

[Recruiting at _____](#)

Mission

To hire only A players.

These are the right superstars who can do the job we need done while fitting in with the culture of _____.

Methodology

Scorecard. The Hiring Manager creates a document in Drive that describes precisely what he/she wants the person to accomplish in the role. This is a set of outcomes and competencies that define a job. They must be both measurable and have an accomplish-by date.

Source. All Hiring Managers systematically source before we have slots to fill.

Select. We conduct structured interviews that rate candidates against the scorecard that we've created.

Sell. Finally, we persuade the best candidates to join our team.

Scorecard

Mission

What is the mission for the position?

The Mission describes the business problem and its solution.

Example: "The Operations Lead will create and manage a world-class department that will support every _____er by providing the environment, information, tools, training, and habits they need to succeed in their role and make _____ a massive success."

Outcomes

What are the outcomes that must be accomplished, by when?

This is *what* the person must get done. These outcomes should be measurable, have a due date, and there should be 3 to 8 of them (target is 5) ranked by order of importance.

Example: "Turn every _____er into a ninja user of our internal tools (Asana, RelateIQ, GoogleApps) and methodologies (GTD, Inbox Zero, Management by Objectives, Active Listening) by Oct 31, 2014."

What traits/habits do we require to:

1) succeed in the role?

2) fit in at _____?

This is *how* the person must do it. These are the behaviors that someone must exhibit to achieve the outcomes above.

Examples

Interesting and Interested. Is interested in getting to know the stories of others. They have interesting stories. We genuinely want to hang out with them.

Organized. Personally organized. Follows the GTD method or something like it, and therefore stays well aware of all to-dos and events. Focuses on key priorities.

Sense of Urgency. Fights against an organization's natural state: inertia. Knows that to build something great, we all need to move mountains, now!

Innovative. Seeks to make process improvements to make their role and _____ more efficient going forward.

Collaborative. Reaches out to peers and cooperates with managers to establish an overall collaborative environment.

Persuasive. Able to convince others to pursue a course of action.

Coachable. Wants to improve; open to feedback; act on that feedback

Alignment

We pressure-test the scorecard by comparing it with the Company and Department Roadmaps and the scorecards of others that the person will interface with. We ensure that there is alignment and then share the scorecard with relevant _____ers, including peers and recruiters.

A good scorecard process translates the strategy's objectives into clear outcomes for the Exec Team, translating their results into clear outcomes for those who report to them, etc. Every _____er ends up with a set of results that support the strategy and competencies that support the outcomes and culture. First, we look for the ability to do the job that is needed today. Second, we look for flexibility and adaptability for what the role may become tomorrow.

Source

We are constantly sourcing, identifying the *who* before a new hire is really needed.

There are three sources of candidates:

1. Referrals from our network.
2. Recruiters
3. Researchers

Referrals. Of these three, referrals from our personal and professional networks are by far the most effective.

We need to ask ourselves: “Who are the most talented people I know that _____ should hire?” And then ask all the talented people in our network, and every talented person that we meet “Who are the most talented people that you know that _____ should hire?” Ask our advisors, customers, partners, suppliers. Join a professional organization. Ask there.

Please fill out your [Top 20 candidates](#).

An objective that will go on each of our scorecards is: “Source one candidate who passes the _____ phone screen per quarter.”

Recruiters. We occasionally use recruiters. They are not as effective as our own network. And we understand that to be effective at all, they need to know and understand _____. It is pointless to engage recruiters unless we bring them inside the kimono and fully expose them to _____. We do so by sharing the scorecard with them, as well as every detail of our reaction to candidates they propose.

Researchers. These are people who research networks and generate names, but do not reach out directly to candidates. We rarely use researchers.

Here is our Process for Sourcing:

1. Gamify the process. Give a prize to whoever reaches out to the most people (or whatever other metric you want to use).
2. Deputizing friends of _____. We offer a referral bonus of \$_____ and regularly ask friends of _____ for referrals.
3. Hiring recruiters. When we hire recruiters, we give them full access to our scorecards and our reaction to candidates.

