



# Reimagine Candidate Sourcing:

23 Ways to Quickly  
Find Talent

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Traditional recruiting works, but as the hiring market becomes increasingly competitive, looking for the ideal candidate may mean you need to consider layering multiple sourcing tactics. After all, taking the right steps during the awareness-building stage can really make all the difference when it comes to your candidate investment and their longevity at your company. Plus, by getting creative with your recruiting tactics, you'll reach and attract more and better candidates your competition hasn't zeroed in on yet.

You'll also build more diversity into your candidate mix. This can improve collaboration and encourage more creative approaches to finding solutions because of the variety of professional and personal backgrounds.

Take a look at our list of the 23 top ways to recruit top talent faster —16 places to find talent and 7 tips to help speed things up. We're sharing a greatest hits list of traditional and not-so-obvious ways to source and recruit. Mix and match the best opportunities to align the role you're hiring for, your industry, and your hiring timeline.

# Job sourcing 101

Sourcing top talent can be challenging since it requires a well-planned approach. Implementing best practices before you launch into the more creative ways to source talent ensures you aren't missing any obvious or simple opportunities to reach your ideal candidates quickly.



## Pro Tip

A little planning can go a long way. Front-load a little prep time to review the job description, the skill set you're seeking and the top qualities you want in a candidate. Then consider where and how you can find them, and identify some of the best sourcing methods you'd like to use.

Finally, begin your search. If you're searching databases, get as specific as possible using search fields, keywords and boolean search. You can always broaden your search if you aren't finding enough candidates.

Remember to scan resumes for key skills rather than getting caught up in reading each one. Create your shortlist based on your quick scans. Then you can return to the most interesting candidates for a deeper dive into their experience.

Look in multiple places (e.g., social media, online forums), post to job boards like Indeed and use your network to seek referrals. Posting available positions on your website will often only get you applications from website traffic. It's essential to cast a wider net when sourcing top talent, especially if you're seeking both [passive and active candidates](#).



## Pro Tip

Don't forget to consider older resumes. Even though they may be several months (or even years) old, many of these candidates are still looking for the right opportunity.

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# 16 places to look for top talent

There's no doubt that [competing for top talent](#) takes some work. Finding and [attracting top talent](#) is where it all starts. Here are 16 places to quickly source the best candidates for your open roles.



# 01 Indeed

[Posting a job on Indeed](#) is a great place to start your sourcing efforts. That's because we have over 350 million monthly unique visitors <sup>1</sup>, making us the #1 ranked job site.<sup>2</sup>

It's quick and easy to [post a job on Indeed](#). When you're ready, we'll help you create your post by asking you simple, step-by-step questions. The info you provide for each question will add up to a comprehensive job post that helps you reach great candidates.

Plus, Indeed has other hiring tools to help you source the candidates you need, including upfront screener questions, candidate assessments and our [Indeed Smart Sourcing](#) product. Smart Sourcing streamlines the hiring process by matching quality candidates to your job, offering faster candidate connections in one cohesive experience.



## Did you know?

With [Smart Sourcing](#) there are on average 70,000 successful connections between employers and job seekers each day.<sup>3</sup>

## 02 Niche job boards

[Job boards](#) and networking sites are excellent ways to expand your job search. Many are focused on industries such as construction, retail, healthcare and more. Some niche sites are also focused on geographic location, lifestyle factors (freelance, remote work) or types of candidates, such as college graduates or government employees.

Niche job boards are useful because of their specificity. It can be easier to find top talent among more specific groups of candidates. Smaller niche boards can help recruiters better understand the market and trends in niche professions.

## 03 Hiring events

Hiring events are an outstanding way to source, attract and even hire multiple candidates in a short amount of time, often for several roles. Many events are held virtually these days, but there's no shortage of in-person hiring events.

If you want to host your own recruiting event, [Indeed can help](#) promote your event and screen and schedule candidates for in-person or virtual interviews. This can help maximize the hires you can make in a single day. Or use [Indeed Interview](#) to [conduct virtual interviews](#) right on Indeed. Indeed is one of the best resources available to ensure you hit your hiring goals.

