

ROMANCE YOUR NEXT

ROCK STAR



How to Apply Dating Basics to Your Hiring Process

Hiring the right talent can provide an organization with a competitive advantage in the market; and chances are, if your company is thriving you may already know this.

In our experience though, companies that **know** how to hire the right talent, and actually **do** it are rare. Most companies struggle to find the right talent and, as a result, lose the opportunity for more significant growth and impact.

According to Career Builder's survey of more than 6,000 Hiring Managers and HR Professionals, more than 50% have felt the effects of a bad hire. The consequences of a bad hire span from morale issues to major financial losses—with some companies reporting upwards of \$50,000 to replace a key person. The US Department of Labor estimates that the average cost of a bad hiring decision can equal 30% of the first year's potential earnings.

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Hiring is tough. It's tough because people are people, their truth is based on what's swirling around between their own two ears and what they tell you is JUST their version of the truth. People have studied psychology for centuries and the vastness of the human mind is still a mystery. Sprinkle in people's motivators, family situations, financial struggles, and egos...you get some pretty challenging waters to navigate as a Hiring Manager.

To level-set for a moment, at entreQuest (eQ), when we refer to a Hiring Manager it could be the CEO of a company, any management position, HR folks, or Corporate Recruiters.

Regardless of who you are, determining whether or not your candidate is legitimate can be difficult—here's why:

- **53% of all job applications contain inaccurate information.**
- **About 50% of hiring managers have caught a job applicant fabricating some part of his/her resume.**
- **34% of all application forms contain outright lies about experience, education, and ability to perform essential functions on the job.**
- **9% of job applicants falsely claimed they had a college degree, listed false employers, or identified jobs that didn't exist.**
- **11% of job applicants misrepresented why they left a former employer.**

Chances are, you've mistakenly hired the wrong candidate, but how many times have you struggled to "reel in the big fish"—meaning you let the perfect candidate slip away? You aren't alone as this happens all the time, and it's because Hiring Managers are more concerned with making sure all of the boxes are checked in regard to the job qualifications and how the candidate lines up to them, that they forget people have options.

According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, job openings have continued to increase recently. People are more connected now than ever before and have shaken off the recession of 2008—they are expecting more and better. Better salaries, bigger upsides, better benefits, and more perks including expense reimbursements, career path options, stock options, and work/life balance.

Our American culture is one where we not only believe we can have it all....but we DESERVE to have it all. This poses yet another major challenge for the Hiring Managers of today.

So, unless you are a Hiring Manager who has a PHD in Psychology, a Master's Degree in Organizational Development, or you have a solid track record as a Chief People Officer attracting, engaging, and motivating people, you're most likely going about this whole hiring thing all wrong.

Even if you are the most qualified person in the United States relative to understanding people, you still might find this difficult and might still be doing it wrong. This is because you are dealing with people and predicting behavior which is challenging and sometimes nearly impossible even for those who have expertise in this space.

So, with all of this data and the challenging circumstances, you may be asking yourself HOW can Hiring Managers be successful? At eQ, we often compare hiring to dating. Whether it's been years since you dated or you are in the dating game now, there are a few things that are true and comparable to hiring:

- **Online is the place to be:** The landscape has changed, online dating revenue is nearly 1.3 billion dollars. In fact, 40 million people use online dating which is about 40% of the US single-people pool.
- **Communication is more than words:** Much of communication is non-verbal—most women (57%) say their first impression is based on body language and self-presentation.
- **First impressions are critical:** On average it takes 15 minutes for a man to decide if he's into a woman and 60 minutes for a woman to determine if she would like to see the man again.
- **Referrals still take the cake:** While online dating continues to be a great place to find your soul mate, 64% of married people found their soul mate through an introduction of a friend or family member.

If you were to approach the hiring process like dating, what would change?

The name of the game is to make a great impression at every turn. So, to start, you'd probably want to make sure you're in top-notch shape—to attract the right partner. You'd make drinking enough water a priority, you'd eat your broccoli, go to the gym, and dress the part. You would be certain to put yourself where other single people are.

You would also probably make sure that the first impression was the best you could muster and the dating process was one full of honesty and transparency and a sincere curiosity about getting to know the other person. You would probably make sure that when you did meet up with your potential soul mate, you were one-hundred percent him/her feel as though he/she was the



**Did you know that
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present, and make
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your world.

