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MASTER THE ART OF HIRING THE BEST CODER

How To Develop A Robust Sourcing Strategy?

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INTRODUCTION:

Being a technical recruiter in a rapidly growing company is a significant challenge. The existing pool of active job seekers is limited, and top talent can be off the market in as little as ten days.

According to Mettl's State of Talent Acquisition 2018 Survey, technical hiring ranked as one of the leading challenges for recruiters.

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Every tech recruiter knows the scenario. **You're looking for that Java developer or senior architect you just can't seem to pinpoint. Hours have been spent scanning job boards and LinkedIn with no luck.** But, while traditional sourcing strategies may be sufficient for certain positions, they're becoming tapped out for technical talent.

The State of Tech Hiring in 2017 conducted by Headlight labs portrays an exciting perspective on the technical recruitment landscape.

According to the results of the survey, sourcing enough applicants is by far the most frequently cited challenge selected hiring managers, while candidates struggle most with getting through the initial resume screen and discovering relevant opportunities.

➡ What is the role that I am hiring for?

    o Does it have a list of key responsibilities?

    o Do I have clarity on the position and the requirements?

    o Do I have an idea of how experienced this person is supposed to be?

    o Do I know the existing skill requirements?

➡ Do I know where to find this person?

    o If yes, do I know how to approach them?

➡ Do I know how to keep the candidates engaged long enough to convert them into employees?

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To tackle challenges of such an order, every step you take should be stellar and optimised to source, attract, assess and hire the best candidates?

Sounds like a herculean task?

Not so much with the right strategy in place.

Read on to find out about how you can make the most of your sourcing efforts.

Before you go on to find your next coding ninja, **ask yourself the following questions?**

❯

1

WHAT ROLE AM I HIRING FOR?

Build a Comprehensive Job Description

2

WHERE WILL I FIND THIS PERSON?

Target the right sources to find the right candidate

3

HOW DO I INITIATE A CONVERSATION?

A guide to Using Different Source for Recruitment

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Sourcing is like looking at an ocean and hoping to catch the best fish you can find. To be able to do that, you need to understand oceanology, weather and probably a lot about fishes too. Similarly, as recruiters, you need to be clear on who you are looking for, and where to find them.
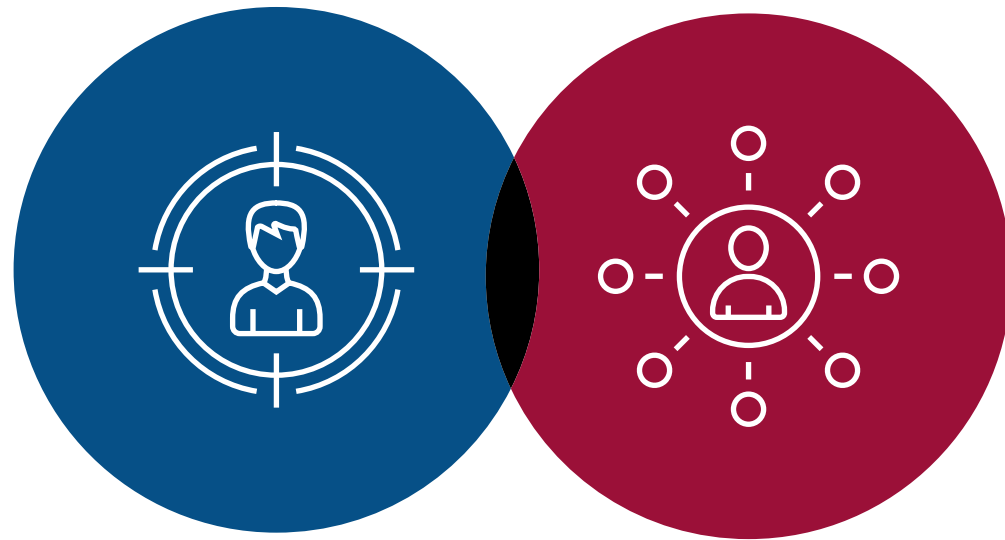
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UNDERSTAND WHO YOU ARE LOOKING FOR?

According to a study by Stack Overflow, there are *five jobs for every one developer,* which means you need to stand out as a recruiter and as a model employer. You also need an efficient, streamlined hiring process to ensure your best candidates don't disengage at a crucial time.

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The kinds of candidates you'll find are

Passive Candidates – those who are not looking for a job change but can be open to one
Active Candidates – those who are actively looking for a job or a job change

With both kinds of candidates, you'll notice one thing in common – **all candidates worth their salt are spoilt for choices.** This can also be backed up by the fact that there is an acute shortage of technical hires in respect to the available jobs.

