A Beginner’s Guide to Technical Recruiting

by

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In this section we’ll review the fundamental aspects of technical recruiting you’ll want to understand before you start looking for candidates. Once you’ve mastered these basics you can then move on to finding the perfect candidate.
The fundamentals of technical recruiting revolve around the same principal all businesses strive for: Customer satisfaction!

The game is changed a bit in Technical Recruiting: You are asked to creatively match the needs, ethos and work of a company with the abilities of an individual.

Who are your customers? How do you satisfy them? The clients of your company are your customers and you need to send a perfect candidate for an open position that they need filled.

**Do you need to be an IT geek?**

While you may get a lot of job details full of technological buzz words that you might have never heard in your life, it is not that you have to learn the details of every single IT skill out there! It is enough to have some basic understanding of the terms that helps you in picking the right candidate for your client.

**Example:** your client is looking for a web developer who should have 3 years of experience in web development
technologies like html, Javascript, dhtml etc. The client says that the knowledge in Javascript is very important because he is going to be only working on creating various Javascript functions, writing code for client side validation etc.

It’s fine if you don’t understand what a client side validation is. You don’t need to know the definition of a function either. But there are some important things that you should know.

**Example:** You are busy searching in the job boards for a perfect candidate for that big gig. Suddenly you come across a profile that says that the candidate has 4 years of experience in Java and has worked in creating web pages using Adobe Dreamweaver. Is this the right profile for the client’s requirement?

Of course not. Java is not the same as Javascript. There are important distinctions between the two which your client is specifically looking for. Understanding that the world of Technical Recruiting is very specific is key. If a client says Javascript, they mean it.
It Is All About Making A Perfect Match

Here’s the game:

In one hand you have the criteria of the job you are trying to fill. In the other hand you have a list of résumé s. Your goal is to match one to the other. You win when the applicant you chose gets the position and the client benefits from their work. The most important thing in technical recruiting is to find the talent who perfectly matches the job’s description.

If the following requirements of a job opening match the experience of a candidate, give yourself a cookie because you just found a winner!

• Mandatory skills
• Years of relevant experience.
• Location preferences
• Preferred type of employment
• Work authorization
• Educational qualifications and certification preferences.
When a client has listed a skill as mandatory, you cannot compromise that skill. Usually a job requirement will need the candidate to have multiple skills, so it is very important to go through the candidate’s résumé to make sure that the candidate really possesses those skills.

In fact, the candidate should have provided an in-depth explanation about what project they did that requires the specific skill that the client requires. Simply having a skill listed may not be enough for a candidate to be considered.

An important note in years of relevant experience as well. The word ‘relevant’ is there for a reason. If a client is looking for midlevel Java developer, then the candidate who has 4 years of total IT experience and 2 years of experience in Java is not the right candidate! Because, he only has 2 years of relevant experience.

Location is an important factor as well. The United States is a very large country covering 4 different major time zones. If a job’s location is in Jersey City, New Jersey then the client may prefer a candidate who is local to New Jersey or the states nearby. It is ok to consider the candidates who want to relocate, but if a face to face interview with
the client is a must, then you need to confirm with the candidate if they are ready for it.

On the other end of the spectrum, a client may be willing to work with a remote employee in which case location won't matter, pure skill will be the more important determinant. As ever, the clients specification is key.
Fulltime jobs are direct hire by employers on their payroll. Consulting or Contract jobs are temporary assignments can go anywhere between 6 weeks to few years.

Why there is a need for temporary employees?

Technology software keeps changing, new versions are coming in and they are coping up with the new market demand. Moore’s Law states that technology increases at nearly an exponential rate. Companies will always have their core group of long-term employees, however, when a highly specific problem needs to be solved, companies hire consultants or contract workers. There is always a demand for temporary technology workers who are highly specialized and can solve problems and assist in upgrading the system..

Most of consulting and contracting positions requires someone to have joined yesterday so its highly demanding request to fulfill. Recruiters should always be prepared with pipeline of candidates and manage their current active candidate very closely. Another important factor to do is
do the follow-up with the consultant after they are hired and make sure they are meeting the clients expectations.

Try being proactive. Keep a number of consulting candidates prepared for a variety of tasks to allow yourself a prompt response to the needs of your clients.
Before you begin to analyze a job requirement, make sure you have all the necessary information from your client. If anything is missing, call them or email them to get the missing data.

While you don’t need to have consummate knowledge of each specific aspect of their work, develop as deep of an understanding as possible to ensure you produce quality results.

