



PETRA PEOPLE

SEVEN STEPS TO RECRUIT (AND RETAIN) AN
ALL-STAR TEAM



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LIFE LESSONS for BUSINESS OWNERS

Building an all-star team is one of the biggest challenges business leaders face. Nothing affects your company's growth and culture more than the people you hire and retain. Competitors can imitate your products, services or processes, but they can never exactly duplicate your team, how you manage it and how you take care of your people.^a

Some businesses get hiring right, while most others get it wrong. In fact, a McKinsey & Company study found that "82% of companies don't believe they recruit highly talented people" and that only 7% think they can retain those executives.

As an entrepreneur, I've done a share of hiring since I founded my first business in my 20s, and I learned a lot of lessons along the way. As a result, I can say categorically that designing an effective system to identify, hire and retain A-players is critical if you're serious about growing your company.

Here are seven tips to help build the dream team that can carry your company forward:

1. STANDARDIZE YOUR HIRING PROCESS.

Having standardized processes are essential to business efficiency and success, and hiring is no exception. When designing your hiring process, create a scorecard for every role you are looking to fill. Detail the skills and competencies required to succeed in the role and what constitutes an exceptional team member. Then, look carefully at the amount of time candidates will be interviewed, the questions they will be asked and the content of any tests they will be required to pass. Also, be sure to include a description of how each role should mesh with the company's culture, mission and core values. When designed properly, a standardized hiring and interview process leads to exceptional hiring decisions.

2. PLAN FOR THE FUTURE.

Business leaders should always envision what their company will look like in the long-term and build one-, two- and three-year staffing road maps based on projected growth. The road map allows leaders and their teams to take a step back, look at the business from a perspective other than sales (i.e., hiring), pinpoint any gaps in roles or responsibilities and identify the skills and experience needed to grow the company in the coming years. Like any form of investment, if you only plan for “right now,” your returns — if any — will be minimal. Make sure you’re hiring the right people to take you where you want to go.

3. SCREEN FOR SMARTS.

After you've determined the needs for each position, set up a screening process to rule out less-qualified candidates and highlight your potential star players. Have applicants complete a skills test related to the job, and if you're impressed with the results, conduct a phone interview with the candidate to get to know them better personally and professionally and discuss potential next steps. There are many ways to screen for the skills you're looking for in a potential team member, including personality tests to see if the candidate's attributes line up with the job's duties and responsibilities. Do what makes sense for your business, and remember that the best processes will attract the right candidates and repel the wrong ones.

4. GET YOUR TEAM INVOLVED IN THE INTERVIEW PROCESS.

Make sure different members of your team — at all levels — have a chance to meet and interview candidates. Getting buy-in from the people who will be working with that candidate day in and day out is critical and will help you make the best decision. Your team can shed light on how candidates might fit in with the company culture and their ability to thrive in the ebb and flow of daily operations. Your team will also be able to point to any inconsistencies that may pop up during the interview.

5. INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF TIME YOU SPEND HIRING.

The first question I ask business leaders when I'm working with them on recruiting and hiring is: “How much time, in general, do you spend interviewing, testing and researching a candidate before you hire him or her?” The answers vary, but they're always surprisingly low. That boggles my mind because, based on the hours we spend at work, managers could very well end up spending more time with their team members than with their own family. Think of hiring in that context, and the decision becomes even more important. I recommend that business leaders take the amount of time they spend on the hiring process and double it to ensure their decision is an informed one.

6. CREATE A STANDBY LIST OF CANDIDATES.

"Always be closing" is burned into the memory of every salesperson. When building a company of A-list talent, business leaders should "always be recruiting." You never know when a key team member will leave the company or when you will need to hire new talent to satisfy growth opportunities. Based on the company's organizational chart and hiring road map, leaders can build a roster of candidates to contact when the need arises.

7. PUT YOUR PEOPLE FIRST EVERY TIME.

Even if you've got a perfect, fail-safe hiring process in place, it's not going to do you any good if you can't retain your top talent. You'll find yourself returning to zero, losing institutional knowledge and gaining a reputation as a place where employees don't stay — and that can be very expensive. Stay focused on culture. Get to know your team members personally. Invest time in making sure they are challenged, recognized for their achievements (through public and private praise, as well as compensation) and that they are given room and an environment to do their best work.

Richard Branson famously said, "Clients do not come first. Employees come first. If you take care of your employees, they will take care of the clients." Live by those words and retention will never be a problem. Investing in your team will be the most important time and money you spend. Get it right, and it will pay you back every time.

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THE PETRA EXPERIENCE

The Petra Experience is like a Mental Marathon of focused effort to create a specific set of priorities and a planned process to achieve them... as a team.

Looking to change your business life - forever?

The daily grind of growing a business is tough... it doesn't have to be that way. We work from our own business experiences while focusing on your business – as coach and an accountability partner. We implement the Petra Process in a way that ensures it “sticks” then we stay engaged to keep you on your path to success and less frustration. We don't want this to be just another thing you start – then it gets ignored and finally dies... let's stop that cycle in your business. The Petra Program 'clarifies' what is most important to be done – by whom, by when – **AND** creates an accountability structure to ensure **IT GETS DONE.**

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