?
- What are you looking for in a new job position?
- How do you deal with stress or pressure?
- What are your hobbies outside of work?
- How would your friends describe you in one sentence?
- What leadership traits do you possess?
- Do you have difficulty making important decisions?
- Do you have any questions?



### Behavioural Questions

- Can you tell me about a past experience where you had to take charge?
- Describe a time you had a disagreement with a co-worker or boss. How did you handle it?
- Describe a time you exercised leadership within a team.
- Give an example of a time you set a goal and were able to achieve it.
- Name a time you failed and how you handled it.
- Tell me about a time you had to go above and beyond to get a job done.
- Tell me about a time you had many tasks to complete in a short amount of time and you were required to prioritize the tasks.
- Give me an example of a time you motivated others.
- Describe a decision you made that was unpopular. How did you handle it?
- Think back to a time you delegated a project poorly. What happened and how would you improve?
- What was the last difficult decision you had to make?
- Give me an example of having to make a split-second decision.
- Have you ever dealt with a company policy you weren't in agreement with? How?
- Have you ever experienced an extremely stressful situation and did not know how to handle it?
- What important truth do very few people agree with you on?



## Situational Questions

- You are a team leader. What would you do in a situation where one of your team members completed a task that didn't meet your expectations? How would you handle the situation?
- Your supervisor informs you that your work is due at the end of the day, and not tomorrow as he initially specified. How would you prioritize your tasks?
- How would you handle a customer that is unsatisfied with your service? How would you provide a solution?
- You've been tasked to be the manager of a team for a new project. What steps would you take in order to motivate your team?
- As a supervisor, you've made an unpopular decision. What action would you take so that morale in the department is not negatively affected?
- You've been tasked to be the manager of a team for a new project. What steps would you take in order to motivate your team?
- What would you do if you were in charge of a team and two team members could not get along?
- What steps would you take in order to lift team spirit and motivation?
- Let's say you disagree with your supervisor. How would you handle this situation? Describe the steps you would take in order to make your opinion heard.
- If you had completed your work for the day, what would you do to fill your time?
- How would you handle a situation where your close co-worker told you they were going to lie to your boss? Would you do anything? If so, what would you do?
- You don't have the information you need to prioritize your projects. Your co-workers and supervisors are unavailable for you to ask for assistance. How do you handle the situation?

## Interview Guide for Startups with a Strong Culture

When you choose the right employees for the right roles you have higher chances of retaining those employees. In the long run this will help your start-up grow and gain a competitive advantage in your given market. When the right people work well together, you gain an intangible asset that is hard for your competitors to imitate. Throughout this interview guide, we will concentrate on the technology industry, with focus on collaboration within the company. Therefore, it is important that the employer searches for an employee who:

1. Can work in teams.
2. Is comfortable with a more horizontal organizational structure (few or no levels of management).
3. Is a good cultural fit for the company's team.

## Discriminatory and Legally Binding Questions

Although an employer ultimately chooses the questions he asks to the potential candidates, there are certain questions which cannot be asked due to legal and ethical reasons. The following paragraph explains on what basis certain questions are deemed to be discriminatory according to the provincial and federal law.

It is illegal to ask an applicant's age, sex, race, marital status, religion, affiliation or nationality. In addition, an employer cannot ask if a candidate has been arrested, however can ask if he/she has been convicted of a crime. Lastly, an employer cannot discriminate and ask questions based on a candidate's physical or mental health. However, it is allowed to ask if the candidate can perform specific duties.

For example, by asking "The work will require the employee to be present during \_\_\_\_\_ days and \_\_\_\_\_ hours, are you able to meet these requirements?". Instead of "Do you have any children?". This will mitigate the possibility of the candidate coming back to sue because you didn't hire them on the basis that they had children or other obligations that may take priority over work.

Therefore, when conducting an interview, it is important to come prepared with questions in advance, and research them to make sure they are not deemed discriminatory.

For more information on discriminatory questions, go to Appendix 1.



### Take-away Message:

If you are not sure whether or not a question is appropriate to ask to someone, it probably isn't, and therefore you should abstain, or ask for legal advice.

