

How to Choose the Best Sourcing & Hiring Software

Talent Management Solution Buyers Guide



Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Section 1: The Struggle of Hiring Today's Hourly Workforce	5
Section 2: Take Stock of Your Current System	10
Section 3: Evaluate Talent Management Solutions	12
Section 4: Make the Final Choice	15
Section 5: Get Internal Buy-In	19
Section 6: Setting Your Team Up For Success	21
Conclusion	22

Introduction

Recruiting, hiring, and retaining an hourly workforce has always been challenging. As the world continues to change, the need for powerful talent acquisition and management solutions has remained. Businesses need a reliable stream of quality applicants as well as the tools to onboard, hire, train, and retain them — quickly and efficiently.

Few talent management systems could handle the unique needs of the hourly workforce before COVID-19. Now, those legacy platforms don't stand a chance.

Under pressure to fill lots of jobs quickly, hiring managers are looking to streamline the sourcing of candidates, use automation to eliminate manual and repetitive tasks, rely on actionable data to make strategic hiring decisions, and utilize virtual assessment tools to pinpoint the best candidates. But the hourly hiring market is dynamic, and what works in one region, or even location, may not work in another, so the best talent management system will give you the ability to adapt to changing market conditions and needs, such as being able to turn the dial from quantity to quality of applicants as needed.

From enterprise software designed for commercial businesses and large, global employers to niche hiring tools for specific industries or use cases, there are more options than ever when it comes to talent management solutions — which is probably why you're here.



**You are likely
reading this guide
for one of three
reasons:**

- 1 You have a time-consuming and/or manual recruiting and hiring process and you're ready for your first (or an enhanced) software solution
- 2 You aren't happy with your current talent management platform and are considering other options
- 3 You want to see if you are maximizing your current system and are considering other options if not



In this guide, we'll walk you through the talent management process, what to look for in a talent management solution for the hourly workforce (including how to evaluate the system you may already be using), making the best choice, and getting the relevant stakeholders on board. You are well on your way towards a more effective — and efficient — hiring process!



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The first rule of any technology used in a business is that automation applied to an efficient operation will magnify the efficiency. The second is that automation applied to an inefficient operation will magnify the inefficiency.”

Bill Gates



1: The Struggle of Hiring Today's Hourly Workforce

Most hiring managers have a number of competing priorities throughout the day — sometimes even taking on additional responsibilities — leaving little to no time to focus on recruiting and hiring. Not to mention that the recruiting process itself can be overwhelming: you know you need to be on job boards but is an organic feed enough? Should you sponsor jobs, and how much should you spend? How do you write a job description that will make your company stand out? How can you find time to look through applications, respond to candidates, and set up interviews? (Then, even worse, what if they don't even show up for the interview?)

Today's candidates have so many options for employment that they won't engage with a complicated application process. Because of this, it's essential to make the hiring process as streamlined and frictionless as possible for both the candidate and the hiring manager. Candidates are looking at many job options and the best candidates get hired quickly, so applicants who don't receive an immediate response are more likely to move on to the next option. Ultimately, you have to get them an offer letter before someone else does.



11 Tips for recruiting and retaining today's workforce:

- 1 Use a fun video to get their attention
- 2 Share your openings on job boards and across social media
- 3 Keep the application process fast and easy
- 4 When you find someone you want to hire, do it quickly
- 5 Get referrals from current employees
- 6 Make sure your hourly rate is competitive
- 7 If you have good benefits and perks, promote them
- 8 Offer flexible schedules
- 9 Highlight causes that your company supports
- 10 Make job responsibilities and expectations super clear
- 11 Continue to support and train them



How to Choose the Best Sourcing & Hiring Software for an Hourly Workforce

Once you extend an offer of employment, you still have to stay on top of making sure the new employee completes all of their paperwork correctly while ensuring accuracy and compliance on your side.

Eliminating inefficient, unnecessary, or repetitive steps helps keep your applicants interested and engaged from the moment they hit the apply button to the moment they put on a uniform.



THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE HOURLY SOURCING AND HIRING PROCESS

It all starts with sourcing applicants. Job boards are one piece of the puzzle, but usually aren't enough these days. Whether it be sponsoring jobs, window clings/receipts with QR codes, employee referrals, or one of [many other methods](#) for attracting hourly applicants, decentralized, location-based businesses need a single place to manage the process.

