

Post-Hire Surveys: The Key to Measuring Recruiting Success

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What is the hardest part of a recruiting in today's market? If you answered finding top talent, you're wrong (well not totally because that is very difficult!), but if you answered proving your worth as recruiters and measuring the success of your practice, you're right. With words like "outsourcing" being on the tip of every executives tongue these days, it is more critical then ever to be sure you show you're value! Unfortunately showing recruitments value in an organization is not a simple task, even with the introduction of sophisticated ATS systems and the robust reporting and measurement capabilities HR departments are sporting these days. HR Leaders expend a lot of time and energy trying to figure out how to measure the success of recruiting, but few have been able to get the equation quite right. The key missing ingredient in many recruitment measurement recipes is a post-hire survey program. An effective post-hire survey program will not only yield invaluable feedback that can help refine your recruitment process, but most importantly, it will provide your organization with a rich, valid and timely vehicle to measure recruitment success.

There are a lot of different metrics that are used today to measure the cost effectiveness and efficiency of recruitment practices; time to fill, ROI, hire source, applicant to interview and applicant to hire ratios, cost per hire and like hire cost comparisons are all examples. All of these metrics have merit and definitely add value to the process of assessing the cost effectiveness and quality of the recruitment process. The problem is, these metrics focus on measuring cost and quality factors involved in the hiring process, and that isn't enough. It is not just about measuring the sourcing process, the true test of an effective recruitment practice is measuring the actual quality of the hire and that can only be assessed after the person has started working. Plain and simply, does it really matter how quickly and cheaply you were able to hire someone if the hire doesn't work out and you have to repeat the entire process over again? If you could report to the organization on how many hires that were made by you or your team that were still on the job 3 and 12 months after the hire, including ratings how well they were performing wouldn't that be powerful? Post-hire surveys will tell you all of that and a lot more.

Post-hire surveys are a very simple but highly effective way to measure the quality of both your hiring process (posting through hire) and your hiring decision (quality of hire). There is no magic behind the surveys or the process and there really isn't any right or wrong way to do them, which is why they are such a great measurement tool. The easiest way to show how simple it is to set up a post-hire process is to just jump right in and explain the steps.

1. **Secure the Data Source.** The most important component of post-hire surveys is ensuring you have a way to capture information on new hires and the recruiters and managers who hired them, without that you won't get very far! For most organizations this is pretty straight forward and can either be pulled directly from their ATS system or their HRIS system.
2. **Define your Strategy.** This is really number 1, but thought I should state the obvious first! Sit down and think through exactly what you want to get out your surveys, meet with your HR and Business Unit Leaders and find out what information is important to them and explain to them what you are trying to achieve with this process. Ask yourself questions like: what do we want to measure (sourcing process, recruiters management of the process, success of the hire etc.)? Who should we survey (just hiring managers or new employees as well)?
Note: a tip on the value of these surveys....don't just survey the managers, the new hires are a great source of information and can be a key component of the measurement process

How often should we survey? (right after the hire, 3 months post-hire, 6 months post-hire, 12 months post-hire etc.). How will I collect and use the data? What will I do with the feedback? Do I have a way to action the gaps or issues outlined?

3. **Build the Survey:** Once you've got all of the major details squared away in terms of the what and the how of the surveys, you need to build them. This part can be tricky because you need to make them long enough that you get relevant data, but short enough that you will have a high participation rate. Metrics are only valid when the response rate is high enough (you will have to establish that for your organization, but anything less than 50% isn't enough in my experience). You need to be sure when you are building the questions that you force a response but that you also give choice (a range of responses) an example would be: The recruiters responsiveness throughout the recruitment process was: Below Expectation, Met Expectation, Exceeded Expectation. In addition, providing the opportunity for respondents to add comments is very important. There is quite often a wealth of great feedback that is obtained through comments and in many cases helps give the direction for further refinement of the survey moving forward. If you see a consistent comment that is coming out in the comments but isn't captured in the questions, then you can add it to the questions so that it can be included in the scoring/measurement. Some examples of good post-hire survey questions would include: Does the hire match the skills and knowledge required for the job (mgr 3 or 6 month follow-up survey), Is the hire the right fit for your team? (mgr 3 or 6 month follow-up), Did the recruiter short-list candidates for you? Did you hire from the recruiters short-list? (mgr 2 week follow-up survey). There are many more, that was just a sampling to give you an idea of what they could look like. In terms of the numbers of questions each survey should have, typically, 6-8 is a good number to focus on.
4. **Complete the logistics:** This in theory is the easy part because if you've figured out what you want to measure, who you are going to survey and what you are going to ask them then executing the survey should be a breeze. If you don't have a formal survey tool in your organization, there are many inexpensive (nearly free) survey tools and websites out there to utilize. I've worked personally with Zoomerang, but I know there are others. Once you've secured your survey tool then you just have to load in all of your questions and outline your survey process: what will be the data feed, when will I run it, what will I do with the data etc. The beauty of many of these tools is that it stores your data and allows you to run reports (not overly robust ones, but detailed enough).
5. **Integrate your findings:** The true value of the post-hire survey process comes at the end when you've got all of this great information and you have to figure out a way to do something meaningful with it. The good news is, if you set up your surveys the right way it isn't too difficult to utilize the data. There are many things you can use the data for, but here are 3 key ones.
 - a. Recruiter scorecard: (aggregate manager and new hire evaluations for each recruiter, baseline evaluations, set standards and measure recruiters against standards)
 - b. Recruitment practice evaluation: (aggregate of recruiter scorecards yields a measure of your recruitment process and practice. Baseline evaluations, set standards and measure recruiters against standards)
 - c. Process re-engineering: Through evaluations and comments, critical process information will be obtained, this is a great way to show managers and new employees that you are listening to them by making changes and enhancements to the recruiting process (where appropriate of course)

Recruiting in the current market is tough, but it will be even tougher if you can't figure out a way

to truly measure the value you are bringing to the hiring process within your organization. One of the key ways to make that battle a little easier is to focus on measuring the success of the hire and the best way to do that is through a well designed post-hire survey program. Cost will always be high on the list of most used recruitment metrics, but it's relevance will certainly be questioned if you show you can measure the success of your hire on the job.