After the completion of the job requirement analysis, you should be able to answer the following questions:

1) Why does the requirement exist?
2) What kind of tasks have to be done by the employee?
3) When does the project start and when will it end?
4) Where is the job located?
5) What are the necessary qualifications that the employee needs to have to do this job?
6) Under what working conditions will the employee perform the job? (Things like temperature, lighting, noise etc.. Usually indoors for technical jobs)
7) What equipments are involved in doing this job?
8) How is the performance or success on the job is evaluated?

Generally, job requirement analysis may involve visiting the client’s site, viewing video recordings of the employees at work, looking at the safety and quality chart etc. But for normal IT requirements, such a deep analysis may not be necessary.

There is a Dictionary of Occupational Titles from which you can refer the descriptions for job titles and you can check it online at www.occupationalinfo.org

For example, the description of the QUALITY ASSURANCE ANALYST is given as the following:

“Evaluates and tests new or modified software programs and software development procedures used to verify that programs function according to user requirements and conform to establishment guidelines: Writes, revises, and verifies quality standards and test procedures for program design and product evaluation to attain quality of software economically and efficiently. Reviews new or modified program, including documentation, diagram, and flow chart, to determine if program will perform according to
user request and conform to guidelines. Recommends program improvements or corrections to programmers. Reviews computer operating log to identify program processing errors. Enters instructions into computer to test program for validity of results, accuracy, reliability, and conformance to establishment standards. Observes computer monitor screen during program test to detect error codes or interruption of program and corrects errors. Identifies differences between establishment standards and user applications and suggests modifications to conform to standards. Sets up tests at request of user to locate and correct program operating error following installation of program. Conducts compatibility tests with vendor-provided programs. Monitors program performance after implementation to prevent reoccurrence of program operating problems and ensure efficiency of operation. Writes documentation to describe program evaluation, testing, and correction. May evaluate proposed software or software enhancement for feasibility. May develop utility program to test, track, and verify defects in software program. May write programs to create new procedures or modify existing procedures. May train software program users.”
O*Net is another great place online which has a database of occupations and its description. It is more widely used than DOT (Dictionary of Occupational Titles which we saw before). You can access O*Net at http://online.onetcenter.org/

You can look at the analysis given for Quality assistance engineer here:

http://online.onetcenter.org/link/summary/15-1099.01

The O*Net analysis lists the following details:

- Tasks
- Tools & Technology
- Knowledge
- Skills
- Abilities
- Work Activities
- Work Context
- Job Zone
- Education
- Interests
For example, the following are the tasks listed at O*Net for Quality Assurance Engineer:

- Design test plans, scenarios, scripts, or procedures.
- Test system modifications to prepare for implementation.
- Develop testing programs that address areas such as database impacts, software scenarios, regression testing, negative testing, error or bug retests, or usability.
- Document software defects, using a bug tracking system, and report defects to software developers.
- Identify, analyze, and document problems with program function, output, online screen, or content.
- Monitor bug resolution efforts and track successes.
- Create or maintain databases of known test defects.
- Plan test schedules or strategies in accordance with project scope or delivery dates.
- Participate in product design reviews to provide input on functional requirements, product designs, schedules, or potential problems.
• Review software documentation to ensure technical accuracy, compliance, or completeness, or to mitigate risks.

There are various job analysis methods in the form of questionnaires. The popular ones are Position Analysis Questionnaire, Functional job analysis and Fleishman Job Analysis System. The pdf files for the questionnaires can be downloaded online.

Also check the sample job descriptions online for the job title of the requirement you are working on, before you start to write your job description. At the same time, try to make your job description as unique as possible.

Job requirement can be for two purposes, either for contract or direct hire.

For contract requirement the candidate should have all the mandatory as well as desired skills.

Direct hire requirement depends upon the position and the company; there may be little flexibility here. Since it’s a long-term commitment and an employer-employee relationship, putting forward a candidate who displays a strong cooperative or team-based skills may be preferable to one who has the “right” résumé.
For a contract requirement, there is no room for learning and the consultant will be under high pressure for meeting the deadline with quality results. The expectation of the client is to get complete efficiency from day one. When the client shortlists the candidate, only the best of everyone will be hired.

The roadmap for sourcing the best candidate starts from the requirements. The requirements can be divided into two parts, explicit requirements and implicit requirements.

Explicit requirements are skills, experience level, duration of the project, location, expected start date etc.

Implicit requirements are communication and personal skills. Sometimes the explicit requirements may not be available with the job requirement. It’s best to clarify with the client but sometimes the common sense approach will work.