Once you attract people with your job posting, your talent management solution should remove friction wherever possible to keep the hiring process moving along quickly. For candidates, this is optionality in how they apply (AI chatbot, company career site, integrated job board application forms, text-to-apply) so that they can move through recruiting, hiring, and onboarding quickly and efficiently — in the way that works best for them.

[Seventy-three percent](#) of applicants will abandon a job application if it takes them longer than 15 minutes, so hiring managers need fast and efficient ways to engage interested job candidates and schedule interviews. A fast and streamlined application process is the key to getting candidates in the door.

From there, automated and optimized workflows and configurations free up time for managers so that they can respond to and interview qualified applicants promptly.

The majority of the hourly workforce grew up with modern technology, so they're used to working digitally and expect communication to be mobile-friendly. But they hate phone calls — [studies](#) show that 75% of Millennials avoid phone calls and 81% get anxious about making a call — and even email isn't fast enough sometimes.

The best way to reach hourly candidates in the 21st century is by [texting](#). Texts get a 10x faster response than phone calls or emails and 98% of texts are read vs. just 20% of emails. Technology that enables two-way texting allows hiring managers to communicate with candidates quickly and efficiently.

Another critical component of keeping the process moving is a talent management system that enables hiring managers to eliminate or reduce the time required for things like completing applications, scheduling interviews, answering applicants' questions, and assessing their qualifications. You must be able to get new hire paperwork completed quickly and digitally, with checks and balances in place to ensure compliance.

Niche solutions might meet this need if you're looking to solve a single problem mentioned above, but they may not integrate with your current system, which will in turn make your hiring process even longer. For the complex process of hiring hourly employees, you need a complete solution that utilizes automation and integrates data-driven, AI-based, low-touch management.



52% of job seekers said they would be “extremely likely” to move forward with the interview process if they hear back from a company **within 24 hours**.¹

A strong onboarding process

has been shown to improve new hire retention by 82% and productivity by over 70%.

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↑ **82%** New hire retention

↑ **70%** Productivity



When you engage in high-volume, location-based hiring of hourly workers, there are five components that make or break a talent management system: optionality, speed, flexibility, automation, and data.



Optionality

Communicating with today's hourly workforce means accommodating multiple communication styles, specifically [text communications](#). Besides texting, easy-to-fill-out forms and [AI chat](#) are must-haves in today's market.



Speed

Hiring managers need fast and efficient ways to engage interested job candidates, schedule interviews, and quickly decide whether or not to hire them. Being able to send a quick text message or [rapidly schedule an interview](#) not only increases the likelihood of a positive interview experience and the potential for hire, but also helps prevent interview ghosting.



Flexibility

Employers of hourly workers need the flexibility to change and optimize configurations and workflows in their talent management system as needed, depending on the location, job position, market conditions, season, and other variables.



Automation

A critical component of moving the process along quickly is a talent management system that automates processes like completing applications, scheduling interviews, and assessing their qualifications.

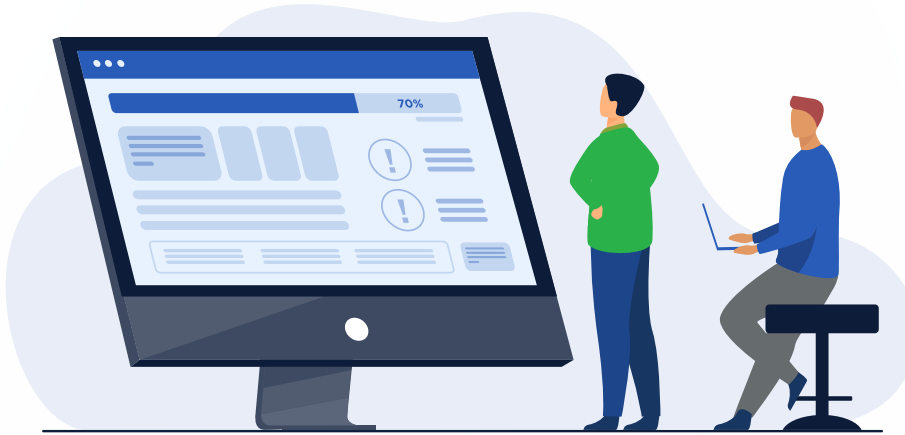


Data

High-volume hiring decisions can only succeed with [adequate data](#) as a guide. Analyzing the data generated from engaging with job applicants and new hires helps you learn vital information to improve your talent acquisition strategy.



In the next section, you'll take a look at your current process to determine where you might have some gaps in functionality and what features you will want in your new talent management solution.



