Dover

Building a hiring process

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Why create a hiring process?

The explosion in startup formation paired with The Great Resignation has created one of the most significant imbalances in supply and demand — you can't just be a great place to work or compensate well. You also have to know exactly who you need, when you need them, and how to run a swift and professional recruiting process to sign them.

A solid hiring process will help you:

1. avoid making costly mistakes,
2. help you better understand how you'll need to evaluate candidates throughout the process
3. reduce implicit bias throughout the interview process

In the early stages, when you're hiring from your network or internal referrals, you may be able to get away with not having a process in place. However, creating a culture of transparent and streamlined hiring early sets you up for success when you raise your first round of funding and need to scale quickly. It'll help you avoid making costly mistakes, and help you better understand how you'll need to evaluate candidates throughout the process. Putting in the work now means you won't be digging yourself out of a hole in the future.

Here are 6 key steps to build a process from the ground-up:

1. Draft a hiring plan for the next six months to a year.

A hiring plan with target metrics is an overall strategy that encompasses your startup's hiring goals and sets clear deadlines so everyone stays on track. You can assess this plan at a regular cadence to discuss blockers, give progress updates, and assess/approve new openings.

Your plan should:

- **Fully align with company strategy and goals** – i.e. positions outlined in the hiring plan should map to specific company goals and objectives. For example, if you want to increase your ARR MoM, it would make sense to build out your sales and customer success teams over the next year.
- **Detail the number and types of roles**
- **Include a budget for things like ads, recruiting fees and employee compensation**
- **Include a goal date for a hire to ensure you're on track**

On Dover's platform, we include an in-app hiring plan that allows you to track hiring needs and timelines for your company on a six-month or longer timespan. The plan prompts alerts, forecasts, and strategic suggestions so you're never behind.

2. Determine which stakeholders will be involved in the process.

After creating the hiring plan, you'll need to identify everyone in your organization, including external partners, who will be involved in the hiring process. This could include founders, internal or external recruiters, hiring managers, consultants.

From there, you'll need to assign roles and responsibilities, as well as assess bandwidth. n other words, if you need to hire several people quickly, does your current team have the capacity to take on the work involved? Or, do you need to partner with an agency to take on some or all of the hiring process in order to meet your timelines? It's important to consider the following questions for each open role:

- **How many interviews do you plan on having for this candidate?** At Dover, our standard includes a phone screen, two interviews, a take-home assessment, and an onsite that includes conversations with 5-6 stakeholders across different teams. Your needs will vary as you continue to grow and learn what's truly necessary when assessing candidates.
- **Who will be involved in each stage?** On our in-app hiring plan, we advise hiring managers to name everyone involved in the process before opening the role, ensuring that no one drops the ball at any point in the funnel.

3. Create a process to open a role.

When you realize you have a hiring need, you'll want to create a process for hiring managers to get approval, allocate budget and execute on an interview/recruiting strategy. The hiring leader discusses new requisition needs with the decision-maker whenever a department has a need to:

Though your process can differ based on your organization structure, it typically follows this pattern:

1. The hiring manager emails the decision-maker (at a smaller company, this is typically the CEO or CFO) to request a new open position — this is called a requisition form at more established companies, but at a startup it can be as simple as a Notion/Wiki/Airtable template. You can make this easy for all hiring managers to access.

It should include:

- Is this a new position, refill position, or temp position?
- Title
- Seniority level
- Who the person will report to
- Basic scope of the role/responsibilities/skillset required — attach job description if this is a refill for a past role
- Compensation benchmarks (you can use online tools like Glassdoor, or Option Impact to gauge the correct equity/comp bands for this role)
- Budget for job boards (Indeed, LinkedIn, etc.)
- The decision-maker approves or rejects

2. If approved, the requisition form is sent to HR (if you are a small team, this step may be handled by founders). It's helpful to attach a job description at this point if it is available. For help, check out Dover's Job Description e-book with examples from other top startups.

3. HR/Finance reviews the requisition form to verify that the job's responsibilities, necessary skills, and compensation match the open role, and suggest edits if necessary.

