

A GUIDE




WHAT'S TAKING SO LONG?

*How to Speed Up
Your Hiring Process*



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The labor market has only gotten tighter, and the interview process longer: an unlikely and detrimental combination.

*When unemployment is low and candidate demand is high, **the market shifts in the candidates' favor.** Available candidates are limited, and that leaves employers at a disadvantage.*

In 2015, **90% of recruiters** said the market was candidate-driven (Glassdoor). And the continued decrease in unemployment and increase in demand for quality talent are expected to favor candidates even more strongly in 2018.

Unemployment is predicted to continue its **downward slope to about 4.6%** in 2018 (Economic Research Institute), while the most recent Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) report shows 6.1 million job openings in September 2017 – **13% of which went unfilled.**


Yet, employers appear to be slow to react.

While hiring managers are working with limited resources, they are taking longer than ever before to interview and hire. The average interview timeline takes **23 days** (Glassdoor). However, the **top 10%** of candidates are gone from the marketplace **within 10 days** (ERE Media). *(When hiring for our own company, we have found that we lose our best candidates if the interview isn't scheduled within five days.)*

Intense screening and prolonged interview processes are leading employers to lose top talent and – **contrary to popular belief** – diminishing the quality of the candidate pool.

Read on to learn more about the detriments of lengthy hiring processes, how we ended up here, and what you can do to increase efficiency without sacrificing quality.





"The prolonged hiring process is proving ineffective and costly."

WHAT'S TAKING SO LONG?

The **average time-to-hire** for white-collar positions is now an extraordinary **68 business days** (CEB), with the **interview process** alone taking **23 days** – 13 days more than it did just four years ago (Glassdoor). Organizations have not seen any real improvement in quality of hire since 2010, even though the entire hiring process takes **26 more business days than it did in 2010**.

Yet, **one-third of bosses know within the first 90 seconds** of an interview whether they will hire someone (UndercoverRecruiter), and **half of hiring decision-makers** say they can tell in the **first five minutes of an interview** whether the candidate is a good fit (CareerBuilder).

So, what's taking so long?

- The current hiring climate
- The Great Recession
- The “Culture Fit” dilemma
- Our view of the relationship between quality and time

This prolonged hiring process is proving ineffective and costly. **Each day a vacancy is open, the average organization loses roughly \$407** (CEB) – not to mention the drain on productivity and morale. The longer the interview process takes, the more likely your candidates will be pursued by other employers. This will likely drive up salary negotiations, and thus overall hiring costs. **Replacing an employee can cost up to 400%** of the annual salary of the position (ERE Media) – the longer the hiring process takes, the closer you get to that number.

To obtain top talent and keep costs low, efficient hiring should be a top priority.

A VIDEO



Damage to Your Employer Brand

Your employer brand is your reputation as an employer. Your candidate experience serves as the first expression of your employer brand in the eyes of jobseekers and is the first test of your employer brand's authenticity.

According to Jibe's *2016 State of Employer Branding*, **95% of companies** consider the **quality of their candidates' experience** to impact their employer brand, and **89%** consider the **quality of their online job application process** to impact their employer brand.

A quality application and interview process only make you look better as an employer, and a company worth applying to and interviewing with.

To read more about building a strong employer brand, read our [eBook](#).



THE CANDIDATE MARKET

This hiring climate is a difficult one. **Nearly seven in 10 (68%) HR Professionals report experiencing difficulty recruiting** candidates for full-time positions in their organizations (SHRM).

With more available jobs than candidates, this creates the ***Candidate's Market***. Among the top reasons organizations experience hiring difficulty, **51% of HR Professionals cite low number of applicants** and **49% cite competition** from other employers (SHRM).

These limited resources are creating prolonged hiring processes. Hiring managers are patiently seeking out the “right” available talent, while simultaneously trying to wheedle passive candidates – those not actively searching for a job, but open to new opportunities. Waiting and persuading take time.

“To obtain
top talent and keep
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RECESSIONAL SIDE EFFECTS

Previous hiring climates are having an effect as well. With more candidates than jobs, the Great Recession allowed employers to take their time in hiring. Now that we've recovered significantly, this leisurely pace can no longer keep up.

But the Great Recession also added a unique factor to the hiring process. As workforce experts, we're noticing candidates are becoming better qualified and more skilled – an interesting residual effect of the Great Recession.

As employers began cutting their workforces during the Great Recession, remaining employees had to broaden their positions in order to make up for the gaps. The employees who were spared from layoffs had to learn quickly and were doing the work of two or more people. Soon, this became the norm. Hiring managers began to expect more from candidates.