## 04 Social media

Social media isn't just for viral videos, life hacks and news headlines. It can be a great tool for reaching candidates where they spend their time. You can post jobs on professional social media and networking sites, but don't forget to post about open jobs and hiring events across other social media platforms. If you have a sense of which platforms your candidates spend their time, you can focus your efforts there.



In addition to all the organic traffic your posts can generate, you might also consider putting some money behind your efforts, particularly if there is a tight timeline or a push to hire for a specific job category. Boosting posts can further extend your reach, and adding paid social ads to your marketing strategy can inspire people to complete an application. Finally, [Sponsoring your job](#) can help your job appear more often and for longer in search results than non-sponsored jobs. Indeed data shows that Sponsored Jobs deliver 60% more applicants on average than non-sponsored jobs.<sup>4</sup>

## 05 Online forums

The key to any marketing effort, including sourcing and recruiting candidates, is to meet the target market where they spend their time. Many people spend considerable time on [online forums](#) like Reddit, Quora, StackOverflow, Meetup and more.

If you know software engineers spend time in a specific online community, for example, then spending time or money there is a great way to get in front of them. In your paid social ads you can retarget candidates with ad banners on that site. Then participate in and follow threads or groups to find and recruit top talent.

This is an especially useful tactic when you're trying to find and attract top passive candidates — those who are open to new opportunities but aren't seeing your recruiting efforts because they aren't actively looking for a job.



## 06 Online portfolio sites

While online forums are helpful for finding candidates, online portfolio sites are also valuable for sourcing talent and viewing their work.

Examples of places where your top talent is sharing their work include Github, Behance, Dribbble, Adobe Portfolio, Portfoliobox and more. These sites are where candidates have the opportunity to show off what they're really capable of doing, rather than just what they say they can do on their resume.

On GitHub, for example, software developers, data scientists, QA engineers, product managers, software architects and others can showcase pet projects on living portfolios where you can evaluate their code and see their skills in action. It's one of many opportunities to zero in on ideal candidates based on demonstrated abilities.

## 07 Freelancing Sites

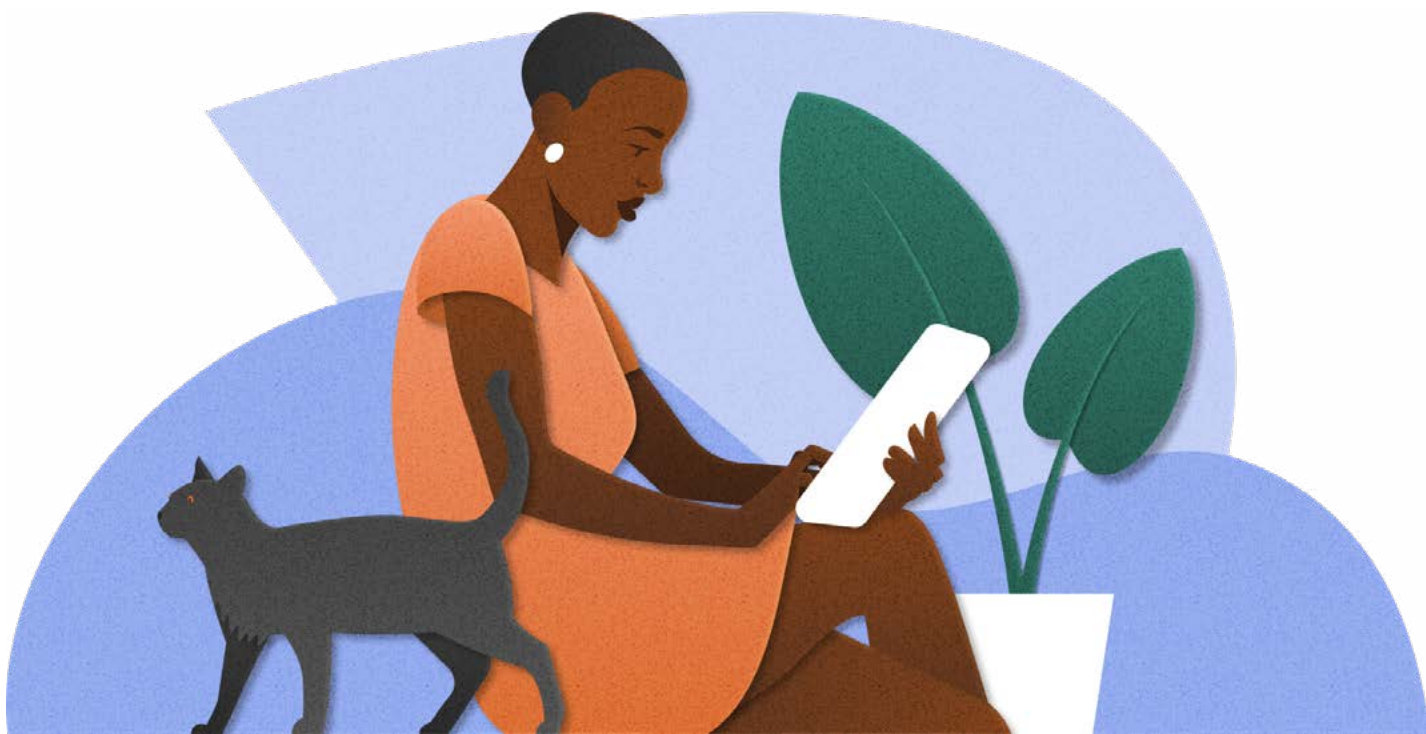
Upwork, Freelancer, Betterly and other freelance networks are ideal places to source talent for both project-based and long-term work. This is ideal for businesses of all sizes who need to find the right people but don't want to hire full-time employees.