2: Take Stock of Your Current System

Whether you have an existing talent management solution or you're starting with something brand new, use the checklist below as a guide for evaluating your current system and/or to decide what features are important to your business as you begin to narrow down your options.

Keep this checklist handy as you'll use it in your research and when you get to the demo phase of the buying process.



Branded career pages that show off your company culture

A conversational AI chatbot that automatically completes applications, assesses candidates' qualifications, and schedules interviews within minutes

Optionality in how candidates can engage with your company through text communications and text-to-apply options, which boosts candidate response and reduces ghosting

Fast, standard, or extended application form options based on position requirements and staffing needs

Seamless integrations that easily share data with POS, payroll, paycard providers, background checks, WOTC, job boards, assessment partners, and more

Automations that streamline process and workflows to decrease manual efforts and save hiring managers time

Customer support seven days a week with a knowledgeable team that can help you optimize your platform and meet the changing needs of your business and today's candidates

Ability to change and optimize configurations and workflows as needed

Flexibility to easily pivot from the employee-driven labor market of today to a future market

A talent community that allows hiring managers to build a pool of passive and active applicants to engage with as needed

SMS and email campaigns with pre-built templates that make it easy to send job openings to a tailored list of candidates

How to Choose the Best Sourcing & Hiring Software for an Hourly Workforce

Job board integrations and programmatic advertising to optimize your recruitment strategies and ensure your jobs show up where the best applicants are searching

Time it will take to complete the implementation process

Cost per user and/or location

Built-in employee referral program

Registration-less applications that don't require the candidate to create an account

Complimentary on-going support after implementation

Actual humans available seven days a week to answer your questions

Strategic support that goes beyond an automated call center

Multiple options for contacting support (live chat, email, support tickets, phone call)

Expertise in hourly hiring and industry best practices

A team supporting the Customer Success Managers for faster issue resolution

Closed loop issue resolution — if we can't get an answer right away, we won't leave you hanging

Regular trainings and support calls for customers

Applicant support when needed to free up your hiring managers' time

Notes:



Questions to ask yourself after going through the checklist:

- 1 What does your current system do well?
- 2 Are you looking for anything else in a talent management solution that wasn't on the checklist?

3: Evaluate Talent Management Solutions

What worked a couple of years ago no longer cuts it. Under pressure to fill hundreds — if not thousands — of positions every year, high-volume hourly hiring isn't for the faint of heart, especially when there are millions more job openings than job seekers.

A newer trend that has developed in recent years is companies that are well-known for a specific purpose, such as payroll or human resources, expanding to offer Human Capital Management (HCM) solutions to meet their customers' needs of recruiting, managing, and developing employees.

Niche solutions are intriguing and may be a good fit, depending on your business needs. However, if you're hiring many employees across multiple locations, a niche or HCM solution may not be robust enough or offer the flexibility you need. Some locations might be looking for quantity whereas others are looking for quality.

Many talent management solutions promise that they will solve your sourcing and hiring needs, yet fall short when the rubber hits the road. Whether it's a specialized company offering a point solution that only addresses a single area of the problem or an HCM platform trying to add value with an ATS, they don't understand the complexities of decentralized and location-based hiring models. Having a system that allows workflows and configurations at a location level is critical to run a multi-location business.



What results could you see with the right solution?

↓ **84%** Time to apply

↓ **40%** Applicant drop-off rates

↑ **281%** Applicant flow



NICHE SOLUTION



Single issue solution

Niche providers are positioning themselves as more complete solutions than they really are—usually built to solve a single problem.



Multiple integrations

Combining several niche solutions for your talent management ecosystem increases solution complexity and requires multiple integrations across your current systems.



Opportunity costs

Efficiencies gained from a niche product must outweigh the opportunity cost of your time and resources.



Limited automation

Niche solutions often claim AI. Make sure that the intelligence isn't really "artificial".

COMPREHENSIVE PLATFORM



Ease of use + tailored experience

All sourcing, recruiting, and hiring tools in one place means easy customization and less hiring friction.



Scalable + future-proof

End-to-end solutions are built with the talent management process in mind, providing scalability and future-proofing.



Multi-location friendly

Comprehensive platforms provide a blueprint for multi-location, high-volume hiring—enabling transparency and oversight for location managers and recruiters.



Plug + play integrations

A single platform is easier to integrate with the entire talent management ecosystem—creating efficiencies, reducing friction, and automating tasks.



Proven efficiencies + data

An automated end-to-end platform with configurable dashboards provide insights and the ability to drill down into candidate and job board effectiveness.