Past that, you would definitely call and follow-up, schedule another really great date, and be sure to WOW him/her at every interaction. And...if something went wrong, you definitely wouldn't break up via email (according to match.com, 48% of people break up over email!).

There's probably seven more things you would do if this was dating, but this isn't dating—it's hiring, and fortunately you can use some of dating's best practices to hire the right candidate. Here are three to start with:

1. Get in shape
2. Make sure you pick the one
3. Make 'em fall in love



1. GET IN SHAPE

Make sure your company is in top-notch shape to attract the BEST candidates. This includes having a clear story, a great brand, and a culture that you can speak to in a compelling way. Your story should not just tell what you do, and how you do it, but WHY you do it. If you haven't seen it, check out Simon Sinek's Ted talk on this very topic.

In our experience, most companies miss this part. They falsely assume that candidates want to work at their company. They forget that candidates have options and the best candidates are fielding calls all day long by people who do have a great story and know how to tell it. Once your story is in place, take some time and make sure that you know who you need to hire, what you want them to do, how you will measure him/her and how you will compensate this person.

It should be obvious that you need a job description with the roles and responsibilities along with the qualifications outlined. It should also be obvious that you must have a decent construct of what the compensation is BEFORE you start interviewing. While these two items seem like common sense, many of our clients simply tell us, "hire us rockstars" without having these items defined. The question we always ask is: how will you identify the rockstars if you haven't outlined what the person will be doing, or what the attributes are needed for the role, and what you will pay said rockstar?

Do your homework and know what you want before you get started.

HOT TIPS FOR GETTING HIRING READY

1. Be aware of what is on glassdoor.com. For those of you that don't know, glassdoor.com is a place where people rate your company (past employees and present). It's never good when a candidate surprises you with reviews of your own company.
2. Create ambassadors internally and externally. You need to get other people to tell your story and do the recruiting for you. You can't beat a word-of-mouth referral.
3. Leverage social media. LinkedIn should make it to the top of your list. The majority of those on LinkedIn are candidates looking (either actively or passively) for jobs and connecting with them and following their activity can ensure that when you get the chance to have a conversation, you make it relevant to him/her.
4. Minimize the amount of time and money you spend on traditional job boards. This may seem counter-intuitive and may also be a not so popular opinion. The candidates you really want aren't putting their resume on monster.com. If you insist on using a job board, use The Ladders because candidates have to pay a monthly fee which means they are more serious about their job search.

2. MAKE SURE YOU PICK THE ONE

People are constantly settling for what they know isn't the right person, but they have their personal agendas and expectations for their lives, so they settle for someone. This is one reason for the high divorce rate that Americans experience. According to American Psychological Association, experts estimate that 40 to 50 percent of marriages today end in divorce.

Settling also happens in Corporate America. Settling happens for many reasons including pressure on timing, poor interview skills, misalignment amongst the leadership team, lack of clarity on the position, and the list goes on!

HOT TIPS FOR MAKING THE RIGHT PICK

1. **Set a Timeline:** Determine when you would ideally bring your new rockstar on and then back out from there. You'll need to define the interview process and stick to it so that you don't find you and your team spinning your wheels six months from now.



2. **Remember Attributes are Key:** Most Hiring Managers talk all about experience and overlook attributes. Defining the attributes and interviewing for them is critical to making the right hire.

3. **Keep it Consistent:** The interview process should be the same for each candidate. Regardless if it's three steps or five, keep it consistent to ensure consistency with candidates and your team, making sure you are fairly comparing each candidate.

4. **Align Your Team:** There's nothing more frustrating than getting to the end of the process and finding that your team has different opinions on who to hire. To mitigate this risk, be sure to do a pre-huddle and align your team with a score sheet for each candidate.¹

5. **Ask Good Questions:** We wrote an entire blog on interview questions. The best questions are behavioral-based questions which make the candidate pull on experiences from the past making it difficult to fabricate.²

6. **Pay Attention to Body Language:** Does the candidate's face turn red when you give feedback? Does he/she make great eye contact? Body language can tell you pretty much everything you need to know about a candidate.

7. **Add in Some Science:** While there isn't a scientific process that is 100% accurate in predicting success and behavior, diagnostics do help. The personality test marketplace is booming and there's a reason: it adds more science to the art of interviewing and hiring people.