## Selection: Interview Scoreguide

When interviewing your candidate, it's important to make sure that you are asking questions that give you the answers you are looking for. Before asking the questions, you should know exactly what you are looking for, and how you want to rate the answers. It's important today more than ever, to make your decisions as objectively as possible for two main reasons. The first is to be able to compare all candidates on the same level regarding the knowledge, skills, and abilities they possess. The second is to avoid litigation due to any discrimination (intentional or unintentional) associated with the decisions made. Having documentation describing why you chose one candidate over the other can help save you in court, if ever the circumstance arises.

Holding a structured interview will allow the employer to ask a standardized set of questions to all candidates, and having a score card will allow for fair comparison of all candidates. The Behavioral anchored rating scorecard (BARS) is a weighted scorecard that provides sample answers to each question asked by the interviewer, so the interviewer can gauge the potential of the candidate. Once all questions are asked, the interviewer can add up all the scores, and the one with the highest rating should be chosen.

Obviously, we cannot forget that intuition plays a strong part in interviews. Everyone is human, people have their biases whether they are aware of them or not. The BARS score card helps to account for some of these biases. Moreover, choosing an employee does have something to do with chemistry, or vibe that the candidate gives off. After all, you will be working with the person for eight hours of the day, so cultural, or organization fit is an important factor to consider!

### Sample Behavioral Anchored Question Scorecard

Criterion	Interview Rating (scale of 1 to 5)	Rating after being hired	Gap between pre- rating and post-rating	Weight (value placed on Q)
1. Technical skills				
2. Interpersonal skills				
3. Leadership skills				
4. Organizational skills				



**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Sample Interview Score Guide Legend

Sample Questions/ Sample Answers	1	2	3	4	5
	Candidate does not meet expectations	Candidate needs improvement	Candidate somewhat meets expectations	Candidate fully meets expectations	Candidate exceeds expectations
<b>Q1)</b> Describe a time where you had a disagreement with a co-worker or boss and explain how you handled it.	Resorted to violence.	Acted in a disrespectful manner.	Avoided colleague. Did not resolve the disagreement.	Spoke it over respectfully. Colleagues avoid any further conflict.	Not only spoke it over, but solved the problem at the source. Colleagues on good terms.
<b>Q2)</b> Describe to me an example of when you illustrated initiative and took the lead.	Never.	Rarely takes initiatives in projects.	Remains neutral. Shows some initiative.	Takes initiative. Leads most projects.	Takes initiative. Leads nearly all projects. Motivates others to take initiative as well.
<b>Q3)</b> Tell me about a time you had many tasks to complete in a short amount of time and you were required to prioritize the tasks.	Never.	Did not prioritize tasks. Completed them as they chose.	Prioritized tasks in an orderly manner. Completed some.	Prioritized tasks in an orderly manner. Completed them on time.	Prioritized tasks in an orderly manner. Completed them on time, and had time to help others complete their tasks.

## Retaining Talent

To be able to retain employees, it is not only important to focus on the cash incentives but also the non-cash benefits. Sometimes the best motivators are the perks, like letting your employees know how valued they are at the company or letting them express themselves. Here are a few ways to retain employees when on a budget.

### Incentives

- Give employees paid breaks for coffee, going for a walk, socializing, etc.
- Give employees the option to work from home when needed
- Casual dress day on Fridays
- Use contests and incentives to help keep workers motivated and feeling rewarded
- Establish SMART goals: Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic and Time-bound
- Provide some benefits for top performers
- Use merit increases to reward top performers.
- Allow employees to choose their compensation mix (example: 40% stock options, 60% salary or vice-versa)
- Allow employees to work on personal projects
- Creating an enticing program for recent college graduates: It is important to be able to hold onto university graduates because 77% of students stay at their first job for less than one year. In an effort to remedy this issue, many tech companies are creating and implementing programs to nurture student talent.

### Environment

- Build an environment that is welcoming and that your employees feel like an asset to your company.
- Create an open and honest work environment  
Encourage flexibility: this not only provides flexible hours but also encourages productivity and employees are happier while at work.
- Offer opportunities for professional development and continuing education: It is important to keep your employees updated, and make sure they're fully aware of the different certification, training and education options available to them.