4. Once approved, the hiring manager is given all relevant information and begins launching the recruiting process.

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Hiring Plan

Title	Employee #	Hiring Manager	Launch Date	Goal Start Date	Status
Account Executive	1		11/15/21	01/17/22	On Track
Customer Support	8	Jane Smith	09/14/21	10/14/21	Completed
	9		10/14/21	01/03/22	On Track
Product Manager	1		11/24/21	12/31/21	Off track
Content Lead	1		09/20/21	12/06/21	Late
Senior Software Engineer	1		11/01/21	01/10/22	On Track
	2		11/01/21	01/31/22	Opportunistic
	3		12/06/21	02/14/22	On Track

4. Write a standard outline for your job descriptions.

Though each role will have its own set of requirements and responsibilities, you'll want to streamline a few key points that all ads should cover:

1. Your diversity, equity and inclusion statement statement
2. A paragraph about your company's mission
3. Your employee value proposition (the values that make up your culture)
4. Your benefits
5. Any notes on visa sponsorship, if applicable

Also, add a level of enthusiasm to show off your employer brand so that potential candidates get excited about possibly working for your company. Remember, the job description is the core of your job ad and it's the way you attract the talent you're looking for.

Here are some other potential considerations when writing your job descriptions:

- Will potential candidates apply on job boards or on your company site?
- Do you want resumes and cover letters only or do you want candidates to answer specific questions?
- Do you want candidates to submit links to their writing or content portfolios?
- What information is absolutely necessary for you to consider a candidate?
- Do you want to include screening questions to eliminate candidates who don't meet the minimum criteria?

Building a Workplace That Reflects Society

Equality is a core value at Salesforce. We believe that businesses can be powerful platforms for social change, and that it is our responsibility to further equality for all. Creating a culture of equality isn't just the right thing to do; it's also the smart thing. It empowers us to innovate, build deeper connections with our customers, and ultimately become a better company.

We strive to create a workplace that reflects the diverse communities around us and where everyone feels seen, heard, valued, and empowered to succeed. Clearly, there is more work to be done, but together we can build a more equal workplace and world for all.

5. Standardize and structure your interview process.

Traditional interview processes are flawed, and often poor judges of character with plenty of room for inserting your own confirmation bias, or the tendency to search for, interpret, favor, and recall information in a way that confirms or supports one's prior beliefs or values.

Think about it, when is the last time you answered the question: What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses? Tell me about a time you overcame a challenge at work? If you've been on the hunt for a job, probably recently.

Most interviewers ask these questions simply because they've heard them before. But, the more intentional and structured you are about your interview process, the better chances you'll have of landing a candidate who is the best fit for the job - aiding in attraction and retention.

Though our questions and assessments differ by the type of role and team we're hiring for, at Dover, we have a standardized set of steps that every candidate goes through, regardless of seniority, past experience, or source:

1. Remote phone screen
2. Second interview
3. Take-home assessment and portfolio review (if applicable)
4. Onsite interview process (covering behavioral assessments, technical assessments, and social fit)
5. Reference and background checks
6. Debriefs and blind assessments with all stakeholders involved
7. Offer or rejection

For an in-depth guide on running a solid interview process, check out our Ultimate Guide to Startup Hiring.

6. Define and document your recruiting metrics and interview notes.

Once you have a hiring plan in place, you'll need a place to track metrics, source candidates, and organize notes throughout the process. There are a multitude of options, but the most common are Applicant Tracking Systems (like Greenhouse, or Lever), external agencies, temp recruiters, or platforms like Dover, which combine the best of an ATS with a human-in-the-loop to manage your pipeline and optimize for efficiency and cost.

When assessing your hiring process specifically, you'll want to pay attention to two key metrics:

- **Time-to-hire**: If it's taking longer than three weeks to go from phone screen to onsite, or you're noticing a ton of candidate drop-off later in the funnel, you may have issues with follow-ups, or scheduling.

Consider: creating templates for rejections, next steps, and scheduling that you can copy/paste for various logistical parts of the process to eliminate bandwidth issues for the stakeholders involved.

- **Quality-of-hire**: If folks are joining your company and leaving after only a few months, or you find that they're not able to rise to the challenges your product presents from a technical standpoint, you're probably assessing the wrong skills during your onsite, or take-home assessment process. Additionally, you may want to add more questions that signal at a candidate's desire for longevity, like "Where do you want to be at 1 year into this role?"

Additionally, you should create a rubric that is used to assess candidates on a very strict set of criteria for phone screens, and technical assessments. Ideally, interviewers for later stages won't know the specifics about how well each candidate did in terms of the resume review and work sample. The goal is for the interview to become a third independent data point.

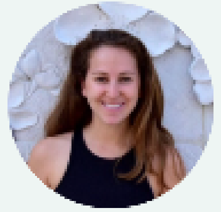
Dover

Looking to scale your team?

Dover is an end-to-end recruiting solution that helps high-growth teams achieve their hiring goals through automation and operational excellency.

Learn more at www.dover.com**.**

“**Working with Dover has meant we get support on all fronts**, and from every angle of recruiting including sourcing, optimal channel usage, and interview best practices.”



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Head of People Operations
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