When you source freelancers, you're often hiring people to get specific work completed rather than hiring people to fill a larger role that may not be necessary. Some roles are project heavy and can be spread across multiple freelancers. Other roles include a set of responsibilities that require the oversight of a specific person. It can be much more efficient and often less expensive to outsource these project-based roles.

### Pro Tip



Grow and maintain relationships with a variety of freelancers. It's common for growing businesses to run into the need for a project or campaign to be carried out, but the timing can overwhelm existing staff. Having freelancers on hand to manage that overflow can make all the difference when it comes to meeting your goals.



## 08 Your Applicant Tracking System (ATS)

Recruiters often focus so much on sourcing talent outside the organization that they can forget about their applicant tracking system (ATS). Your ATS is a gold mine of opportunity for candidate rediscovery. Utilize this tool to re-engage with candidates you passed on for previous roles that would be a great fit for your open roles.

There are plenty of benefits. These candidates are already familiar with your company and may have already been interviewed and vetted. They will likely appreciate that you didn't forget them and matched them with an ideal role when it became available.

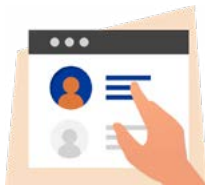


### Did you know?

[Indeed integrates with 300+ ATSs globally](#), so you can spend less time going back and forth between systems and more time hiring. [Post your job](#) with an integrated ATS and sponsor it to take full advantage of Indeed's job posting features.

## 09 Resume databases

Resume databases are a great way to streamline the sourcing, interview and hiring process. The ability to access and sort through resumes before approaching candidates can make your recruiting efforts much more efficient and targeted.



**Smart Sourcing** helps ensure that your talent team gets what they're looking for by enabling new methods of matching, connecting and collaborating in the recruitment process. AI-powered features match you with quality candidates from Indeed's pool of millions of job seekers. Smart Sourcing users receive a shortlist of candidates who match job criteria across a variety of industries, skills and educational background, eliminating the need for you to manually search for candidates.

A recent Indeed study revealed that matched candidates you invite to apply are 17x more likely to apply to your job than job seekers who only see it in search.<sup>5</sup>

# 10 Professional associations

Nearly all industries have various places and ways for professionals to gather, network, share professional stories and recognize other professionals in their industry. There are endless organizations and associations with membership lists, events and newsletters that can be used to source talent.

These target industry memberships may also have job boards, directories, conferences and other valuable ways to source top talent. Professionals who aren't looking for a position may be able to refer or recommend someone. And in some industries, membership means some vetting is taking place, bringing a certain level of credibility to the mix.