In a 2017 survey of tech recruitment, referrals and passive candidate sourcing emerged as the best routes to finding the right tech talent in this competitive, fast-moving market. If references don't bring the volume you need, you head to sites like LinkedIn, Twitter, GitHub or Stack Overflow to find your coding ninjas.

You want to talk to them

They want to talk to you

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BUILD A COMPREHENSIVE JOB DESCRIPTION

The job description is a critical document for every position. A good job description is much more than a laundry list of tasks and responsibilities. If well written, it gives the reader a sense of the priorities involved. It not only provides a clear picture of the position of potential candidates but is also a useful tool for measuring performance and a vital reference in the event of disputes or disciplinary issues.

So, the more accurate you can make a job description up front, the more useful it will become in the future. A good job description performs several vital functions:

➡ It describes the skills and competencies that are needed to achieve the KPIs;

➡ It defines where the job fits within the overall company hierarchy;

➡ It is used as the basis for the employment contract; and

➡ It is a valuable performance management tool.

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Good job descriptions include elements like the job title that accurately reflects the nature of the job and the seniority of the position, a description of the duties, a list of skills and competencies that would be ideal to have for the position, and an expected range of compensation for the desired function.

For example,

Do you want a database developer or a front-end developer?

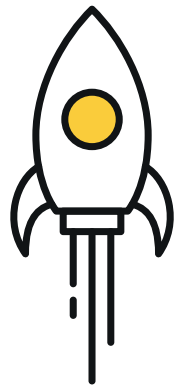Are you sure you are not confusing a web designer with a web developer?

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# UNDERSTAND WHAT DRIVES YOUR CODERS TO SWITCH JOBS

Developers who care about what they do and provide the most impact on a company must be curious and excited about solving problems.

1. What will they learn?

Growth is vital for a candidate. However, it should not be restricted to just a raise in salary. Growth revolves around the opportunities a new job might present them regarding learning new skills and taking up a more challenging role. Candidates usually think from a long-term perspective.

2. A Change in The environment
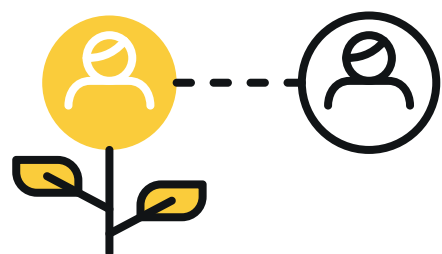
No two companies will ever be similar, and especially if they are moving from an MNC to a start-up, there's a massive difference between their work environment. Thus, they need to be flexible enough to adapt to new changes.

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3. How big is the company?
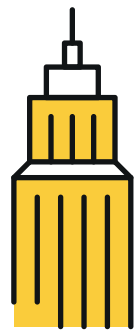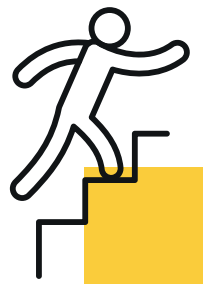
Every company has its advantages and disadvantages. Joining an early-stage start-up can lead to life-changing financial gains. On the other hand, larger companies may have better mentors from whom you could learn a lot. Mid-sized companies offer a bit of both the worlds.

4. Are You Contributing to Their Future

When it comes to career, long-term planning always triumphs over the short term. If they feel that their current skill set does not have a stable future, they won't stay. In this case, even accepting a lesser salary would be acceptable as long as they get the role they desire.

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Inside the Head of Your Coder		
Parameters	**Type of Candidates**	
	Active	Passive
Learning and Growth	Maybe	Yes
Non-Monetary Benefits	Maybe	Yes
Challenging Work Environment	Maybe	Yes
Team and Culture	Yes	Employer Brand
Planning for the Future	Yes	Yes

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WHERE YOU SHOULD BE LOOKING TO FIND THEM?

As our senior manager of Human Resources at Mettl, Ms. Gargi Rajan puts it, the primary source of candidates for Mettl is either campus recruitment for freshers, or external agencies or Naukri.com for lateral hiring. She goes on to elaborate more about how social recruitment hasn't taken off for small companies yet, and the number of applications through Linkedin, Facebook and other social recruitment channels are still comparatively lower than other channels. Interestingly, many other startups are of the same opinion – its difficult to find and hire candidates for technical roles while being a startup.