How to Choose the Best Sourcing & Hiring Software for an Hourly Workforce

That being said, if you are already using an HCM and love some aspects of it, the best option might be finding a comprehensive platform that integrates with that company and can fill in the gaps.

For many hiring managers and franchise owners, the best solution to the challenges of hiring hourly employees — now and in the future — is an end-to-end talent management platform that allows you to do all of this and more in a single platform. Creating a smooth, streamlined process attracts more candidates, moves them through interviewing and hiring in a flash, and gets them into a uniform within days.

Use your list of non-negotiables from Section 2 as you do your research for a new talent management solution. When you narrow your list down to 2-3 options that check most — if not all — of the boxes, you're ready to move on to the next step.



To stay ahead of the competition, your platform must:

- 1 Automate as much as possible
- 2 Speed up the application process
- 3 Allow you to revisit previous applicants
- 4 Create talent pools to share across multiple locations
- 5 Communicate with candidates in the way that works best for them
- 6 Offer applicants a branded experience
- 7 Make it easy for existing employees to refer their friends
- 8 Track your efforts so you can optimize your ROI



4: Making the Final Choice

It's time to see your top 2-3 choices in action and request a demo. Typically running anywhere from 30-60 minutes, a demo is when a representative of the company walks you through an overview of their platform to highlight the features and functions that it can offer. This is your golden opportunity to see the platform, ask any questions, and determine which solution you're going to move forward with implementing.



6 Tips for making the most of your demo:



- 1 Have your checklist handy to compare features to what you see in the demo — if you don't see something, be sure to ask rather than assume they don't have it.
- 2 Ensure that at least one primary decision-maker is included in the meeting or get a recording of the demo to replay later.
- 3 Tell them exactly what you are looking for and what you need to see to make a decision.
- 4 Ask questions, ask them to slow down, or ask them to repeat a step — don't be shy!
- 5 Give them a chance to address any concerns you might have.
- 6 Make sure they integrate with your business-critical systems, like payroll, background checks, WOTC, etc. Bring a list of your challenges so you can ask how they solve for each one.



QUESTIONS TO ASK DURING YOUR DEMO:

What does the implementation process entail? How long does it take? What are the implementation fees?

How do they incorporate customer feedback into their product roadmap?

What does their Customer Success Model look like? What support is and isn't included both before and after you go live? Do they offer applicant support?

Does the system have built-in compliance that alerts users if something needs to be corrected?

Does this system give the right visibility and permission to the right people to help streamline hiring workflows?

What kinds of reports can you run?

How is pricing structured? How much will your cost be?

Can all employee data be accessed from an employee's record? If I make a change in one place, does it sync up with other sections?

How to Choose the Best Sourcing & Hiring Software for an Hourly Workforce

Can I easily add a new location if I expand/
open a new franchise?

How does the company communicate new
features and updates?

Is the system configurable for different
locations that might have different needs?

What makes them different from their
competition?

What experience does the company have
within the hourly workforce industry?

How will the solution adapt to future
market conditions and/or what new
features are they working on?

How does the company handle changes in
laws that might affect compliance?

Does the platform connect with the back office
tools and/or partners you are already using
today? Are they preferred partners of the most
well-known job boards, programmatic job
advertisers, payroll, background check, POS,
workforce mgmt., WOTC, I-9, assessments,
training/LMS and other providers?

What security measures are in place to
ensure data is protected?

How are integrated partners connected:
seamless API or file upload?



After you get a demo of each option, it's time to make a choice. Only you can decide which is best for your business, and don't hesitate to follow-up with the sales team if you need anything else to make your final decision.



What other questions do you have for your demo?



5: Getting Internal Buy-In

If you are not the primary decision-maker, you will have to make your case for why the talent management solution you chose is worth the time, effort, and investment.

Start by explaining how this will address your company's biggest challenges. After completing your research and demo, you should be able to address how your proposed talent management solution can alleviate these concerns.

The biggest questions will likely be around cost and process efficiency. The company you selected should be able to provide information around cost savings, as well as customer testimonials and stats that demonstrate the results you can expect to see.



Don't forget about other company goals that the solution can help you meet, such as employee engagement, productivity, and retention.



You can also expect questions from stakeholders such as:

- 1 What will it cost and how will it save money compared to the current system?
- 2 How will this make the current process easier or faster?
- 3 What will the rollout and training process look like?





