

OkDork by
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7 steps to hiring an "A+" team member



7 steps to making your perfect hire

1. Create an exact list of their tasks

You want to hire someone. But what exactly do you want them to do?

This may sound simple, but it's a huge mistake most hiring managers make — even my friends with 7+ figure businesses, or your favorite Fortune 500 company.

You need to be 100% clear on EXACTLY what you need your ideal team member to achieve. Otherwise, you're setting your future team member (and yourself) up for failure.

To avoid making a failed hire, the first step in my hiring process is to write down a list of tasks I need the new hire to do.

2. Write a damn good job description

Here's the problem: Most hiring managers don't create specific requirements. As a result, they get tons of awful applicants, and spend hours sorting through the pile (only to find no one who fits). Waste of time.

To help you write an awesome job description, here's a super quick outline you can work with based on my Editor listing:

1. Start with a story: I realized I needed an Editor to make sure my content was next level. I opened up the job description with a story to illustrate.
2. What's the role: Editors make everything better and I was looking for someone to [turn my ugly-ass old posts](#) and notes into damn-sexy content.
3. What's in it for the applicant: Great people aren't just motivated by money, so I shared some other benefits of working with me.
4. Skills/Requirements: I covered all the technical stuff I was looking for, but also other requirements (like my want to work with someone who's fun to be around).
5. Tasks/Challenges: Challenges separate the stars from the flops. By including some simple tasks to complete in the application, I can weed out the losers immediately.

3. Set a simple task or challenge

At the bottom of my job descriptions, I always create a few simple challenge for applicants.

The reason is two-fold:

1. In my experience, applicants LOVE a quick challenge.
2. Filter out the weaklings.

Instead of wasting hours sorting through dozens of resumes that totally miss the mark, a small test can immediately disqualify some of your worst, most time-consuming candidates.

In the OkDork Editor job listing, I set three tasks for every applicant:

1. Include LinkedIn URL (in the specific format I asked)
2. Pick out 4 spelling / grammar mistakes
3. Email your application to editor@okdork.com

4. How to automatically find the best candidates that apply

A. Turn your tasks into questions

Before the wizardry and automation kicks in, you need to build questions for all the applicants who make it past your first quick screening into the second round.

Here are some questions from my Editor role:

- I want to update all OkDork articles, how would you prioritize this project?
- I started a podcast, my goal is 100k downloads per episode this year. What can we do to ensure I hit this goal?
- I want to interview Jeff Bezos of Amazon. How would you get ahold of him?

B. Add questions to a Google Form

Once I have the questions ready, I create a Google Form which will automatically send to everyone who makes it past the first screening.

C. Automatically message successful applicants in Gmail

Once you've written an email to send to applicants who've successfully made it past the first screening to round two, save it as a Canned Response. Then, create an automatic Gmail filter based on the Canned Response. Boom!

5. How to further filter your candidates

At this stage, you need to filter applicants based on how they handled questions in round two.

It's super important to do this without any bias, so the first thing I do is hide the names and identifiable information of applicants in the Google Forms results spreadsheet.

What I'm looking for here is:

- Binary answers: One word answers to open-ended questions (these people are removed)
- Ability to follow instructions: Who carefully followed what I'd asked
- Quality of answers: Who really put in effort and stands out (more on what I look for below)

6. Give the remaining applicants a real task

Picking a final candidate is often harder than narrowing down from 10,000 to 100 applicants. At this stage, all the candidates have followed directions and given quality answers. It's your job to pick one.

At this stage, I give each applicant a real task to complete.

For the OkDork Editor role, I set the task of taking my [Jason Fried podcast episode](#) and turning it into a blog post.

7. Organize a video call

The final step is a video call with each of the final applicants.

Our call gives me a chance to learn more about each candidate, why they're excited to work with me, and why they want this role.

I jokingly call it the "weirdo test" but it's important to speak with each candidate face-to-face before I decide who I'm going to work with. Every hire should take you one step closer to your goal — so spending the time to get the right candidate is critically important.

Want more tips on hiring and growing a business?

I was employee #30 at Facebook, and
I founded AppSumo and Sumo. I
know what it takes to grow and build
a business, and now I want to show
you.

Show me!