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The situation in the case big, established brands and MNCs is a bit different. A leading German automaker doesn't use recruitment consultants to find consultants at all. According to the Human Resources department, this is a major cost-saving measure as they find most of their applicants through either referrals, inbound submissions or manual-searches on Naukri. An interesting fact to note here would be that the success rate for there is the highest for Naukri, followed by social recruitment and finally referrals.
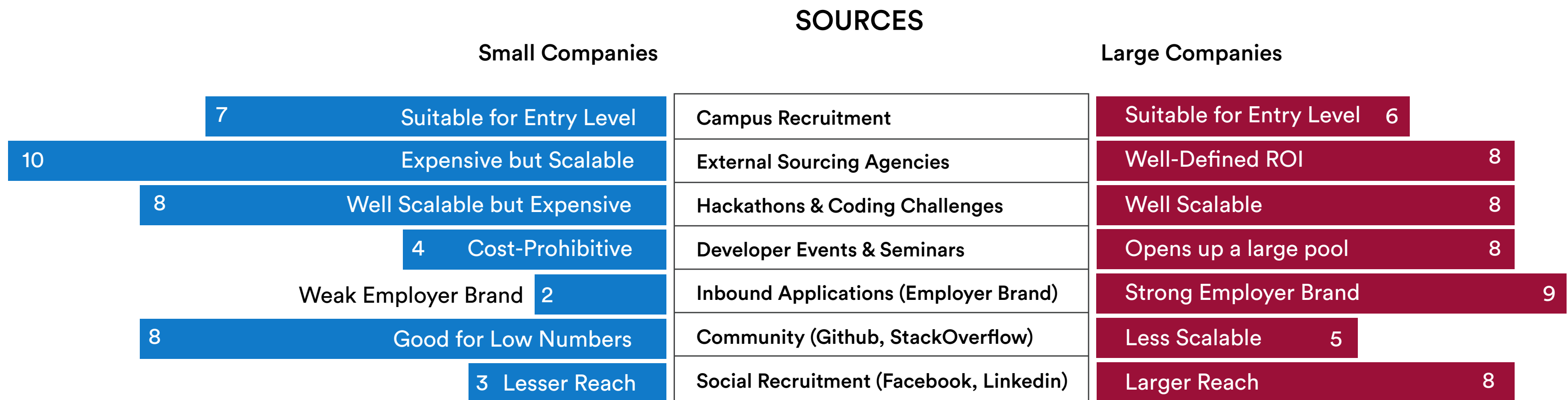
Different sources like Facebook, Linkedin, Community Events and Hackathons represent an outbound sourcing strategy. Going offline and meeting people face-to-face at events is a great way to source new candidates. Attend job or industry-specific conferences and events or host your meetups to bring together groups of people you'd like to meet.

Your sources may vary according to your identity. For large companies with a significant amount of hiring requirement every year, the only way to source a large number of candidates would be through online job portals like Naukri, or external hiring agents.

For a relatively smaller company, an external hiring agency proves quite expensive even as they are widely used to find the right candidate.

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Below is a chart that defines your sources based on how suitable a source is for your company and why.

Your Requirements Define Your Sources, Not the Other Way Around

SOURCES

Small Companies		Large Companies
7 — Suitable for Entry Level	Campus Recruitment	Suitable for Entry Level — 6
10 — Expensive but Scalable	External Sourcing Agencies	Well-Defined ROI — 8
8 — Well Scalable but Expensive	Hackathons & Coding Challenges	Well Scalable — 8
4 — Cost-Prohibitive	Developer Events & Seminars	Opens up a large pool — 8
Weak Employer Brand — 2	Inbound Applications (Employer Brand)	Strong Employer Brand — 9
8 — Good for Low Numbers	Community (Github, StackOverflow)	Less Scalable — 5
3 — Lesser Reach	Social Recruitment (Facebook, Linkedin)	Larger Reach — 8

[Ref: Mettl Research]

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There will be less competition to stand out as an employer, and candidates will be more likely to respond to your follow-up messages after they've had a conversation with you in person. If other people in your organisation attend events, ask them to stay on the lookout for excellent candidates too – sourcing should be a team sport!

LinkedIn:

Once you create an attractive profile and company page, you should create a careers page. Through engaging content, updates, and Q&A, recruiters can establish themselves as thought leaders. LinkedIn is excellent for creating a referral chain, getting recommendations/testimonials to humanise your brand, and sourcing talent by networking through new, past, and present contacts.

GitHub:

GitHub is an online project-hosting service site where developers share their open- source projects. Once you have a public account up and running, you can get contact info, websites she has chosen to display, number of followers, GitHub contributions, and repositories.

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Stack Overflow :

Stack Overflow is an online community for programmers to learn, share their knowledge, and advance their careers. Essential details and summary about programmers are accessible; use the right filters to refine your search. For passive candidates, check out the Careers section. Remember to engage in meaningful discussions with people of interest.