# 11 College campuses

If you're searching for eager, talented, early-career professionals entering the market, [college campuses are a great resource](#). Here are just a few ways you can source early career college students and grads:

- ☐ Colleges often have both physical and virtual job boards where you can post open positions. Professional student associations are always looking for job opportunities they can provide to their student members.
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- ☐ There are virtual and in-person job fairs.
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- ☐ Some organizations are allowed to hold their own job fair or hiring events on or near campus.
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- ☐ The Office of Administration or Office of Student Affairs will often have post-grad lists where you can access recent graduates.

# 12 Help wanted ads

A tried and true method for sourcing candidates is creating [hyper-local visibility](#). Consider using newspaper ads and window signs. To reach local markets, it can also be helpful to tap into the resources and networks of the local Chambers of Commerce, Rotary chapters and other community organizations.



## Pro Tip

Consider geotargeting and awareness events. If you're targeting software engineers within a particular city or who work for a competitor, launching a respectful and fun awareness campaign can do the trick.

# 13 Job fairs

Job fairs are an effective way to reach active candidates, whether virtual or in person. They are often held on college campuses, in cities at local Chambers of Commerce or conference centers. A growing trend is to hold a job fair at an airport hotel. It allows local professionals to attend while remaining efficient for traveling recruiters.

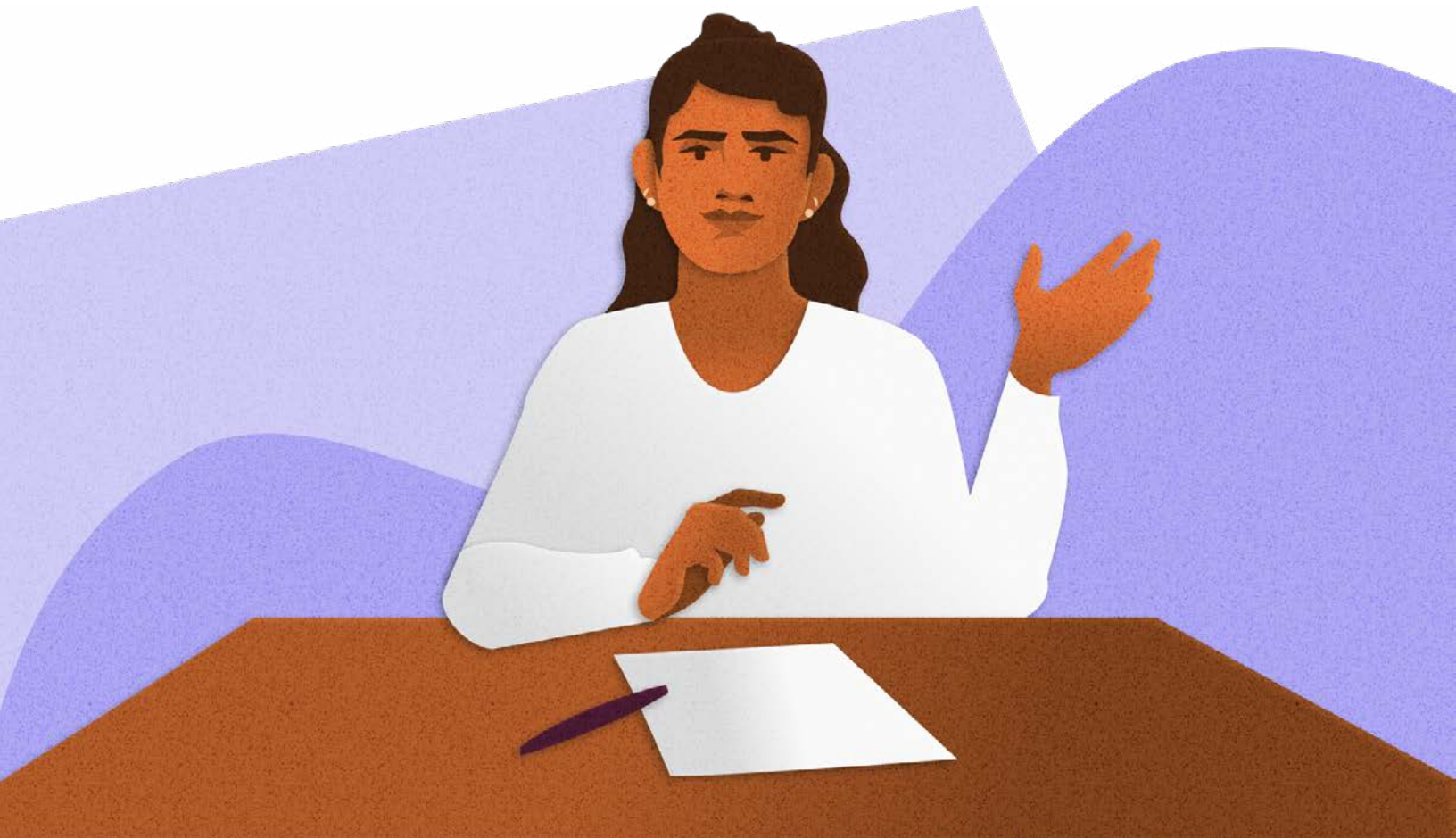
Virtual job fairs often have breakout rooms for companies to speak to their hiring needs, present their hiring propositions, discuss benefits and work culture, and answer questions. Virtual events also allow recruiters to build awareness in a market that wouldn't otherwise have exposure to your company.



