

Hiring Candidates with Potential



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The most obvious solution for an IT employer adding to their team is to hire the person that aligns most closely with the criteria for the role. And with recent global events affecting economic security, many employers are understandably keen to have as much certainty around hiring decisions as possible.

As an IT recruitment agency, we are constantly on the lookout for candidates with sought-after skillsets and experience, but this is never the full story for us. We advocate for a more holistic approach with our clients, recognising that past successes don't always predict future performance – or automatically qualify someone for a role.

Sometimes, **finding the ideal candidate** requires looking beyond the obvious choices and recognising candidates that have the potential to add value to the business in the longer term.

Hiring candidates with potential allows you to expand your talent pool, reduce salary costs and grow your pipeline of future leaders – all hugely relevant benefits in today's market. With this in mind, here is our advice on how to identify and recruit candidates with potential.

Hiring Candidates With Potential - A 5-Step Guide

1. Expand Your Talent Pool

Potential is described as the capacity to grow, improve and develop into something in the future. When hiring candidates with potential rather than simply hiring for experience, it's important to expand the initial search parameters before you even begin to review CVs. This will help to bring new candidates into the mix who may not have previously made the cut due to some areas of their experience not matching the role requirements.

2. Review the Evidence

Once you have an expanded pool, there are several opportunities to identify potential during the recruitment process: the CV review, the interview and the references.

When faced with just a resume, it can be very challenging to spot candidates that are likely to continue growing and developing their existing skills.

3. What the Resumé Really Tells You

There are a few tell-tale signs that can indicate a candidate has potential when you're considering experience vs. ability. These include:

- Examples of learning new skills, such as by completing in-house training in the past.
- A commitment to improving the way things are done rather than sticking with the status quo.
- Instances where they have overcome challenges or hurdles in their job.
- Quantifiable results, such as direct contributions to team or business goals.

4. Getting the Right Response at Interview

Likewise, you can look for similar signs during the interview stage, but there are often more opportunities to recognise them or probe for further details. It's also important to ask the right questions to help identify the **core attributes of IT professionals with potential**, such as passion, grit, determination and self-belief. Questions to consider include:

- Those relating to the company and its values, which can show whether a candidate has come prepared. E.g. "Do you resonate with one of our values in particular, and why?"
- Questions that focus on the candidate's goals and ambitions. E.g. "Where do you see yourself in five years from now?"
- Industry-related questions to assess whether the candidate keeps up-to-date with industry developments. E.g. "What is your opinion on this new innovation/event?"
- Questions about the candidate's real-world experience. E.g. "Describe a time when you encountered a problem in a job. What was the result, and would you do anything differently next time?"

5. Taking A Detailed Reference

If you're still unsure whether a specific candidate has the potential required to succeed in your organisation, speaking to people that they have previously worked with will provide added insights to help you make your decision. In this scenario, it can be helpful to provide the referee with an overview of the role the candidate is expected to perform and the future goals associated with. This way, the referee can provide feedback on the candidate that is specific to the challenges they may face.

Summary

Hiring candidates with potential successfully is no easy task, which is why many IT employers' resort to looking for the exact experience needed at the time rather than thinking long-term. By changing your hiring strategy, you can equip your organisation with talented, engaged employees that will continue to grow, add value and build quality leadership well into the future.

If hiring IT professionals with potential is the best approach for your business, partnering with a specialist IT recruitment agency will give you the support you need to succeed. For more information on how we can help, feel free to **get in touch with the team** at Sourced.

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