4. ATS (Applicant Tracking System). We are relentless about entering all relevant information into our ATS. This system is everyone's responsibility. While one owner of this list will check it weekly for "not filled out the information," we will pester each other to enter this information whenever we see holes.

Select

We have a set of four interviews that allow us to rate a person against our scorecard. To be great interviewers, we must get out of the habit of passively witnessing how somebody acts *during* an interview. And instead, use the four interviews to collect *facts and data about how they have performed over decades*.

- Screening Interview
- Topgrading Interview
- Focused Interview
- Reference Interview

Phone Screen Interview

The goal is to eliminate people who are inappropriate for the position as soon as possible. One can conduct this by phone, and it should not last more than 30 minutes. Preview that it will last 15 minutes, then extend to 30 during the call only if the candidate appears to be excellent.

The Hiring Manager will assign the first screener. If the candidate passes the first screen, the Hiring Manager will do the second screen.

Read the scorecard just before the call.

Set expectations:

"Thanks for taking the time to talk to me. I'd like to spend the first 10 minutes of our call getting to know you. After that, I'm happy to answer any questions you have about us. Sound good?"

(It is essential to get their information first so that what you get isn't simply a parroting back of what _____ is looking for.)

The script:

1. "What are your career goals?"

(If his/her goals sound like an echo of the _____ website or they don't have any, screen them out.)

2. "What are you good at professionally?"

(Push them to give you 8-12 positives, with examples, so that you can build a complete picture of their capabilities. You are listening for strengths that match the scorecard.)

3. "What are you not good at or not interested in doing professionally?"

(Push them for real weaknesses, 5-8 of them. If they don't respond thoroughly enough, call them on it. If they still don't, then say the following: "If you advance to the next step in our process, we will ask for your help in setting up reference calls with your bosses, peers, and subordinates. What do you think they will say are some things that you are not good at, or not interested in?")

4. "Who were your last three bosses, and how will they each rate your performance on a 0-10 scale when we talk to them?"

(Press for details of why each person would give them such a rating. We are looking for consistent 8-10s. A 6 is actually a 2. But ask why it's a 6.)

1. What are your career goals?

2. What are you good at professionally?

3. What are you not good at or not interested in doing professionally?

4. Who were your last three bosses, and how will they rate your performance on a 0-10 scale when talking to them?

And then, it is essential to go deeper. Throughout the interview, get curious. Ask follow-up questions that start with "What," "How," or "Tell me more."

Examples:

- "What do you mean?"
- "What is an example of that?"
- "How did you do that?"
- "How did that feel?"

(Developer hires will have an extra screening step of performing a programming test.)

The goal of this phone screen is to weed out candidates quickly. If you can't definitively say: "This is an A candidate," then hit the gong. It is better for us to miss out on an A player than to waste many precious hours on a borderline case that turns out to be a B or C player. If we weed harshly, we will spend more time with candidates who are known A players.

If you think this is an A player, let the candidate know that you believe they are great and that you are open to extending this phone interview to get to know them more and answer their questions about _____. Jump into "selling" mode.

If you think that the candidate is not an A player, end the call at the scheduled time (15 minutes, hopefully). Within 24 hours, inform them that you appreciated their time, but you will not be moving forward with them at this time. "Thank you for taking the time to interview with us. We do not feel that our needs for this role match your strengths. That being said, we will be hiring for many more roles in the future, and we hope to be able to reach back out to you again."

While it may feel difficult to say "no" to people, it is disrespectful to let them linger. The vast majority of people prefer a quick "no" to a slow one, or worse yet, no response at all.

Now, let's get back to that candidate who is an A.

Selling

In addition to getting curious about a candidate's passions, dreams, and personal life (as described in [Building Trust and Like](#)), the key to successfully selling a candidate on _____ is giving them enough information so that they will see that at _____ they will have:

Fit, Family, Freedom, Fun.

Fit. Share the Company Roadmap, Department Roadmap, and their Roadmap. Show how where they want to go is a match for where _____ is going.