**What to look for on the job requirement?**

**Title of the Job:** This provides a good visibility of the type of requirement. Eg: Programmer Analyst, Data Base administrator, Senior developer...
**Experience Level:** Part of this information can be found in the job title. If the title is says “Sr” then the candidate should have at least 5 years of relevant experience. There is a possibility to ask for midlevel or senior. In this case the expectation of the client should be interpreted as 3-5 years of relevant experience. Candidates with 6 years of total experience and 3 years of relevant experience should be considered as only midlevel candidate. In some cases, if the candidate has markedly similar experience or has almost done the same job in a different company they may be hired even if their experience is only 3 years. So finding the best profile to perform the required job duties are the key for increasing your success rate.

**Mandatory skills:** This is directly related to the individual’s specialized skills and related experience. The candidate should have the required experience for all the mandatory skills. Having simple keywords on the résumé will not suffice. Sometimes the keywords in the job requirement may not directly reflect the actual skill, you may want to search on the web and find out alternate keywords. Eg: “SSRS” is key word for “SQL server Reporting services”. Searching résumé s for SSRS may not yield the results of candidates who mentioned “SQL Server Reporting Services”. Similarly some clients even mention very small
tools while many other candidates may omit that tool seeing it as very common and not worth mentioning in the résumé. It may not be possible to know all the skills and keywords in the technical recruiting world. So the best approach will be to work with the client as well as the candidate and understand the requirements for better match making.

**Location:** In the United States location is one of the important factors to be considered. Cultural difference, weather and relocation cost all inform the importance of location.

**Job description:** Finding the best résumé can be fine tuned if there is a better understanding of the requirements. When you understand the job requirement better, then you can write a better job descriptions which will result in finding the right candidates.
Finding Potential Candidates

In this section we’ll discuss the process of gathering résumé s and searching for your top-notch candidates.
The objective of the job ad is to attract the right candidates and encourage them to submit their résumé. The job ad is one way communication to the job seeker about what the company is looking for and why this would be the best career opportunity for them. Also the ad should discourage the job seekers who are not likely to be considered at all.

While working on a job opening, the most time consuming task in the process is to sort through the tons of job seeker résumés to find the few relevant matches. This can become more frustrating when your job advertisement is inaccurate or misleading.

The worst situation arises when all the résumés you get are totally irrelevant for your job requirement.

**How do you solve this problem?**

Here are some tips to help you construct your job advertisement so that it targets only the right candidates.

1. Use a job title that a job seeker is likely to search for; not the internal job title that you are likely to use. The
title is the attention grabber and entry point for the job seeker to read your full description.

2. Don’t use generic words since they can be misleading. If there is a more specific term use it to achieve optimal results.

Eg: Do not use “Software developer” instead “Java Developer with Unix background” this title will easily encourage the right candidate and discourage someone who does not have the relevant background.

3. Always list the responsibilities of the job. A job advertisement that only lists the job title, location, pay rate and essential skills is usually ignored or misunderstood.

4. Don’t use a lot of insider buzz words. Use the words that are commonly known to the candidates.

5. Use bulleted lists to explain the roles of the job. Paragraphs often go unread.

   a. This short and crisp list will guide the job seeker to match the job need and their experience, remember instead of matching the job description to the résumé by you, the candidate is doing the work you. You can save time and energy.

How to Attract the Right Candidates for Job Advertisements?
6. Mention clearly the steps that the job seeker needs to follow to apply for your position.

7. When you expect multiple skills, always mention whether you want a combination of those skills or if any single skill would suffice.

8. Be clear about which skills are mandatory and which ones are optional.

9. Include your company information and a brief introduction. This will add more reliability to the advertisement.

10. Explain clearly about the benefits of the job and the positive aspects.

11. Make sure that your job advertisement complies with discrimination legislation and avoid any discriminatory description or job title.

12. Discourage applications from candidates who are not qualified. It will help to reduce the number of irrelevant applicants.

Job Description priority can flow as follows:

Job Title

Description in priority

- High level roll of the job
- Location of the position
• Minimum experience level (include if there is a flexibility)
• Proposed pay range
• Roles & Responsibilities
• Career growth opportunities
• About the company
• Why the candidate should apply

Finally, remember that a job advertisement works similar to any advertisement for a product or a service. The advertisement must be approachable, convincing and informative.
Job portals are websites which allow you to post jobs in order to make them visible to a wide audience. They also have a database of résumé s that you can search. They are powerful tools for both posting your jobs and searching for résumé s.

Some job portals are region specific; a specific country, state or a city. There are also job portals which are specific to a field, for e.g. Corp-corp.com is a job portal specifically for technology jobs.

Job portals are beneficial to both job seekers and recruiters. A candidate posts his résumé and searches for open positions. A recruiter posts his requirements and searches for best candidates for his position.