### Open Communication

- Hold regular meetings to express your happiness about your employees work and productivity
- Make sure employees have a detailed idea of what they need to do and what you expect from them so they know exactly what to do.
- Provide opportunities to move forward in the organization, so they feel more motivated to stay.
- Communicate openly: Treat your talent like part of the team. This means you need to be as open as is practical to your startup's situation. If genuine, openness will often be rewarded with loyalty
- Stay open to suggestions: A "my way or the highway"-attitude drives away talented employees. Remain open to suggestions, acknowledge good ideas and respect constructive feedback

### Invest in your staff

- Consider your future leaders: Does your environment nurture Generation Y? Born in or after 1980, Generation Y tends to value work/life balance over money, has high expectations for career development, and demands collaboration and transparency.
- Invest in your staff: Do so, and they will reciprocate. Good training and development programs reduce turnover and increase motivation.
- Cultivate a positive corporate culture: Encourage collaborative and supportive relationships among your team, and build a culture that recognizes achievement. This can be a better predictor of job satisfaction than money.
- Respect the work/life balance: Employees have a life outside of work. Be respectful and understanding when personal issues arise.



### Seating Arrangements

1. Have the interview set up in an office or meeting room.
2. Have a table placed between the interviewer and interviewee so that you can take notes without the applicant seeing what you have to say.
3. If there are two interviewers, have one sit across from the applicant and the other sitting in the middle, in a triangle formation.
4. Ensure that it's possible for the applicant to hold eye contact with both interviewers.



### Ice Breakers

1. Did you have trouble finding the office today?
2. Would you like a glass of water or coffee?
3. Have you ever visited our location before?
4. Tell me about yourself.



### Tips While Pre Screening Applicants

1. Take notes. Taking notes is incredibly important as you can refer back to these notes later on and allow you to recall the applicant's strengths as well as their weaknesses.
2. Give the applicant a score. Scoring the applicant can make the overall process of finding the right candidate much easier. For each characteristic you are looking at, give the applicant a score on 1-5 for example with 5 being the best. Provide an overall score based on each characteristic.
3. Don't talk too much. You want to make the interviewee feels comfortable talking with you on the phone. Remember to introduce yourself, remain polite and ask questions. Put the focus on the applicant and listen carefully at all times.
4. Be prepared for anything. Although you may be the one conducting the interview, the applicant may have many questions for you regarding the position. It is important for you to be prepared as well so that you can provide the applicant with any necessary information they may need.



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### Conducting the Interview

1. Spend a few minutes at the beginning of the interview putting the applicant at ease.
2. Ask each question in turn without omitting or skipping any.
3. Take detailed notes, focusing on recording what the applicant says. Taking detailed notes requires a lot of attention, so it's important to remember to focus more on the candidate than on your paper. Maintain eye contact and be aware of the body language of the candidate as well as yourself!
4. Allow the applicant to ask questions at the end of the interview and answer them to the best of your ability.

5. Follow the same procedures for each applicant and retain interview documentation for future reference.
6. Conduct the interview with two interviewers if possible, in order to compare candidate ratings and notes after the interview.



### Closing the Interview

1. Tell the candidate when and how he should expect to hear from you.
2. Thank the applicant for coming.
3. Review your notes and make your ratings.
4. Make sure you inform all candidates of your decision when you have made it.



### Making the Selection Decision

1. Identify all of the sources of information about the applicant available to you.
2. Use reliable, valid selection instruments whenever possible.
3. Determine which decision-making model you will use.
4. If using the regression or combination models, collect and save data over a period of time for all predictors as well as job performance data for those applicants who are hired.
5. If using multiple cutoff or multiple hurdle models, determine appropriate cutoff scores for each predictor.
6. Combine data from different predictors statistically to yield an overall score.
7. Offer the position(s) to the candidate(s) with the highest overall score(s).



### Making a Job Offer

1. Move quickly.
2. Hold off on contacting others until first offer is made.
3. Be enthusiastic and positive.
4. Ensure the job offer is attractive.
5. Try to get an oral commitment.
6. Be ready to negotiate (if necessary).
7. Follow up in writing.
8. Set a deadline for the candidate to accept the offer.
9. Make a counter offer if the candidate has a better offer.
10. Never push a candidate to renege on acceptance of an offer from another employer.
11. If no further negotiation, indicate that this is your final offer.
12. If your final offer fails, move on to your second-choice candidate.
13. Once you have received a signed acceptance of the written offer, let the other candidates know the position has been filled.