Family. "What can we do to make this change as easy as possible for your family?" Ask about their family. Get to know their names, ages, etc. Ask what concerns and needs their family members have. Meet those needs. Ideally, meet their family in person (or at a minimum, speak to their spouse on the phone), discover their needs directly, and meet those needs.

Freedom. "At _____, we collaboratively set Company, Department and Individual OKRs at the beginning of each quarter. Your Individual OKRs means that I will not micromanage you. In our regular 1-1s, I will ask you to update me on your progress toward your OKRs, and offer you support whenever you run into obstacles. I encourage you to talk to my team to see what I am like to work with."

Fun. Here is what we do for fun at _____.

At the end of the phone interview, let the candidate know that you would like to immediately schedule the next interview (either the second phone interview or the on-site interviews).

On-Site Interviews

For the on-site interviews, schedule interviews back-to-back (with some break time in between) with all of the needed decision-makers, followed by a decision meeting at the end of the day attended by all interviewers. The goal is to get all required buy-in for a yes/no decision in one day of interviews.

This day of interviews will include:

1. A Topgrading interview

2. Several Focused interviews

The schedule for the interviewers will look something like this:

830-900am Interviewers meeting. Here's what's going to happen today. Review scorecard, candidate's resume, notes from screening interviews, and roles/responsibilities for the day.

845-900am A team member greets the candidate and orients them to the day ahead.

900-1100am Topgrading Interview. (1-2 hours)

1100-noon Focused Interview.

Noon-100pm Lunch with _____.

100-400pm Focused Interviews

400-415pm Host thanks the candidate and explains the next steps.

415-500pm Decision Meeting. The interview team meets to rate the scorecard. Hiring Manager makes a YES/NO decision to conduct reference calls or terminate the process.

Topgrading Interview

The goal of this interview is to understand the candidate's story and patterns. These stories and practices are predictive of the candidate's future performance. Start from the beginning and move forward chronologically. Create chapters of a job (or groups of jobs) that last 3-5 years. This interview should take about 2 hours (3 hours for a CEO, 1 hour for entry-level). It is worth the time. For every hour we spend Topgrading a candidate, we'll save 100s of hours not dealing with B or C players.

The Hiring Manager should conduct the Topgrading Interview and a colleague who wants to learn the method by observing.

In the interview, first set expectations:

"Thank you for visiting us today. We are going to do a chronological interview and walk through each job you've had. For each job, I am going to ask you five core questions.

1. **What were you hired to do?**
2. **What accomplishments are you most proud of?**
3. **What were some low points during that job?**
4. **Who were the people you worked with?**
5. **Why did you leave that job?**

At the end of the interview, we will discuss your career goals and aspirations, and you can ask me questions about us.

80 percent of the process will take place in this room, but if we mutually decide to move forward, we will conduct reference calls to complete the process.

Finally, while this sounds lengthy, it will go remarkably fast. It is my job to guide the pace of the discussion. Sometimes I will ask you to go into more depth; other times, I will ask that we move on to the next topic. I'll try to make sure that we leave plenty of time to cover your most recent and, therefore, most relevant jobs.

Any questions before we begin?"

The script:

For each job or group of jobs (lasting 3-5 years).

1. What were you hired to do?

You are trying to create a picture of their scorecard as if they had one. What were their mission and key outcomes (or Objectives and Key Results)?

2. What accomplishments are you most proud of?

Hopefully, these accomplishments will match the outcomes described in the first question.

3. What were some low points during that job?

Do not let the candidate off the hook. Reframe the question over and over again until you get honest answers.

4. Who were the people you worked with? Specifically:

i. What was your boss' name, and how do you spell that? What was it like working with him/her? What will he/she tell me were your biggest strengths and areas for improvement?

Follow the script exactly. By letting the candidate know that we will be contacting these references, the candidate will become much more truthful. This is the most crucial question we ask during the Topgrading Interview, as it gives us the information needed to do the Reference Interviews. For the most recent or significant job, also ask:

ii. Who were your peers on the team, and how do you spell their names?

iii. Who were the members of your team, and how do you spell their names?