It's important to make sure your expectations are realistic. Among those same **top reasons for hiring difficulty, 50%** of HR professionals state that **candidates don't have the needed work experience** and **38% say that candidates do not have the right technical skills** (SHRM). If you've become accustomed to having jack-of-all-trades employees, you may have unrealistic expectations for incoming candidates. **Remember:** you can always teach skills, and that can be an effective tactic in bridging the gap between skills and salary.



THE DANGER OF CULTURE FIT

Company culture has become a top priority – as it should be. However, it has added another layer to the interview process. Adding a cultural element to interviewing is good, but common misconceptions about culture fit are making the process take longer.

“**Culture fit**” is the likelihood that **someone will reflect or be able to adapt** to the core beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that make up your organization (HBR). Culture fit plays a huge role in employee engagement and retention, and should not be understated.

However, it is common to think that “culture fit = similar employees,” but that’s not true.

Employers are taking longer to interview and hire because they are looking for replicates of their current employees, rather than complementary employees. True culture fit focuses on “softer” elements like passions and values, rather than “harder” elements like educational and employment backgrounds – or simply, “people who are like us.”

Diversity beats homogeneity every time, but you still want employees to feel passionate about, and contribute to, culture. Later we’ll discuss culture fit questions you can ask to help expedite your interview process.



LONGER ≠ BETTER

Logically, we tend to think that the longer an interview process takes, the better we will get to know a candidate, ultimately leading to a better hiring decision. However, research tells us otherwise.

Five minutes is way too quick to make a hiring decision and wrought with unconscious bias, but there is a hiring speed sweet spot.

The lowest time-to-fill without sacrificing quality is 31 days (CEB).

This does not mean speeding through the process and hoping for the best. Sticking to a one-month timeline requires intentional, efficient action – especially since the average employee gives the standard two weeks' notice when quitting.

The Importance of Shared Purpose

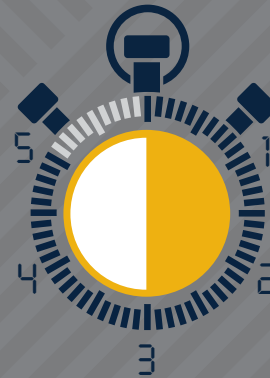
Your organization's shared purpose is a crucial element of your culture. **Your shared purpose is your organization's why:** *why* you come to work every day, *why* your organization exists – and that's something all your potential employees should get behind and contribute to.

To learn more about defining your shared purpose, read our [eBook](#).

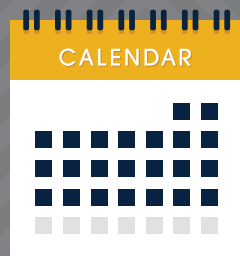
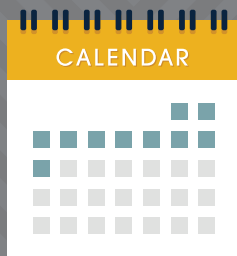


THE HIRING PROCESS IS TAKING TOO LONG

an infographic



Yet, we're taking a lot longer than a few minutes these days...



Avg. **interview time** in 2013: 10 days

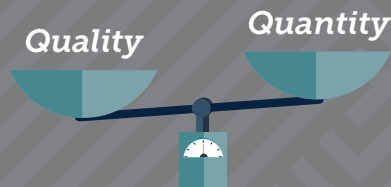
Avg. **interview time** in 2017: 23 days (Glassdoor)