1. See [Appendix A](#) for the attributes we look for at eQ.

2. See [Appendix B](#) for the score sheet.

3. MAKE 'EM FALL IN LOVE

You've told your story, you know what you want, and you've done a great job qualifying the candidates. Now, you find yourself with one or two final candidates. Most likely, these candidates have many choices, in fact, great candidates have more choices now than ever before. So, **what makes you worthy of their undivided attention and commitment?**

This is the time where you need to put on your sales hat — sell the candidate that your opportunity is the best opportunity out there. Before making an offer, you need to make sure that the candidate is excited and will say yes. This is exactly like the dating process, when the guy (and at times girl) is ready to propose, he's not proposing unless he's confident she will say yes.

Just as people say no to marriage proposals all the time, candidates turn down offers every day. Make sure this doesn't happen to you—you want your perfect candidate to be in love with you (and your company) as much as you are with them.



HOT TIPS FOR FALLING IN LOVE

1. Remember the Little Things Matter

Walking the candidate out, shaking his/her hand, introducing the candidate to others in the office, smiling, sending a follow-up thank you (yes, Hiring Managers should send thank you notes too), connecting with the candidate on LinkedIn, and the list goes on and on.

2. Getting to Know Them Personally

Work and life are all one thing, even though many people strive to keep them separate. Knowing that what goes on in people's professional lives affects them personally and vice versa, it's important that you take interest in the candidate's personal life. There is a fine line of what you can and can't ask, so make sure you aren't opening yourself up to a lawsuit.

3. Make Every Interaction Positive

From the first interview to the last and then the offer and negotiations, the candidate should always feel as though this is the right pick.

4. Show Some Love

Have your team send out a congratulatory email or phone call to welcome the new teammate to the team! This goes a long way and makes the first day feel less daunting and more welcoming.

Chances are, if you've spent time getting in shape, doing all of the things necessary to ensure the candidate you pick is the one, then once you've identified the one, you've made him/her fall in love—you will have made a great hire.

Hiring the RIGHT talent isn't as easy as posting a job and hoping the right person falls into your inbox. As Run D.M.C. said, "It's Tricky," of course Run D.M.C. was talking about rocking a rhyme (that's right on time) and we are talking about hiring....but regardless, it's tricky.

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WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

entreQuest (eQ) is a management consultancy firm with a focus on talent. Our business has practices that are separate, yet closely connected: talent acquisition and consulting.

Our Talent Acquisition Practice ensures our clients' talent acquisition strategy supports, and is aligned with, their overall business strategy. By taking a collaborative and consultative approach to our client relationships, we are able to find rockstars with the right DNA for our clients' culture, a specialty other recruiting firms lack.

Our Consulting Practice is structured to help our clients Grow Regardless by building world-class cultures designed to attract, retain, and grow top talent. We roll up our sleeves and work directly with Executive Teams to create alignment, provide clarity to their teams, and make an impact on their employees, clients and community. We then work with all levels of the organization, beginning with the C-level executives all the way to the front-line staff, to transform the organization into a performance-based growth machine.

In 2013, we had the opportunity to share our message and expertise with the world by writing a #1 New York Times best-selling book called *Grow Regardless!*

WHY WE DO IT

Small to medium sized companies are the biggest driver to economic growth, yet support for these businesses is lacking. Unlike large corporations, smaller businesses, often, don't have the resources necessary for growth—that's where eQ comes in.



**“It's tricky to rock a rhyme,
to rock a rhyme that's right on time.
It's tricky...”**

- Run DMC

FLEXIBILITY

Ability to adapt to new, different or changing requirements.

SELF-CONFIDENCE

Maintaining a winning mindset; move, think, act like winners.

ENTREPRENEURIAL

Thinks like an owner. Wants to be part of growing something where their individual contribution can directly affect the company and team success.

ENERGY

Highly motivated, outgoing individual with the ability to self-start, self-focus and energize those around him/her. Has a high degree of passion about life and about work.

MOTIVATION

Highly motivated to exceed objectives and perform above expectations.

COACH-ABILITY

Willingness to be trained and willingness to learn.

TEAMWORK

Wants to succeed as part of the team, not just as an individual.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Overall, how well did the candidate communicate in the interview?

