



Wanted: Top Technical Talent

INTRODUCTION

"Hire slow, fire fast" is a common phrase describing how organizations find uncommon hires and retain great talent. In nearly every industry, associates serve as core differentiators for the company. The IT industry is no exception.

Where many MSPs run into challenges is in identifying and hiring the right individual—especially for a technical position that requires specializations, such as service and support capabilities.

The topic of finding the right technical talent has dominated headlines for some time. It has also become a catalyst for industry studies, many of which have spent hours analyzing the shortage of qualified techs and qualifying fresh interest in a career in IT.

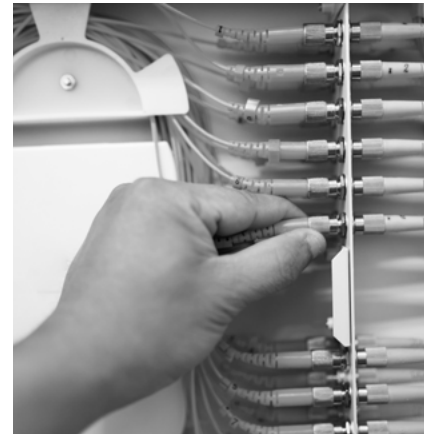
The struggle for technical talent is real, and demand is growing—so before you post for an open position, do your homework. Identify what you are looking for, make the case for a great company career, and set clear expectations for all involved. This will help ensure you hire smart and don't just hire anybody to get the position filled.

BE PATIENT AND DEFINE THE PROCESS

BE PREPARED BEFORE YOU START

Take your time and be process-oriented with the hiring selection. This will inevitably make it easier to vet candidates, eliminating the wrong ones and finding the right ones. After all, a bad hire can take down the team and ruin a customer experience.

- » Set and document goals for the hiring process, working to ensure the timing, tools, and talent needed in-house are in place to attract and assess candidates properly.
- » Engage an expert if you don't have the time or resources in-house to focus on recruitment, and get associates and your network involved in the search when appropriate.
- » Recognize that potential candidates want more than just a place to work. They want to be a part of a company that has purpose. Ensure your "pitch" accounts for the company's vision, mission and value, and goes beyond the standards benefits and salary discussion.
- » Get comfortable asking questions that challenge candidates to solve problems and demonstrate both hard and soft skills. Gone are the days of personality tests and softball questions.



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Talent Tip: Always be hiring. You will inevitably come across talent that isn't a fit for the current position in play, but don't lose sight of the bigger picture. Good talent is hard to find. Keep the conversation going and remember additional skills can be taught and learned. Attitude and work ethic come from the core, build on the company culture, and help define the customer experience.

SET THE SKILL SET

DEFINE THE ROLE AND THE SKILLS

Writing a clear job description is foundational to finding the right talent and setting a career path that people want to pursue.

A technician's capabilities can run the gamut, making for a great generalist or a highly skilled specialist. A laundry list of certs and experience does not guarantee the candidate is good match for the needs of the business.

Be deliberate in the career description and title of the position. Not sure what to say? Leverage existing technical staff to assist in getting the terminology right and ensure the talent you want is the tech you are asking for.

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On a similar note, if you are not able to vet the individual's capabilities for a new or existing position within the company, find an individual on your team or in your network who can. What you don't know and don't ask could lead to hiring an unqualified individual for the job.

Talent Tip: Take the time to define and differentiate the skill set wanted. Lay out the responsibilities, resources the position requires, and requests—leaving nothing to interpretation, including hard skills as well as soft skills. A preferred profile is paramount to the selection process and should serve as a guide, not a checklist.

HIRE SPECIAL TEAMS

ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

The days of sitting across from an individual and firing off questions about their biggest strengths and weaknesses are over. Yes, the answers remain relevant, but the general approach and strategic priorities have changed. Even the resume has been retooled in many cases to "show and tell" versus "just state the facts".

Today's MSP does business differently. You are a problem solver, a trusted advisor and a rainmaker. The talent you hire ties directly to the growth of your company, as well as the loyalty of your customers. Look for inquisitive and qualified people who focus (not fixate) on their career, the company's potential, and your customer's success.

Once you have identified and initially vetted a candidate, set a qualifying call to align priorities and discuss any deal breakers, which may include salary range, commute, and general business benefits.

The goal is not to cut a contract blindly over the phone, but to simply weed out prospects with unrealistic demands and expectations and find those worthy of an in-person interview. There is no use spending time with a picture-perfect hire who will never sign on the line.

Talent Tip: Always be ready to discuss the day-to-day, as well as the potential career path surrounding the position in question. Continued education, opportunity, and growth are extremely important to motivated millennials, as well as experienced technicians looking to advance their careers. If a candidate is not asking questions about the company, the customers, or the career path, take heed. It could be a sign of something much more telling.



HOW WE CAN HELP

Keeping associates and customers happy requires deliberate focus and execution. For well over a decade we've been enabling channel partners with the technology and documented business resources designed to help them become successful MSPs.

One of the biggest benefits of working with SolarWinds MSP is our relentless focus on our customers. We want to help make your world more actionable and your business more profitable. Here are just a few of the many resources and technologies available to you:

MSP Institute: Gain knowledge that may help you to improve your business by visiting our extensive library of business and technical training content, based on the practices of the most successful MSP businesses. Get the latest practical tips and strategies by browsing through our videos, webinars, blog posts, and other content available at solarwindsmsp.com/msp-institute.

Business-Building Resources: Our resource center is full of business-focused content ranging from technology trends, marketing and sales best practices, and information around how to potentially capitalize on key market trends. In addition, we provide specific GDPR and security-centric resource centers that delve more deeply into those areas. Visit solarwindsmsp.com/resources.

MSP Pulse: We provide an industry benchmark tool that can help you better understand the nature of your business compared to your peers, with a customized report delivered to you upon completion. Visit <https://pages.solarwindsmsp.com/msp-pulse-survey.html>.



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