Again, these are critical questions that will enable the Reference Interviews.

iv. How would you rate the team you inherited on an A, B, and C scale? What changes did you make? Did you hire anybody? Fire anybody? How would you rate the team when you left it on an A, B, and C scale?

Does the candidate accept the hand they have been dealt, or do they make changes to get a better hand? You can also use the reference check method to get more information: "When we speak with members of your team, what will they say are your biggest strengths and weaknesses as a manager?"

5. Why did you leave that job?

Was the candidate promoted, recruited, or fired? Get very curious about why?

To conduct this interview well, you will have to:

1. **Interrupt.** Do so tactfully. But do not let a candidate ramble. Doing so will only hurt their chances of success because it will chew up valuable time without conveying important information. Expect to interrupt the candidate once every 3-4 minutes.

The proper way to interrupt someone is to be positive and use reflective listening: "Wow! It sounds like that pig farm next to the corporate office smelled horrible!" The candidate says: "Yes." Then you immediately say: "You were telling me earlier about launching that email campaign. I'd love to hear what that was like? How well did it go?"

2. **Three Ps.** Use the 3 Ps to clarify how valuable an accomplishment was in context.

i. How did your performance compare to the previous year's performance?

ii. How did your performance compare to the plan?

iii. How did your performance compare to that of your peers?

3. **Push versus Pull.** People who perform well are generally pulled to more significant opportunities.

For each job change, determine if it was a push or a pull.

Push. "It was mutual." "It was time for me to leave."

Pull. "My biggest client hired me." "My old boss recruited me to a bigger job."

4. **Painting a Picture.** You'll know that you understand what a candidate is saying when you can see a picture of it in your mind. Put yourself in their shoes.

5. Stopping at the Stop Signs. If you see or hear inconsistencies, the candidate may be telling an untruth. If this happens, get curious, and dig deeper. Think of yourself as a biographer (positive), not an investigative journalist (negative).

Focused Interview

Three _____ers (not the Hiring Manager) will be asked to conduct 3 Focused Interviews, each 50 minutes. The focused interview is a chance to involve other team members and get more specific information about the candidate. Focus the interview on the outcomes (skills) and competencies (culture fit) of the scorecard. Get curious after every answer by using the "What? How? Tell me more" framework. We split the Outcomes and Competencies in the scorecard into three sections, allowing each interviewer to focus on one area ($\frac{1}{3}$ of the Outcomes and $\frac{1}{3}$ of the Competencies).

Set the stage:

1. "The purpose of this interview is to talk about _____(fill in the blank with the Outcomes and Competencies in the Scorecard that you are going to review)."

The script:

1. "Now we are going to talk about _____ (fill in the blank with the next Outcome or Competency to be reviewed).

2. What are your most significant accomplishments in this area during your career?

3. What are your insights into your biggest mistakes and lessons learned in this area?"

The rating:

At the end of the day of on-site interviews, we hold a Decision Meeting. The entire interview team gathers. All submit their comments on the candidate in writing in the ATS system. We then declare our positions on each candidate.

Skill-Will Bull's Eye. We only choose candidates whose skill (what they can do) and will (what they want to do) matches our scorecard. This scorecard is their skill-will profile. For each item on the scorecard, rate the candidate's skill-will. Only rate people an A in whom you have a greater than 90% confidence that they can and will meet all outcomes and competencies.

Red Flags:

Here are the things to watch out for during the interview process that signal problems:

- Candidate does not mention past failures.

- Candidate exaggerates his or her answers.
- Candidate takes credit for the work of others.
- Candidate speaks poorly of past bosses.
- Candidate cannot explain job moves.
- Their family doesn't want them to take this job.
- For managerial hires, the candidate has never had to hire or fire anybody.
- Candidate is more interested in compensation and title than in the job itself and _____.
- Candidate tries too hard to look like an expert.
- Candidate is not curious about us or others. (Candidate is self-absorbed.)

The selection:

1. Update all the Scorecards.
2. Rate each candidate.
3. If we have no A's, restart the process to step 2: Source.
4. If we have one A, we make them an offer pending reference interviews.
5. If we have several A's, we rank them and offer pending reference interviews to the best A from among them. We try to find another role at _____ for the other A's.