Usually the job portals allow candidates to upload the résumé s for free and may charge the candidate if he/she opts for some extra advertising. The recruiters will have to pay for posting the position and searching the résumé database. There are some free job portals around but they lack the features and quality of the paid services. If you are active in recruiting it is necessary to get a paid subscription in a good job portal.
Job portals also utilize site-specific search engines to streamline your results. They allow you to sort the search by date posted, relevancy etc. The jobs posted in the job portals are also indexed in job search engines and the internet search engines like Google.

**Here are some guidelines to make the best use of the job portals as a recruiter:**

- Create a detailed job description which clearly states the necessary qualifications and the responsibilities of the job and post it in the right category.

- Make sure you have the right preferences set for the visibility of your contact details. For e.g. If you prefer not to receive calls and get the résumés only through emails, then there should be an option in the job board to set it.

- Create a catchy title and make the first paragraph of your job description interesting and clear. Only the title and the first few lines of the job description are shown in the search results.

- Use relevant keywords in your job description. This will help a user who is searching in Google to find your job.
o Make sure that you have the email preferences set to receive notifications when someone applies for your job.

o Apart from posting the requirements, actively search for résumé s to find the passive candidates who are suitable for your job.

o Update your job if necessary. Older jobs may be pushed back in the search results or a candidate may think that your requirement has already been filled and may not apply for your requirement.

o Remove your job from the job boards once the position is filled. This will avoid unnecessary calls and will help the job portals to serve you better.

It is important to choose a good job portal for the primary use. A good job portal should save your time and should have necessary tools to find what you are looking for.

Also, don’t ask how many résumé s a job portal has and make a decision based on the number. You should give more importance to the quality and specificity when it comes to choosing a good job portal.
Apart from using internal database and job portals like corp-corp.com, using social media works very well for sourcing candidates. The best thing to do will be posting a job in the portal and promoting the public url of the job in the social media sites.

Here are some tips to harness the full power of social media. You can source candidates more quickly than ever before using the combined power of social media and corp-corp.com.

Social media not only helps you to source candidates but you can also use these sites to do some background checks about the candidates. Almost everyone has profiles in one of these social media sites and you can know more from them from their public profiles on these sites.

There are three social media sites which are more useful for recruiting than others. They are Linkedin, Twitter and Facebook.

Linkedin is the ultimate source of candidates. By now, there should be nearly 80 million profiles in Linkedin. While profiles in other social media sites exist for personal communications, the sole purposes of Linkedin profiles
are job seeking and for building a professional network. There are a lot of groups that you can join to promote your job. However, when posting jobs, never enter your email address or phone number, since it leads to spam and abuse. Instead, post the public url of the job and let the candidate apply from there. You can also ask the candidates to pm you, but if you care more for privacy and have set not to allow private messages from everyone, then posting the job’s url will be the best option.

Twitter can be used to promote your jobs, promote yourself as a recruiter and promote your company. You follow the same rules as you do in Linkedin except that all your postings can only be up to 140 characters. Twitjobsearch.com is job search engine which indexes jobs from the tweets. While posting a job, it will ask you to enter the public url where the job is posted. List the url of the job from corp-corp.com.

Many people don’t use Twitter as much as they use the other such sites because they don’t really understand how it works. Twitter is essentially a networking tool where you are allowed create posts up to 140 characters. That is why it is called as a micro-blogging service. Managing your followers on twitter is important. You can create a huge
number of followers but if many of them are automated followers your reach is still limited. Your tweets are also permanent. All the tweets get indexed in search engines, searchable using hash tags and from http://search.twitter.com. In fact, if you use these search engines, you will often see tweets from people mentioning that they are looking for a job.

The statistics from the Facebook says the following:

- More than 500 million active users
- 50% of our active users log on to Facebook in any given day
- Average user has 130 friends
- People spend over 700 billion minutes per month on Facebook

Facebook is the most powerful site among the social media websites though most of the people use it only for personal purposes. You can still reach many good candidates from Facebook. It is also a great way to promote your company. You can also ask the short listed candidate to visit the Facebook page of your company and the client’s company to appear more reliable to the candidate.
Realize, though, that each site is used differently by its clientele. Facebook users are generally not searching for jobs. While their profiles may be edited to ensure a potential employer sees the right things, they most likely use it to stay in touch with friends. Linked-In, on the other hand, is used precisely for networking. However, it is not as ubiquitous as Facebook. Twitter is a mixed bag. Many people use it as a networking tool while many others use it more similarly to Facebook’s status updates. Assess your needs and maximize the return on your efforts.
Vendor Management Systems

Vendor management system is software that is used by direct clients as well as recruiting or staffing companies to manage their vendors. It is often a web based application which comes with a lot of tools and business intelligence.