Please focus on asking questions that allow candidates to exhibit these attributes through their responses.



Candidate Name:

Interview Time:

	Lowest				Highest
Circle the score that is most indicative of your assesment of the candidate	1	2	3	4	5
Flexibility	1	2	3	4	5
Comments:					
Self Confidence	1	2	3	4	5
Comments:					
Entrepreneurial	1	2	3	4	5
Comments:					
Energy	1	2	3	4	5
Comments:					
Motivation	1	2	3	4	5
Comments:					
Coachability	1	2	3	4	5
Comments:					
Teamwork	1	2	3	4	5
Comments:					
Communication	1	2	3	4	5
Comments:					





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I'll start with the question we hear over and over from our clients: What is the VERY best interview question to ask a candidate to REALLY see if they have the "it" factor and what sets them apart from all of the other candidates interested?

But of course; these people are looking for a job after all—so no matter what question you ask, it's their job to sell themselves, so it's tough to gauge who these folks really are... And if they are good at selling themselves, you need a bulletproof approach for methodically asking questions to really understand if this person fits your company, your culture, and the open job opportunity. More importantly, does the person have the heart, hustle and humility to be successful?

Hiring decisions are among the most important that any organization makes... and the toughest. Let's be honest, hiring a candidate after a few short interviews is like getting married after only a few dates. That's why organizations, large and small, owe it to themselves and their stakeholders to do their due diligence by asking the RIGHT questions versus basing the decision on surface level answers that give zero insight into the candidate's capabilities.

We tell our clients: You should leave the interview process confident about the answers to two questions: CAN the candidate do the job and WILL they do the job?

The question: Can they do the job, relates to the ABILITY a candidate has to apply his or her skills and attributes to the new situation, job, and environment.

Will they do the job, is a question of MOTIVATION and MINDSET. Does the candidate have the Heart, Hustle, and Humility?

LEADERSHIP IQ FOUND THAT 46% OF ALL NEW HIRES FAIL WITHIN THEIR FIRST 18 MONTHS. BUT HERE'S THE REAL SHOCKER: 89% OF THEM FAIL FOR ATTITUDINAL REASONS—NOT SKILLS.

SIMILARLY, HIREOLOGY.COM REPORTS THAT 80% OF TURNOVER IS A RESULT OF HIRING AND INTERVIEWING MISTAKES.

Hundreds of other studies reveal the profound limitations of traditional interview styles (think games and right/wrong answers) and traditional interview questions (3 biggest strengths, 3 biggest weaknesses)—these interviews favor candidates who are attractive, sociable, articulate, etc., but they aren't taking into consideration that surface attributes (being attractive, sociable, articulate, etc.) are easy to fake—people with these qualities are just good at selling themselves. So, the issue many companies face when using traditional interview methods is that the interview process favors manipulative candidates, or ones who know how to make a positive impression even in a brief interview.

After interviewing thousands of people and knowing what we do about the current market, eQ knows that finding out who the person is, their attributes, character, and how they relate to others in terms of work ethic, mindset, and aspirations (think Heart, Hustle, and Humility here) is far more important than their current skills and experience.

Before we dig into the best questions, it's important to note a few things about interviewing:

- Interviews should always be conversational: PLEASE do not read straight through this list in your next interview—if you do, the interview will feel like it starts and stops and won't paint you in the best light for the candidate.
- The first question you should ask is: Why do you want to work here? The answer to this question will help you decide if you should spend even one more minute with this candidate. If someone doesn't have a good answer; he either: hasn't researched your company or is just looking for a paycheck.
- Find the opportunity to give the candidate critical feedback whether it's on her resume, what she says, or on a story she tells. The candidate's response will tell you how coachable she is. For example, during an interview for a position at eQ, I asked a candidate to describe her relationship with her past manager. She used words that didn't paint this gentleman in a very nice light. I gave her feedback that this was unfair to her boss in that he wasn't here to defend himself and her perspective is one-sided AND it is an interview best practice not to ever say anything negative about a past employer. EVER. This particular candidate took a deep breath and paused for a moment to follow-up with a "thank you" for the feedback. She was obviously VERY coachable which is still true today!
- Be sure to watch the non-verbal body language. For example, if a candidate is telling you a story and is shaking his head "no", there may be something about that story that is untrue. Or the candidate may not be confident in what he is saying.