Avg. **time to hire** for white collar positions in 2013: 42 days



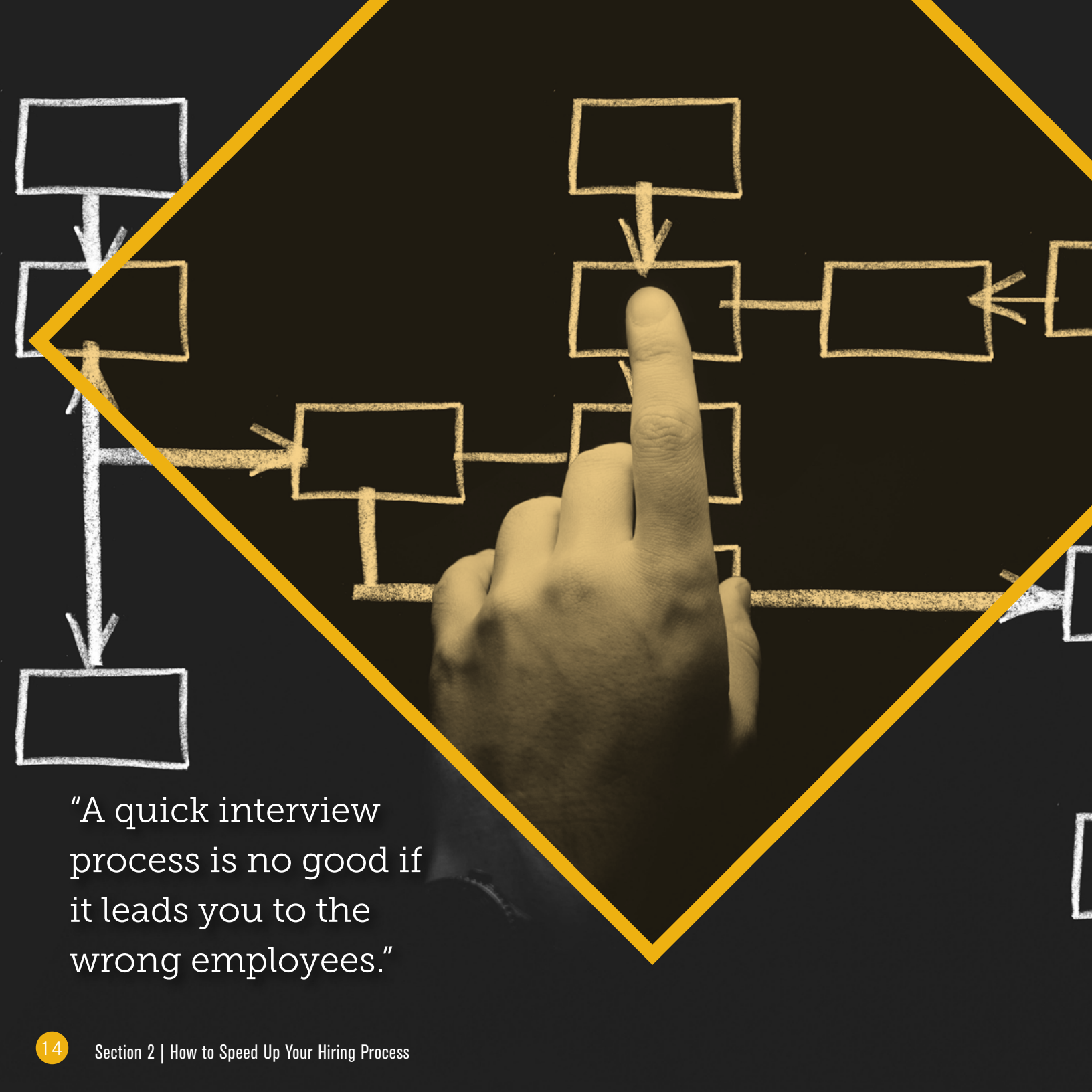
Avg. **time to hire** for white collar positions in 2017: 63 days (CEB)



Lowest time-to-fill without sacrificing quality: 31 days (CEB)

When your hiring process takes too long, you miss out on that top talent.

The candidates that have this kind of availability may not be the best for your organization.



"A quick interview process is no good if it leads you to the wrong employees."

HOW TO SPEED UP YOUR HIRING PROCESS: *THE RIGHT WAY*

Efficient hiring is more complex than simply moving faster. A quick interview and selection process is no good if it leads you to the wrong employees. Our company makes thousands of hires and placements every week, so we've compiled our best tips for hiring that will help you snag top talent while making your best judgment.

1

Loud and Clear

Before the interview process begins, start with a precise and dynamic description of what the job requires and what you are looking for in the ideal candidate. Outline a specific skill set, but also think of your existing top performers and try to pinpoint their intangible “remarkable” qualities.

Don't shy away from giving insight into your culture and what your workplace is like. Not everyone is looking for “Ping Pong table culture,” and an honest account of your workplace will allow applicants to self-filter.

Prioritize **qualities, skills,** and **elements** of culture fit.

2

Material World

Maintaining candidate engagement should be a top priority. Have physical, hardcopy handouts (printed on paper) of company policies and information available and ready for candidates to review.

When candidates were asked, **“What information would be helpful when considering a potential employer?”** they responded:

1. Culture and values
2. Perks and benefits
3. Mission and values

When candidates were asked, **“What swayed you to accept your current company’s job offer?”** they responded:

1. Better compensation/benefits **(45%)**
2. Opportunities for career advancement **(44%)**
3. Challenging work **(44%)**

(LinkedIn)

Content provided should include information on **benefits, culture, their individual role, structured career paths, leadership**, and other **unique factors** of your workplace – anything that will demonstrate what their life will look like if they work for you. Make sure this content is well-written, visually engaging, and distributed throughout the interview process.

3

Game Plan

Make a plan and a timeline to match. Try to shorten it while still making it realistic. When you do begin your interviews, outline the process for your candidates (this will add a little pressure to complete deliverables on time).

Be sure to walk them through the process and how long each step will take. **Demonstrating transparency and open dialogue** will communicate that you value and respect their time, and appreciate *their* consideration. This will make them feel important, and help you stand out from other companies they may be interviewing with.