There are nearly 100 VMS providers in United States and they started to appear in the market in 1997. A VMS application holds essential benefits for an employer or staffing company. Vendor management systems grants the ability to intelligently manage labor cost and the relationship with vendors through the internet.

It is important to keep certain things in mind when choosing a VMS. First, we need to understand that VMS is not just a portal and it has some unique features that a portal doesn’t have.

A VMS allows you to do the following:

- A client can enter job orders, route them throughout the organization until it is approved and then notify a vendor about the order.
- The job order is held for a period of time to check if they can get candidates from their internal resources. E.g., Their HR department may be able to get a candidate
for the position without having to outsource it. If candidates can’t be found this way then the orders are sent to tier 1 vendors. If the position is still not filled, then they are sent to tier 2 vendors. A VMS automates this complex process.

- VMS gives an easy way to manage new hires to notify IT, finance and admin departments to make the necessary arrangements.

- VMS generates reports about the vendors and their performance. It helps employers to decide who can quickly fill the position with the best bill rate.
Passive Recruiting explained

Passive recruiting doesn’t mean what the name suggests. It is nothing but recruiting candidates who are not currently looking for a job.

We pursue passive candidates as their status implies that they are talented employees. The challenge in recruiting passive candidates is you have to prove that the job you are offering to the candidate is really better than the job they are already working on. You should have a full understanding of the job and its benefits so that you will be able to explain it well enough to the candidate.

You get to know most of the passive candidates through referrals and sources like data mining. You will have to cold call them and talk to them about the opportunity and often, your call may not be welcomed. You can also find passive candidates in online networking groups and social media sites like LinkedIn.

You should also increase your visibility in online forums and blogs. By doing this, you may get more new contacts and it will be easy to approach people whom you already know.
How to cold call passive candidates?

Before you call them, make sure that you have enough information. Knowing the background of the candidate and his current job responsibilities will be helpful.

If they are referred by someone, it will be a little easier to begin the call and often the candidate may be willing to hear more about the job offer since he or she was referred by his/her friend. If the person who referred the candidate didn’t want to reveal his or her identity, you will have to handle the question ‘how you got my name?’ by explaining the candidate that you will have to keep the name of the referral confidential.

Cold Call Tips

Keep the timing of you call appropriate. Try to call when you will be received well and not asked to call again later.

Be conversational and engaging, success is more likely if you develop a rapport with the candidate

Project confidence that your position is the best for the candidate.
While you make sure that you list all the advantages of the position, always let the candidate know about any drawbacks. Example: Having to relocate, having to work in night shifts etc. When you say this it shouldn’t sound like you are telling him about a disadvantage of the job. Instead, show that you care for the candidate’s own well being and ask if he will be comfortable with these things as well. This is necessary because you need to show the candidate that you are helpful rather than being someone who is trying to push the job offer.

**If the candidate is not interested, ask for these two things.**

1. References
2. Whether the candidate will be open for any future offers.
Selecting the Right Candidate

Now we’ll discuss what you do when you’ve gathered you potential candidates and are ready to make the tough call.
Whittling down the résumé pool is one of the most time consuming yet important tasks. Attention to detail will make the difference between short listing a well-written résumé representing a mediocre client or a well-written résumé representing a truly worthy individual.

Before we go further on how to sort through and select the résumé s for the interview, let’s talk about the job application from a candidate’s point of view.

A candidate who is desperate to find another job is likely to send bulk applications to various job offers. Also, it takes much less time to apply for a job and many job seekers may try for a job opening even if they aren’t likely to get an interview.

Job seekers may also apply for jobs to test themselves for the eligibility of the job. There are others who apply for your job simply because they have misunderstood the job description. For example: technical helpdesk support can be misunderstood as a requirement for telemarketing if the job seekers don’t pay attention to the job description.

A job seeker may also consider your job offer as their last
option. Such people may hardly show up for the interview or reject the offer after the interview.

All told, the résumé review process isn’t about finding the right candidate. The process is more about whittling down the potential interviews – where the tough decisions will be made.

**What are the symptoms of an unqualified résumé?**

There are few signs in a résumé which indicate to you that the résumé you are looking at is not the winner. If you find more than one of the following is true in a résumé, then you will be better off putting that résumé away and go for the next one.