Now that we have the basics covered, let's talk about HOW you're going to drill into a candidate and find out if they have what it takes (Heart, Hustle, and Humility) to help your company succeed. We all know the traditional questions—"What is your biggest strength/weakness," "Where do you see yourself in five years," and, "Tell me about yourself." But these questions only graze the surface in terms of finding out who a person is and what makes them tick. In order to really understand someone (in a very short amount of time) and figure out if they meet your specific needs, you need to focus on their mindset and behaviors.

So, to cut to the chase, here are the 20 VERY BEST INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (divided between mindset and behavior) based not only eQ's experience, but also the latest research in social science, behavioral economics, neuroscience, and psychology.

MINDSET QUESTIONS

Mindset questions are critical to hiring the RIGHT people—these questions will help you dive deeper into who the candidate really is and help you decide if he or she will fit your culture and help drive the overall mission and vision of your company. When asked correctly, these questions will give you the best sense of a candidate's work ethic by focusing on their overall mindset and outlook on life. Be sure to look for: how they describe things, experiences, and words. Is it with a negative tone or positive? Is the candidate's outlook "glass half full" or "glass half empty"?

Here are eQ's top 10 Mindset Questions to Ask:

1. What's most important to you about your next position? You are looking to see if what they say matches up with what you are offering.
2. What would you do if you didn't need money? Will tell you what their true passion is.
3. How do you define success? Gives you insight into their standards for success.
4. What does a company owe its employees? Gives you insight into what you are going to be on the hook for to retain him/her.
5. If you were to be hired, what do you think would be a reason you may not stay in this position or with the company? Mindset: what would make them quit?
6. What's most important to you about your relationship with your boss/manager and what type of management style works best for you? This is normally a great opportunity for coaching.
7. What are you most proud of? Again, you are looking for their standards. Also, have they done anything they are proud of?

8. What are the 3 boxes that must be checked for you to accept a position? Their answer should give you a sense of what they are motivated by and what's most important to them. If they are interviewing for a sales position and money isn't in the top 3, pass on them.
9. Describe the perfect company culture for you and why? Their description needs to work with your culture, but doesn't need to be the exact same.
10. Who are you outside of work? Less about what it is, more about what their answer means. Are they passionate? Do their eyes light up?

BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS

Behavioral questions are also critical to hiring the RIGHT people—simply put, they help you predict future success by looking into past behavior. These questions allow you to look at previous behavior (not potential behavior) and use that as an indicator for future behavior. For example, if you start a question with, "What would you do if..."

you're leading candidates to say what they think you want to hear, instead, try, "Tell me about a time when..." This gives them the opportunity to give you a real-life example that provides insight into their personality and work ethic. Past that, it's very difficult to make up stories about past experiences on the fly.

Here are eQ's top 10 Behavioral Questions to Ask:

1. Tell me about a time when you overcame a significant challenge? Looking for what they think is "significant".
2. Tell me about a time when you were recognized by your peers for your hard work? Get a perspective of how they feel others view them.
3. Tell me about a time when you worked with difficult people? These are normally my favorite, as most people try to take a middle of the road approach and not give an actual example.
4. Tell me about a time when you failed, but learned an invaluable lesson? What's their view on failure?
5. Tell me about a time when you were wrong in front of a lot of people? Are they humble and do they have humility?

Make no mistake between my personality and my attitude.

My personality is who I am, my attitude depends on who you are.



6. Tell me about a time when you helped someone win, but did not get the credit? How much of a team player are they?
7. Tell me about a time when you worked really hard, but missed your goals? Look for excuse-making.
8. Tell me about a time when you hit your goals without working hard? What comes easy or natural to them? Or how much structure/process they need in place to be successful?
9. Tell me about a time when you read a book you loved and couldn't put it down, why? Who are they as a human being?
10. Tell me about a time when you read a book and did not finish it, why? Look for excuse making and how they make decisions to not finish something they started.

If you already ask these questions—great, I'm sure you have hired some rock stars. If you don't ask these questions, start and see how they impact your decisions. Again, the goal is to identify those who CAN do the job and more importantly, those that WILL do the job. There's a lot of people who fall somewhere in between and those are the people you are trying to weed out. Getting good at interviewing is just like getting in shape—it takes a lot of repetition and discipline.