## Appendix

### Discriminatory Questions to Avoid According to the Quebec Charter of Human Rights & Freedoms

There are certain grounds upon which certain questions can be considered discriminatory during interviews. The following guidelines outline these grounds, and give some insight as to what can and cannot be asked. The interviewer should keep in mind that restructuring questions can also help with obtaining the needed answer.



#### Subjects deemed to be discriminatory

- |                       |                          |                           |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Race               | 6. Age                   | 11. Political convictions |
| 2. Sex                | 7. Ethnicity             | 12. Economic status       |
| 3. Civil status       | 8. Language              | 13. Disability            |
| 4. Marital status     | 9. Religion              |                           |
| 5. Sexual orientation | 10. Criminal convictions |                           |



## Race

### Non-discriminatory

- N/A

### Discriminatory

- Any question related to race or color, including eye, skin or hair color.
- Any request for a photograph to accompany an employment application, or for a photograph to be submitted before the aptitude test or interview.



## Gender

### Non-discriminatory

- N/A except where sex is an attribute objectively required for the job.

### Discriminatory

- Mr., Ms., Miss., or Mrs.
- Different forms or different codes for men and women.



## Civil Status

### Non-discriminatory

- Would you be available to travel as part of your work?

### Discriminatory

- Married, separated, divorced, etc.
- Name and occupation of spouse and his or her eventual agreement in case of a transfer involving a move.
- Number of dependent persons.
- Arrangements for care of dependent persons.
- Family ties with a person already employed by the firm or organization, without further explanation.



## Marital Status

### Non-discriminatory

- N/A

### Discriminatory

- Are you pregnant?
- Do you intend to have children?
- Have you ever had a pregnancy-related health problem?
- How long do you think you will remain on the employment market?



## Sexual Orientation

### Non-discriminatory

- N/A

### Discriminatory

- N/A



## Age

### Non-discriminatory

- N/A except where a minimum age is fixed by legislation for a given role.

### Discriminatory

- Date of birth.
- Health insurance number.
- Driver's licence number.
- A request to enclose a birth certificate with the application form.



## Language

### Non-discriminatory

- Candidates may be asked if they can understand, speak, read or write the language or languages required for the job.

### Discriminatory

- Mother tongue.
- Place where languages were learnt.



## Ethnicity

### Non-discriminatory

- Are you entitled to work in Canada?

### Discriminatory

- Place of birth.
- Place of birth of spouse or parents.
- Previous addresses.
- Experience in Canada or Québec, unless a specific type of experience is objectively required for the job, in which case the nature of the experience must be specified.
- Citizenship, landed immigrant status or possession of a work permit
- Social insurance number.



## Religion

### Non-discriminatory

- None, except where adherence to a religion is an attribute required for the job or justified by the religious nature of a non-profit institution.

### Discriminatory

- Adherence to a religion or religious practices.
- Availability to work on a specific religious holiday.
- References from clergy or religious leaders.



## Criminal Convictions

### Non-discriminatory

- N/A unless information is objectively required for the protection of public safety.

### Discriminatory

- Do you have a criminal record?  
Have you been arrested in the past months? Etc.



## Political Convictions

### Non-discriminatory

- N/A unless the job objectively requires membership of a political party.

### Discriminatory

- Political affiliation or activities.



## Economic Status

### Non-discriminatory

- Could you obtain access to a car if needed for the job or to get to work?

### Discriminatory

- Do you have a car?
- Are you a landlord or a tenant?



## Disability

### Non-discriminatory

- An employer may ask a candidate to agree to undergo a medical examination before hiring.
- An employer who implements a plan for hiring of handicapped persons under the Act to secure the handicapped in the exercise of their rights (R.S.Q, chapter E-20.1) may add a note to the application form on the following lines:  
"To further your candidacy, you may inform us of any handicap which would require adaption of our selection methods (interviews, tests, etc.)."

### Discriminatory

- Health condition
- List deficiencies.
- Hospitalization or previous or present medical treatment, including treatment for mental health.
- Compensations for previously taken part in a detoxification program?