**1) A generic cover letter**

A generic cover letter that isn’t targeted for your company or the position is often a sign of bulk application. Someone who has applied for the job out of a genuine interest to work with that company will definitely write a custom cover letter. While you can’t decide based only on this alone, it is important to consider this when you have to make a choice between two résumé s. An interested candidate would have taken his time to research the company and the position in order to craft a more engaging cover letter.
2) Frequent hops between companies

A candidate who has changed his job three times in two years time has a problem. He may not have a good roadmap for his career and may change his mind anytime when he hears about another job offer that is better than the current job. At the same time, you should also understand that there could be other reasons for the hops such as the relocation of the family, personal problems and more. This is not applicable to consultants or contract professionals, they usually work for short term and change the projects once they finish the contract. If you see already see another problem in the résumé along with the frequent changes in the career, then it should give a hint that helps you to decide.

3) Insufficient details in work experience

If you are looking for a person who has strong work experience in number of skills, then you will have to carefully look at the job responsibilities that the candidate had in his previous jobs. This is important because the job title ‘Database administrator’ doesn’t always mean that he has all the responsibilities of a database administrator in his previous job.
If the candidate has mentioned a work experience without providing clear details of the responsibilities, you should give less consideration to that work experience. If you find insufficient details in more than one position in the total work experience give less credence to that candidate.

4) Poor English

Writing skills for IT positions aren’t top priority. However, if a candidate displays poor skills you can assume one of two things:

- A candidate has his own time for writing a résumé. A really careful candidate would have taken his time to ensure that his résumé doesn’t have any grammar or spelling errors.
- Once a candidate is on the job, he will have to communicate with people during the business meetings and he should be able to express his ideas on his work very clearly. A candidate with a week English may not feel comfortable to work in a job that needs a lot of interaction with others.
Candidate evaluation is the process that determines if a candidate is suitable for the job by going through his/her résumé as well as through the interview.

A candidate’s past performance is the best indication of how a candidate will perform in the future. The history of the candidate, including his educational qualifications and professional experience is well explained in the résumé so it is the first thing that you use when evaluating a candidate.

It is also important to check the attitude and behavioral skills of the candidate which can be done using phone and face to face interviews.

Here’s a quick guide of what to look for when trying to evaluate a candidate.

**The Candidate:**

a) Meets the job requirement
b) Exceeds the expectations of the job requirement
c) Doesn’t meet the expectations of the job requirement
d) Not applicable to the job requirement.
Mark the Strength of each category

1) Education 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2) Relevant job experience 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
3) Supervisory experience 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
4) Technical skills 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
5) Interpersonal skills 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
6) Motivation 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
7) Strengths 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
8) Weaknesses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
9) Communication skills 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
10) Knowledge about the company 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
11) Being a team player 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
12) Time management 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
13) Salary expectations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

More elaborate candidate evaluation forms are used in job interviews to evaluate the candidates. The questions asked in the interview are based upon the above list. Sample candidate evaluation forms can be downloaded from many web pages.
How to conduct Phone Interviews

Conducting interviews over the phone is the best way to narrow the large pool of candidates whose résumés have been shortlisted. Before inviting candidates for a job interview, a telephone interview is desirable so that you save both the your own and the candidate’s time.

While conducting the phone interviews, remember to follow normal telephone etiquettes. The candidate doesn’t see your face so they get the impression about your company on hearing your voice, tone and the telephone manners. Whether you are successful in hiring the candidate depends heavily on the impression that you make.

Before the phone interview:

Collect all relevant information and have the candidate’s résumé ready with you.

Prepare your questions, have them written down and ready.

Place yourself in the candidates shoes, think of questions they might ask you.
During the Call:

Be prompt
Clear all distractions
Ensure you wont be interrupted by visitors or phone calls

Taking precautions to avoid these distractions and disturbances are necessary for these two reasons:

1) If distracted, you may need to make the candidate wait on the line or reschedule the interview another time. You don’t have full control over the situation while on the phone and there is no guarantee that you will be able to reach the candidate quickly again.

2) Distractions for sure affect the flow of thought for you and for the candidate. You may forget to ask an important question and may miss important information that the candidate would want to let you know.

Don’t simply listen, pay attention. Don’t let any breaks in the conversation. Be loud and clear.

Keep yourself smiling during the entire phone call. You may think that this is not necessary since the person at the other end cannot see you. But it is not true. Your smile very clearly affects the tone of your voice. You can try this experiment with one your friends; make one call without
smiling and another one with a smile. Ask your friend about the difference between the true and you will be surprised with the reply.

While you take the time to evaluate, give the candidate opportunity to evaluate the job and company so that he can decide if the job requirement is really right for him. There is no use in trying to hire a candidate who would drop out at the last minute of the process.
Reference checks and background verification are usually the final stages yet remain an important part in the process of recruiting a candidate. It helps to make sure that you are hiring the right candidate by interviewing the people who know the candidate and by checking the past records of the candidate.