Here are a few of the more common problems that those hiring the hourly workforce are experiencing these days as well as how it affects your business:

PROBLEM	IMPACT	SOLUTION
Low applicant flow and not being able to fully staff your locations	Reduced hours of operation (less revenue), lower customer satisfaction (less revenue), manager burnout from working extra hours to cover the difference (employee turnover)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automated processes, using data to maximize recruitment spend
Struggling to find quality applicants	Not enough staff means reduced hours of operation (less revenue), lower customer satisfaction (less revenue), manager burnout from working extra hours to cover the difference (employee turnover)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job board integrations, fast application options and a conversational AI chatbot to speed up the application process, offer candidates optionality in how they apply, using data to help maximize recruitment spend
Hours of time being spent on inefficient hiring and onboarding processes across multiple systems	Less time for managers to focus on business operations (less revenue, higher employee turnover)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automated processes, seamless integrations with critical business systems, all-in-one platform
Lack of customer support with your existing solution	Less time for managers to focus on business operations (less revenue, higher employee turnover)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive customer support model, hourly expertise
Lack of system flexibility and scalability	More manual work (time wasted), less time for managers to focus on business operations (less revenue, higher employee turnover), going through the evaluation process again to find a new system (HR costs, time wasted)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AI- and data-driven system that can grow with your business, robust customer support to help your business succeed with best practices gathered from working with thousands of businesses
Low user-adoption in less tech-savvy employees	More manual work (time wasted), less time for managers to focus on business operations (less revenue, higher employee turnover)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automated processes that require fewer steps, an easy-to-use platform dashboard
No way to determine how to effectively budget your spend for recruitment and hiring	Losing money or spending it in the wrong places (wasting time and money), not finding enough or the right applicants (less revenue), not being able to fully staff your business (less revenue)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data and analytics reports that can tell you what is and isn't working
High employee turnover	Losing money constantly onboarding/training new employees, lower customer satisfaction/loyalty (less revenue)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy employee referral system that is built into the platform, hire the right employees the first time through Posi-fit screening questions

6: Setting Your Team Up For Success

Investing in a talent management solution is a big decision, so once you get through all of the steps, make sure that you're setting yourself up for success to maximize your ROI.

Customer support is there to help your business succeed and should feel like a partnership, so ask for help when you need it. Throughout the implementation process be sure to take advantage of training support so that you and your team(s) are set up for faster adoption.

Know what resources are available to you so that if you or anyone else has a question, you know where to start looking for an answer. Video tutorials, webinars, and step-by-step directions are great resources that a good customer support model will include. If you do need more support, are they resolving your issue in a timely manner? Are their answers backed by industry and technical expertise?

Once a quarter or every few months, refer back to the original checklist to make sure the solution you chose is still checking the boxes. It should be flexible enough to change as your recruiting, hiring, and onboarding needs change. It should grow and scale with you as your business grows.



Last but not least, are you taking advantage of the data and analytic features? Not only will this help you report your overall ROI, but can be used to help hiring managers make recruiting spend decisions, simplify compliance, and track employee goals.



Conclusion


When it comes to running a business, it is essential to know your market and know who you are serving. The needs of a company employing hourly workers are very different than a company with salaried workers. The needs of a franchise-based model or with many locations are very different than a company with ownership in one centralized location. Different industries have their own workflows and requirements.

To stay competitive, the smart move is to ensure that you have the flexibility to change and optimize configurations and workflows as needed, depending on factors such as location, job position, market conditions, seasonality, and other variables. That includes the ability to pivot easily from the employee-driven labor market of today to a future market if and when the pendulum swings.

The TalentReef platform helps hiring managers, HR pros, and franchisees just like you do that every day.

As an industry-leading talent management solution provider, we leverage over a decade of serving national brands at more than 100,000 locations to optimize recruiting, hiring, onboarding, training, and assessment workflows. The only talent management platform purpose-built for location-based, high-volume hourly hiring, TalentReef integrates seamlessly with your existing business systems to create a single, streamlined experience for all internal and external stakeholders.

TalentReef was acquired by Mitratesh in August 2022. [Learn more.](#)



TalentReef has everything you need for success today, plus the flexibility to adapt to tomorrow's changes.





Would you like a demo?

Ready to see what a talent management platform purpose-built for location-based, high-volume hourly hiring can do for your business?

[Sign up for a demo](#)

¹ <https://www.qsrmagazine.com/employee-management/restaurant-hiring-trends-2021-virtual-interviews-speed-and-flexibility>

² <https://b2b-assets.glassdoor.com/the-true-cost-of-a-bad-hire.pdf>