# 14 Hire internally

There are plenty of pros to [hiring internally](#). When hiring from within, there's no need to educate the candidate about the company, benefits and culture. You're already familiar with the talent pool and can source the best option.

It's useful to have conversations with the hiring managers first. These conversations can help a manager think through their existing team, identify [internal hiring opportunities](#) and steps they can take to make an internal hire, such as coaching and cross-training.



# 15 Agency assistance

Staffing agencies, temp agencies and headhunters are all useful when brought into the recruiting process at the right time and for the right positions. This allows you to extend your network and reach by leveraging [recruitment process outsourcing \(RPO\)](#).

While these resources will improve your reach, save time and often save money, they need to understand your propositions, values, company culture and other important factors when attracting the right candidates. Communication is key to ensuring these third parties source the right candidates.

# 16 Networking events

Not all networking events are strictly hiring events , but they can help you build out your network as a recruiter and meet potential talent on the spot.

In addition, these events can be useful ways to announce that your company is hiring for particular positions and request referrals. Consider invitations to Meetups, industry-specific association events or conferences, local Chambers of Commerce and Rotary, and co-working spaces.



## Pro Tip

Many networking events have sponsored handouts or agendas, brief speaker openings and other opportunities to get seen. Try one or more of these methods to amplify your presence at these events.

# 7 quick ways to attract talent

Here are seven tips to help you quickly attract and source talent with ease.

## 01 A user-friendly application process

Whether people are passively seeking opportunities or actively seeking employment, most people prefer a simple application process that won't take all day. That doesn't mean they don't want the job. It means they have other obligations in life, other applications to complete and are perhaps completing applications during their work breaks.

Make sure the application process is available on desktop and mobile-friendly formats. This is especially true if you're posting and advertising job openings on social media. Additionally, ensure the process won't take them more than 10 minutes. If possible, add a tool that will show them where they are in the process and how much time is remaining for the average applicant.



Avoid repetitive tasks like uploading a resume and then having to type all the same information into the application. A smart application process leaves the impression of a thoughtful company with a culture that respects its employees.



### Did you know?

When you post your job on Indeed, a fully mobile-optimized version is created. This is especially important since 75% of applications submitted on Indeed are done so on mobile devices. [Post your job](#) to get started.

## 02 Employee referral program

According to an Indeed survey, [74% of employers said](#) candidates sourced from employee referrals were “extremely qualified” for the role.

Don’t wait for referrals to just happen. Sit down with your current employees and instead of asking “Do you know anyone who’s looking for a job?” ask “Who would you work with again?” You can also ask employees to [share existing company social media posts](#), especially those that discuss open positions they think their network would be interested in.

## 03 Share your employer brand

According to a 2021 Indeed survey, [42% of job seekers](#) said they read reviews about a prospective employer before applying for a job. Only 8% of job seekers in the same survey said they never read reviews about prospective employers.<sup>6</sup> That's because company reputation, values and culture matter to candidates. In fact, according to an Indeed survey, [29% of job seekers](#) say they would reconsider accepting an offer from a company if the mission/vision doesn't resonate with their values — even if the job is perfect for them otherwise.