Reference checks may be performed by the client, outsourced to a staffing agency or a third party agencies that specialize in doing background checks.

The best person to give a feedback about the candidate is a person who managed the candidate in his/her previous employment. You need to get the contact details of such people from the candidate, contact those people and probe them to get information about the candidate. It’s also important to interview someone who has managed the individual in question, not worked with them. Colleagues are generally more biased than bosses when asked for a reference.

Assuming that the name of the candidate is Paul, here are the questions that you can ask for the employment references:
• Do you know Paul?
• How long do you know Paul and which position was he holding in the company?
• Did you directly manage Paul?
• What were Paul’s job responsibilities?
• How Paul does handles stress and pressure?
• Will you hire Paul again/prefer to have you in your team if there is such an opportunity? If not, why?
• Would you like to tell me anything else about Paul’s work at your company?

Apart from employment references, there are other checks that might need to be done depending on the company that is hiring: Criminal History Report, Credit History, Identity and Address Verification etc. These are collectively termed as background checks.

**Why does an employer need to do reference and background checks?**

You must perform these checks in order to determine the validity of the information provided.

First of all, how do you know Paul is actually Paul? A proper background check and reference check is necessary
to really make sure that what you have heard from the candidate is actually true.

It may also be necessary as it helps to know if the candidate needs any training prior to starting his work. If the Paul’s previous employer says that he has technical expertise but is not really good in communication, then as an employer you may want to provide some short training sessions to improve Paul’s communication skills.
Here we’ll cover some of the end-game aspects of Technical Recruiting as well as the one thing no one can avoid: Taxes
The résumé is a virtual candidate. It should speak on behalf of the candidate. When someone visits a website for the first time, they’ll only stay if there is something enticing on the first page to go to the next page. Similarly, when the client screens the résumé, the first page should hold the attention and tempt to take deep dive on the résumé.

If the client reads the résumé completely then the recruiter had 50% success, if the client is interested in talking to the candidate then the success rate is 75%, the remaining 25% is with the candidate’s interview performance and meet the client’s expectation. Without 100% success all the effort put fourth will not bring any value to the client, vendor or the company.

Remember, the recruiter increases the credibility of the submission, only if the client shortlists the résumé and calls for the interview.

As such, the clever recruiter should view presenting the candidate’s résumé as if they were presenting their own. Take the time to edit and help construct their résumé to ensure success.
Résumé Building Tips

• Keep it brief - 3 pages will be ideal and the maximum will be 4.

• Don’t leave the text too crowded. Leave white space as needed.

• Use a standard font with 10 pt size will be ideal. Using fancy fonts or using a font size which is either too low or too high is not advisable.

• Use bulleted text as necessary to make the reading easier.

• Experience list must be in reverse chronological order, the latest experience first.

• Keep the format simple; avoid special boxes, shading, columns/tables, and pictures. Simple clean résumé s in a Word or Rich Text Format will be the most well received.

• Duration of the project, month and year will be more appropriate. If there is a gap between projects, provide a brief explanation.

• Check for spelling, grammar and punctuation errors and correct them.
Order of the information in the résumé

- **CONTACT INFO** - Include your full name, address, phone and email. Don’t include current work contact info if you don’t want to be called at work.

- **OBJECTIVE** - This doesn’t always need to be included but if it is, it should reference the job you are applying for. Making this generic could lead to confusion on the part of the résumé screener.

- **CAREER/ACHIEVEMENT SUMMARY** - Our clients seem to like this brief summary. It should be no more than 5 lines or bullet points. This is also a place to list your career achievements if they apply to the job you are applying for. This needs to be to the point and descriptive, it will entice the screener to read further.

- **TECHNICAL SUMMARY** - This should be a listing of your technical skills, but keep it limited, no laundry lists here. Break down your skills into hardware, software, languages, applications, OS, protocols, databases, etc. Number of years in each area should be included as well.- ie Java (3 yrs), C++ (5 yrs). If you have done certifications in this area, include them.

- **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE** - For each position, list (in reverse chronological history) company, location, periods of employment (mm/yyyy) and title. In your description of the job/project: briefly describe the
projects you worked on, daily activities etc. In describing your specific responsibilities, use the action words we know very well (managed, created, led, developed, interfaced, etc.). In addition, our technical clients like to see action words associated with the software development lifecycle (analyzed, designed, developed, tested, implemented, maintained, supported etc).

- **EDUCATION/TRAINING** - Include degrees, certifications and training.
IT contract jobs have three main classifications. They are W2, 1099 and corp-corp. Let us first look into the simple definitions of these three.