Glassdoor :

A promising tool for recruiting, Glassdoor exerts substantial social influence on job aspirants. People go on Glassdoor to write or read anonymous reviews about companies and company life. So, this is where you need to build an impressive brand while being honest and transparent. Recruiters can gather valuable metrics from this site.

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Hackathons:

External hackathons are fantastic places to network with exceptional talent and industry experts. You can skillfully build a talent pipeline of hardworking, smart, and passionate programmers by attending the right events.

Meetups and developer events:

Meetup.com unites people with shared professional interests. You can find potential candidates without having to go to any events as many of meetup's groups and attendee lists are public. Once you've made your interest list and filtered your candidates, you can send them a personalized email. Developer events can give you an opportunity to network with the most sort-out technical experts. You can make connections and build mutually beneficial relationships with them.

The following chart will give you a handy set of tips to get started with every channel and an idea of the type of candidates you'll find through the specified channel.

Source	Tips to Use the Source	Type of Candidate
Campus Recruitment	1. Ideal for hiring freshers 2. Ensure a robust selection process 3. Close offers as quickly as possible	Active
External Sourcing Agency	1. Provide clear and concise requirements	Active/Passive
Hackathons and Coding Challenges	1. Network with exceptional talent 2. Build a talent pipeline 3. Conduct a recruiting hackathon	Active/Passive
Developer Events & Seminars	1. Make connections 2. Build mutually beneficial relationships	Active/Passive
Inbound Applications (Employer Brand)	1. Promote your company brand 2. Gather metrics to fine-tune hiring	Active
Community (Github, StackOverflow)	1. Search for candidates with specific skill-set in a location 2. Filter search results based on relevant criteria and reach out to people of interest	Passive

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Source	Tips to Use the Source	Type of Candidate
Linkedin	1. Create a company page 2. Create a careers page 3. Publish engaging content 4. Get recommendations and testimonials	Active/Passive
Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Google+	1. Creative job postings on the company's page 2. Strengthen company presence 3. Highlight employee achievement 4. Engage in relevant discussions to spot possibilities and build your community	Active/Passive

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SO, YOUR COMPANY'S NOT THE NEXT GOOGLE?

YOU CAN STILL ATTRACT TOP TALENT

Your company may not carry the stature of Google or the pay structure of Facebook, but that doesn't mean you can't still win over incredible developers. You can win them over by emphasising the areas you can control.

01

Emphasize the company's vision

Maybe you are working on a support system that may not seem exciting at first. But what if you can express the idea that it'll help whole villages in third world nations gain access to STEM education? Passionate engineers want to get excited about what they work on, and they want their work to matter. If your vision aligns with their interests, you provide a level of work satisfaction that can dull the allure of larger companies.

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02

Build a better culture

Create a team culture that fosters creativity and empowers engineers. Help them feel ownership in the product and feel comfortable speaking up. Let them try new things even if it means a small delay in the short term. They'll look forward to the work because they can play with the latest technology that they're reading about.

03

Cast a wider net

Sometimes, you just can't compete with the wealthier & shinier companies. So, look for talent outside of your locale. Freelance marketplaces like Upwork make it easy to find the skilled professionals you need, anywhere in the world. Perhaps to them, you are the unicorn.

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HOW TO BUILD YOUR EMPLOYER BRAND, ONLINE OR OFFLINE?

Employer branding is not about advertising that you're a good employer. It's about being one. Companies with strong employer brands recruit good employees faster and retain them in the long-run.

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Here are some strategies for building your employer brand, with examples from companies that do it well

Respond to online reviews

This will help portray you as an employee-centric and engaged employer, a must for today's workplace and employer-branding.

Spotlight your employees

Spotlighting your employees on a regular basis help them feel appreciated, recognized and keeps them motivated on a regular basis, making it a good employer-branding practice.

Be authentic on social media

Social media provides you a platform to connect with millions of people, including your potential clients and your employees. Make sure you portray yourself in good light.

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CONCLUSION

Sourcing is the first and most important step to recruiting your employees as it is the first filter that defines the kind of candidates you are getting. Hence, it is essential to have a robust sourcing strategy in place so that there is no gap between the expectation and the results when it comes to new hires.

But sourcing is definitely not where it ends, as the real struggle starts after. Right after you have a ready pool of candidates, you have the task of selecting the best of them. And remember, if you don't get this right, a bad hire could cost you **at least 30% of the annual salary of the employee.**

Ready to learn more about finding the right candidate?   😊

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What is Mettl?

Mettl is a Saas based assessment platform that enables organizations to create customized assessments for use across the entire employee lifecycle, beginning with pre-hiring screening and candidate skills assessment, training and development programs for employees/students, certification exams, contests and more.

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