Reference Interview

We do not skip the reference checks! The Reference Interviews are where we learn the truth about the candidate. These interviews give us by far the most accurate picture of the candidate's future performance.

1. We pick the proper references. Bosses, peers, and subordinates (sometimes 2-3 levels down). We do not use the reference list that the candidate gives us.
2. We ask the candidate to contact the references and set up the calls.
3. The Hiring Manager conducts at least 2 (but preferably 4) reference interviews, and other team members do at least 1 (but preferably 3) more for a total of at least 3 (but preferably 7).

The script:

1. **"In what context did you work with the person?"**

2. "What were the person's biggest strengths?"

Get curious by using the "What? How? Tell me more" framework.

3. "What were the person's biggest areas for improvement back then?"

It is essential to say "back then." This expression liberates people to talk about fundamental weaknesses, assuming that the candidate has improved them by now. (In reality, past performance is an indicator of future performance.)

4. "How would you rate his/her overall performance in that job on a scale of 0-10? What about his/her performance causes you to give that rating?"

5. "The person mentioned that he/she struggled with _____ in that job. Can you please tell me more about that?"

People do not like to give negative references, so listen for cues. Faint or qualified praise is damning, as is hesitation.

From Danny An, Founder of TrustToken:

"When asking for weaknesses or areas of improvement during interviews and reference calls, people answer more freely if you say, "People shouldn't do the majority of things and should focus on areas where they can use their strengths. Understanding weaknesses demonstrates self-awareness."

Sell

Our decision to hire the candidate is only one part of the equation. The second and even more critical part is selling the candidate to join us.

As described in [Building Trust and Like](#), the key is to put yourself in the candidate's shoes. Find out what they care about. And then care about it yourself. Most people tend to care about ...

Fit. Share the Company Roadmap, Department Roadmap, and their Individual Roadmap. Show how where they want to go is a match for where _____ is going.

Family. "What can we do to make this change as easy as possible for your family?" Ask about their family. Get to know their names, ages, etc. Ask what concerns and needs they have. Meet those needs. (Ideally, meet their family in person, discover their needs directly, and meet those needs.)

Freedom. "The Individual Roadmap allows you the freedom to make decisions. I will not micromanage you." Encourage the candidate to do reference checks on you to see what you are like to work with.

Fun. Here is what we do for fun at _____.

Fortune. "If you accomplish your objectives, and we as a company accomplish ours, you will likely make x over the next 5-10 years."

Selling happens throughout the recruiting process. Here are key moments to put yourself in a candidates shoes and address the issues above:

1. When you source
2. When you interview
3. The time between your verbal offer and the candidate's acceptance (reach out to them repeatedly during this time!)
4. The time between the candidate's acceptance and his/her first day (yes, they still aren't really here yet; keep reaching out to them!)
5. The new hire's first 100 days on the job (yes, they are still evaluating; keep addressing what they care about!) Be persistent. **Think lots of touches!** Too many candidates are lost because they feel abandoned once they are offered or arrive at the company.

Implementation

To implement this recruiting system:

1. Announce it to the company.
2. Train all Hiring Managers and interviewers.
3. Implement the schedule and process. Enter the process and questions in the ATS system.
4. Put "Source 1 great candidate" on everyone's quarterly scorecard (i.e., OKRs)

Legal

Don't discriminate. We hire people on one criteria only: whether they are likely to perform the job or not. Keep in mind the following:

1. Relevance. Defining the outcomes and competencies will ensure that we are judging on relevant criteria.

2. Standardization. Having a standard process ensures fairness across all groups.
3. Non-discriminatory language. We always use "he/she" or "they." No derogatory language toward anyone, ever.
4. **No illegal questions: Anything related to marital status, intention to have children, pregnancy, date or place of birth, medical condition, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, or physical or mental handicaps.**

Further Reading

For more detail, please read:



★ Interested in coaching or software to help implement the Mochary Method at your company? Please fill out our interest form [here](#), or book a discovery call with Nancy Xu [here](#).