If you are an individual, provide IT services to a company, bill the company for the services and handle the taxes that you need to pay on your own then you are a 1099 contractor.

If the company takes you in their pay roll, you work as their employee and the company pays the taxes for you, then you are into a w2 contract.

If you are a corporation and provide IT services to another corporation and bill them for the services you provide then it will be a corp-corp contract.

**W2 Contracts**

W2 contract can be further classified into W2 Hourly and W2 Annually. W2 Hourly jobs pay the employees on hourly basis and they receive their salary weekly, bi-weekly or monthly. W2 Annually jobs pay the employees twice in a month.
The employer will have to fill up a W2 tax form for which employee that have hired. The form w2 will have the report of salary given to an employee in the calendar year.

**A W2 form has 6 copies:**

- **Copy A** - Submitted by the employer to the Social Security Administration. (In addition, the employer must also submit Form W-3, which is a summary of all Forms W-2 completed, along with all Copies A submitted. The Form W-3 must be signed by the employer.)

- **Copy B** - To be sent to the employee and filed by the employee with the employee’s federal income tax returns.

- **Copy C** - To be sent to the employee, to be retained by the employee for the employee’s records.

- **Copy D** - To be retained by the employer, for the employer’s records.

- **Copy 1** - Submitted by the employer to the employee’s state or local taxing authority as required by law. Some tax jurisdictions do not require a copy of the W-2 to be sent to them.

- **Copy 2** - To be filed with the employee’s state or local income tax returns (if any).
W2 is considered as the simplest option to choose and it really doesn’t require you to understand all the complexities in paying tax. W2 employees are eligible for benefits like Medical benefits, Vision benefits, Dental benefits, Life Insurance benefits etc. But these employees generally pay more tax than 1099 contractors.

1099 Contracts

1099 contracts is self-employment. It requires complex accounting and book keeping. As explained earlier, a 1099 consultant will be responsible to pay all the applicable taxes.

The 1099 contract is easy to get started and easy to discontinue at the end of the contract. Apart from the income tax, these contractors will also have to pay self-employment tax.

A consultant who want to be his own boss and willing to take the responsibilities of dealing with all the taxes involved, then he/she can go for a 1099 contact.

Corp-Corp contracts

This is the most complicated option of all. You set up a corporation, render your IT services to another corporation
and get paid by that corporation. Unlike 1099, you don’t have to pay self-employment tax for a corp-corp contract.

Even though you own the corporation, you and your corporation are seen as separate legal entities. You will have to get a checking account for your business apart from a personal account that you have for you. Apart from this, you are an employee of your own business and you have to pay some salary for yourself.

As an individual you won’t be filling any 1099 form but your organization will be paying payroll taxes.
Prabakaran Murugaiah is the founder and CEO of www.Corp-Corp.com, an exclusive portal for IT consulting and Temporary staffing industry.

He is the inventor of FETCH, a résumé search/analysis algorithm based technology solution for the recruiting vertical that matches the relevant jobs with qualified candidates within 30 seconds of posting a job/résumé in the system. This technology powers corp-corp.com site and has upwards of 15,000 recruiters that are actively using the system. The goal is to create a global tech-workforce market place that connects employers and job seekers in real time using FETCH technology.
Corp-Corp.com was launched in 2007 to help match resources and requirements swiftly and efficiently between staffing companies. We created a unique market place for IT consulting and contracting opportunities with over 5000 IT consulting companies registering approximately 25,000 Jobs per month.

**Scenario One:**

Out in the world of recruitment, recruiters are mining millions of résumé s every minute in search of the right candidate.

**Scenario Two:**

Hundreds of genuine résumé s are lost in the millions of résumé s floating on the Internet.

**Scenario Three:**

A job that opens up one minute may not be available the next. The competition is so fierce and the supply so intense, that vacancies close even before a fraction of the recruiters sees them.
Recruiters are constantly looking for efficient methods to circumvent this problem and have designed an exclusive corp-corp contract marketplace to enable companies and recruiters FETCH the right candidates to the right position in real time.

**FETCH Philosophy**

Allow us to explain our claim to being a unique job search portal, considerably different from all the others out on the Internet.

- Assists in finding right talent in the simplest and fastest way possible
- Ensures contact with available candidates only
- Provides a direct link to employers
- Brings more opportunities for consultants

Here are some of the advantages in choosing our customized FETCH technology in your search for quality IT personnel.

- Reach 1000’s of companies
- Exclusively market your consultants
- Reduce bench time
- Get the best billing rate
• More productive recruiters
• Save on subscription costs
• More successful placements