



Don't Lose Your **Best Candidates** to a Poor Screening Process

Overview Losing a job candidate is like losing a customer. Don't let a negative applicant experience hurt your chances of attracting top talent. Streamlining your employment screening process is the first step to a better candidate experience.



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Introduction

Job candidates aren't just looking for a job, they're looking for a positive brand experience from your company. And they consider the entire recruitment process – including pre-employment screening – when they evaluate your business.

You can build a pool of solid candidates if you simplify your application process, streamline your communication – but stay in touch – and provide the experience candidates are seeking.

Blow it, and you've lost not only a potential employee, but a possible loss of revenue for your business down the line.

Consistent engagement is an essential part of keeping talented candidates interested.

You spend thousands of dollars to hire, onboard and train new employees. A thorough employment screening process is a simple and relatively inexpensive way to ensure you're making the best decision for your business. But you have to manage the screening portion of your process just as you do the other moving pieces (i.e., application, interview, timely communication) to help ensure you don't lose good candidates before you have a chance to make a job offer.

Here are some guidelines.



Get signed consent for background checks

The federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) requires written disclosure notifying a candidate that an employer is hiring a company to do a background check. The candidate must sign the disclosure, giving the employer authorization to do so. If information uncovered in the background screening process is even a partial factor in the decision to hire, promote or take any other employment action, the candidate must be notified before adverse action is taken under the law.

Your job candidates may be hesitant to sign off on more paperwork for a variety of reasons – criminal convictions they hope to hide, poor credit or even concerns about privacy of their personal information. They may just be tired of the process and feel like this is one more way you’re dragging it out.

It’s tempting to let screening slide when your gut tells you the candidate is the right one, but resist that urge. Remind her or him that a company willing to overlook the background screening process may not be a place they want to work.

Your decision to conduct background screening provides protection for your workplace and for your potential employees. Put your candidates further at ease by ensuring them that their personal information will remain private and used only by a reputable screening company.

Don’t make the process any lengthier by failing to secure signed consent forms. If you do, your screening vendor has to come back to you, and you’ll have to go back to your candidate to get those forms before the process can begin.



Take time to ensure you provide correct information

Establishing the identity of the candidate is job number one for you as an employer.

Obtaining multiple identifiers, such as full name and previous names, date of birth, Social Security and driver's license numbers sounds simple, but verifying that all of this information belongs to your applicant is the first step in the process.

Failure to secure correct or complete information can slow down your screening process and result in a negative candidate experience. It's a big world, and there are lots of people with not only the same name, but the same name and the same date of birth.

If your screening vendor calls you with a question about your candidate, don't sit on the request or ignore it. Until you provide the information your vendor needs, your vendor can't do his or her job. Another delay, another frustrated job candidate who may decide you're not the company for him or her.

You've told your candidates their personal information is safe, but they may not feel that way if they start getting calls from strangers – a screening vendor, an actual verifier or even a recruiter – asking for verification of information.

Candidates who feel you or your screening vendor are being intrusive or accusatory may decide to skip you as a potential employer and create a negative image of your brand when they talk about their experience.



Make sure your pre-employment assessment aren't cumbersome

Few people enjoy taking tests. If you offer a pre-assessment test, it's essential that your candidates have a positive experience, so take design and length into consideration.

The test's look and feel should be conducive to your company's culture. It's unlikely an applicant will think positively of your company if it's not.

If the test is too long or cumbersome, it's not going to be a beneficial tool to the hiring process and can result in increased candidate drop-off rates.

Also, throwing an assessment test into the process late in the hiring game can make it seem like an afterthought and be a turn-off to job candidates.

Which of these background checks are subject to the FCRA?



Criminal history



Driving history



Credit reports



Education verification



License verification

If you answered “all,” you’re correct.

Let candidates know what checks you’ll be performing

Develop a written screening policy for your company that adheres to preset standards and helps you determine which checks are beneficial to your business and for which positions. This helps you avoid unnecessary checks that can add time to the process.

When you perform the same background checks for all like positions, you’re treating your candidates consistently and avoiding potential discrimination complaints. You can also give your candidates an idea of how long the background check process will take.

Provide adverse screening results in a timely manner

Under the FCRA law, any negative information that could cause an employer to take adverse action against an applicant must be reported to that person and the candidate given opportunity to correct or challenge the information – before adverse action against the candidate is taken.

Provide results to your candidates in a timely manner – don’t sit on them because you’re discarding an “unfit” applicant to focus on other potential employees. If you immediately disqualify candidates with criminal records, you may open your company to claims of discrimination or an FCRA lawsuit.

You may also be running off good candidates whose backgrounds will not adversely affect their ability to perform the job or jeopardize your employees, clients or company in any manner.



The bottom line

Your background screening process can help or hinder your brand.

Working with a reputable employment–screening company gives you the peace of mind that comes with making informed hiring decisions – but not if the process has caused your best candidates to turn away and left you with a mediocre talent pool.

You have a responsibility to manage the screening portion of your hiring process just as you manage the other components of the process.

Good vendors, like Insperty® Employment Screening, will schedule regular client reviews with you to provide a realistic picture of how you may have slowed the process at any point and what you can do to improve and streamline it.

Want more resources to guide you?

Keeping up with the latest in business trends and best practices can be challenging. Insperty can help.

From in-depth guides to interactive infographics, we provide a variety of complimentary online resources that are chock-full of useful and timely content for business leaders like you. Explore the latest news and proven advice on a wide array of business and HR topics, including business performance, benefits and compensation, leadership and management, and legal compliance that help keep you in tune with new ideas and best practices.



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