You can use [Indeed Company Pages](#) to promote your company and showcase your unique [employee value proposition](#) (EVP). Your company page can help you attract talent, build your reputation and speak to specific benefits and lifestyle factors that job seekers are most interested in.

In addition, [Glassdoor and Indeed are partnering](#) to bring clients the power of our combined strengths in hiring and employer brand solutions. Our partnership opens the door for clients to tell their brand story and hire from an unmatched audience representing 80% of US online job seekers, advancing both companies' missions to help people get jobs.



### Did you know?

On average, employers who purchased Employer Branding Ads saw a 2.5x increase in brand impressions across Indeed and Glassdoor.<sup>7</sup>

[Sponsor your job](#) today to get started.

## 04 Get employees involved (beyond referrals)

Launch an internal communications plan to go beyond referral programs. Use it to educate employees about the value of being an active part of the company culture by participating in recruiting efforts.

Use the internal comms plan to share ways employees can participate in recruitment efforts by encouraging them to share their experience on social media, as well as discuss open positions via word of mouth. For example, weekly emails to all managers and employees that highlight open and soon-to-be-open positions, cross-training opportunities, and job fairs are a great way to get people involved in recruitment and thinking about other career paths within the company. This helps build a company culture that will keep employees excited to work at your company.



## 05 Make job descriptions inclusive

To attract a diverse set of candidates, it's important to write [inclusive job descriptions](#) that encourage quality people from all backgrounds to apply. Beyond adding your Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) statement to your job description, here are some other ways to help make your job descriptions more inclusive:

- ☐ **Highlight the inclusive benefits your company offers**, such as paid parental leave, floating holidays, flexible schedules, expanded health insurance plans, mental health resources, extended bereavement leave and more.

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- ☐ **Avoid listing a top limit for years of experience.** Instead of requesting that candidates have 5-7 years of experience, you might ask for a minimum of 5 years. That way, you won't exclude people with a longer career history who would be a great fit.

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- ☐ **Avoid making degrees a requirement.** Making degrees a requirement can prevent the right candidate from applying to your job. While some careers and positions certainly require formal education, consider if a degree is necessary for someone to succeed in the position you're looking to fill.

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- ☐ **Be intentional about the language you use.** Make all applicants feel welcome by avoiding exclusionary or discriminatory language. For example, words like "aggressive" and "driven" may communicate a bias toward a male candidate, while "empathetic" and "nurturing" can indicate a preference for a female. Additionally, avoid words that communicate a preferred age range, such as "recent college graduate" or "digital native."

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- ☐ **Include info about your company's [Employee Resource Groups \(ERGs\)](#)**, including which specific groups your company has available for employees to join.



## 06 Welcome back boomerang employees

Previous employees who left the company on good terms and are open to returning are called [boomerang employees](#). They may have left for any number of reasons, such as parental responsibilities, temporary relocation, or another opportunity they couldn't pass up. Reaching back out to these employees shows just how much they're valued.



Plus, they're already familiar with your company. Re-introduce them to anything that has changed and get to know their lifestyle and workplace needs.

## 07 Encourage hiring managers to be proactive

Help hiring managers understand how to talk about the company and available positions. Coach them on what to look for when hiring and give them pointers on how to address candidates needs and questions. Walk through candidate resumes together to include the hiring manager in further narrowing the applicant shortlist.

# Summing things up: Ways to quickly find talent



Sourcing talent can be one of the biggest challenges companies face in the hiring process. It means providing a high-quality set of early touch points that attract candidates and invite them to learn more about your company, complete an application and look forward to continuing the hiring process. Using a combination of traditional and digital tactics, you can craft a targeted hiring strategy to source top active and passive candidates.

<sup>1</sup>Indeed Internal Data, average monthly Unique Visitors October 2023 – March 2024

<sup>2</sup>Comscore, Total Visits, March 2024

<sup>3</sup>Indeed data (WW), Q1 2024, based on Indeed Resume

<sup>4</sup>Indeed data, (US), March-May 2023

<sup>5</sup>Indeed data (US), August 2023

<sup>6</sup>Indeed survey (worldwide), n=7,101

<sup>7</sup>Indeed and Glassdoor monthly employer-level data, worldwide, January - June 2023