4

Bring in the A-Team

Invite your top performers to interview your favorite candidates. Awesome people love awesome people. They can sniff out weaknesses and will be able to understand where the candidates might stand in the team environment.

5

Back to Back to Back

If you have **multiple interviews, condense them into a single day**. You'll be in the interviewing mindset, and it will be easier to compare candidates. This technique includes lining up individual and team interviews, and interviews with various supervisors.

6

Technically Speaking

Try to go easy on the technical testing, only utilizing it if absolutely necessary. If you really must do it, **keep it to 15 minutes** and make it a real-life scenario.

7

Be Ruthless

You have pretty great intuition. If the candidate isn't right, move on. Mimi Taylor, VP of Finance & Accounting at Roth Staffing Companies, states, "When you know, you know. If they are a hit, hire them. If they are ... just okay ... move on to the next candidate – don't settle for less than excellent."

8

The Culture Glass Slipper

You can teach skills, but it's a lot more difficult to force a culture fit. Make culture fit the top priority when hiring, but make sure it's actually culture fit you're looking for. Here are a few questions you can ask **to reveal culture fit:**

- *Describe the work environment you thrive in.*
- *What are you passionate about?*
- *What was the greatest work day of your life?*
- *What are you most proud of in your career?*
- *Do you have a best friend at work? What kind of team do you work best in?*
- *How would you describe your leadership style? What would your reporting staff members like to see you do more of, less of, start, and stop?*
- *Tell me about a time you exhibited [core value].*
- *Describe a challenge you faced at work, and how you tackled it.*
- *Why do you want to work here?*

9

Keep in Touch

Consistently keep in contact with your candidates, even if it's just an email to let them know a meeting got postponed. Keeping them involved in the process will keep your favorite candidates close, and again, differentiate your organization from others they may be interviewing with. In addition, it could also cut down on how often they reach out to you.

10

Competitive Advantage

Remember, this is a candidate market. Be ready to make a competitive offer, and for their current company to make a counteroffer. Websites like Glassdoor can offer insight on what your competitors are offering for specific positions. For more insight on salaries by region and position, consult one of Roth Staffing's annual [Salary Guides](#).

"If they are a hit,
hire them. If they are just ok,
move on."

HOW TO SPEED UP YOUR HIRING PROCESS IN 11 STEPS

an infographic

When the average time-to-fill is 63 business days (CEB), the top 10% of candidates are gone from the marketplace within 10 days (ERE Media), and the lowest time-to-fill without sacrificing quality is 31 days (CEB), you have to move forward with a plan.

Here's how to create an efficient and effective hiring process in 11 easy steps:

#1



Begin with a precise and dynamic job description

#2



Have hard copies of company policies and practices ready to distribute to candidates throughout the interview process

#3



Make a plan and a timeline to match— make it short and realistic

#4



Invite your top performers to interview your favorite candidates

#5



Try to condense the entire interview process to a single day

#6



Restrict technical testing to quick, real life scenarios

#7



Be ruthless – if the candidate isn't right, move on

#8



Have questions ready to analyze culture fit

#9



Consistently keep in contact with candidates throughout the process

#10



Be prepared to make a competitive offer

#11



And finally...

If you meet the ideal candidate, offer them the job before they leave!

11

Deadline Inspiration

If you meet the ideal candidate, offer them the job before they leave.

Give the candidate 24 hours to accept your offer. This limits the time they have to negotiate other offers and will allow you to move on quickly if they decide to go in a different direction.

Overall, this process should be an exciting one, overflowing with opportunities to make your organization better. Allow yourself to feel the excitement, and feed off the energy of your candidates. This will propel you forward and create an eagerness to reach the finish line.

You know your company, you know what you're looking for, and you have the ability to create the team of your dreams.



About Roth Staffing Companies

At Roth Staffing, we live our Purpose in all that we do. The Founder of our company set out on a quest to define our company's Purpose. In 2001, he asked all employees to answer "what are we the best in the world at?" and "what are you most passionate about?" He combed through the answers and found some consistencies. While on the simplest level we find positions for job seekers and talent for businesses, we've found that our Purpose is "to make life better for the people we serve[®]," allowing our Ambassadors and clients to build their livelihood, impacting their lives for the better.

This spreads to our coworkers, making us one of the most engaged workplaces in North America. We use this engagement to better serve our Clients, and we are honored to live our purpose through your business.

Roth Staffing has five specialized staffing business lines: Ultimate Staffing Services, Ledgent Finance & Accounting, Adams & Martin Group, Ledgent Technology, and About Talent.

Our Awards



View our entire list here...



rothstaffing.com