

IQTalent Recruitment Glossary

IQTalent has an expansive vocabulary of recruiting-specific terminology.

To help you navigate the occasionally murky waters of recruitment we've created an A-Z industry glossary. Keep track of recruiting-related jargon and understand how it ties into your talent acquisition strategy.

Acqui-Hiring

(acquisition and hiring) purchasing a company in order to acquire its employees, while the product of the acquired company becomes secondary. This is a relatively new concept that is becoming more common, especially in the tech industry.

Active Candidate

an individual who is actively searching for a job and is open to hearing about opportunities from recruiters and employers. The opposite of a passive candidate.

Actively Passive

someone who makes themselves “findable” but isn't actively looking for a new career.

AI Recruitment

the application of artificial intelligence to source, engage and interact with candidates. This technology is designed to automate repetitive, high-volume tasks so recruiters can focus on other elements of their jobs.

Applicant Tracking System

the software used to automate many of the processes needed to manage the recruitment process. In many cases, an ATS automatically filters applications based on given criteria such as keywords, skills, former employers, years of experience and schools attended. The ATS then creates a list of candidate applications that match the given criteria.

Aptitude Testing

test(s) made to assess a candidate's potential and thinking capabilities in order to determine whether or not they are qualified. These can also be used to prove if a candidate is being truthful about their skills listed on their resume.



Backfill

an open position created by the vacation of the incumbent.

Billable Hours

the hours (of the 40 hour workweek) which are billed to a specific client.

Boolean Search

a process that allows the user to insert words or phrases such as AND, OR, NOT to limit, broaden, or define the search results. Boolean search allows the combination of five different elements to conduct a search.



C-Level

top-level managers in organizations whose titles include the word “chief”. Examples include CEO (Chief Executive Officer), CFO (Chief Financial Officer), and COO (Chief Operating Officer).

C2C

Contract to Contract. This is a contract employee who moves from one contracted position to another one.

Benefits

non-cash incentives that are separate from salary. Examples are healthcare, 401K contributions, company cars, flexible schedules, paid time off, wellness program or gym, children’s daycare, student loan assistance, conference stipend, and so on.

Bonus Hours

any remaining hours (of the 40-hour workweek) a team member has available which are not billed specifically to the client but worked as extra “free” hours for a client.

Buy-Back

when an employee is offered more money than their previous salary to encourage the employee to stay with their current company after they’ve resigned.

C-Suite

Chief [insert] Officer. applies to executives at the VP level and up.

C2P

Contract to Permanent. This is a person who is hired as a contractor with the intention or promise of transitioning to a full-time employee after a specified period.

Calibration

typically done during an intake meeting where the Recruiter or Sourcer meets with the Hiring Manager to understand the job requirements for a new opening.

Candidate Experience

a candidate's perception of a company's entire recruiting and hiring process.

Candidate Profile

a framework of qualities, characteristics, or past achievements that you want in a candidate for a certain job opening.

Client Kick-Off

the initial meeting with a client where the scope of the partnership is clarified.

Contingency Recruiter

the recruiter or recruitment firm is not paid until they provide a candidate who is offered and accepts the position. Sometimes called "No Win, No Fee." Contingency recruiters must operate especially quickly to attract top talent before in-house teams and competitors.

Call to Action CTA

to start a conversation or take action.

Candidate Persona

a clear semi-fictional representational of the ideal candidate to fill an open position. The candidate persona is typically determined by an HR team in order to tailor their sourcing and acquisition strategies towards candidates who match that persona.

CF

an abbreviation for Connectifier which is a LinkedIn-owned machine learning-based searching and matching technology to help recruiters and hiring managers find talent.

Close

the final step of the recruiting process when the candidate signs the job offer and becomes an employee.

Cost Per Hire

the total cost of bringing new hires into a company. This metric includes all expenses of the recruitment process including communication/ administrative costs, travel, and equipment. It can be calculated by adding all costs of hiring then dividing that sum by the number of hires in a certain time frame.

Counter Offer

made in response to a previous offer by the other party during negotiations of a final contract.

Customer Relationship Management CRM

a technology for managing company relationships and interactions with customers and potential customers.

Deferred Compensation

a portion of compensation that is paid to an employee at a later date. An example of deferred compensation is a pension, which is paid when an employee retires, even though it is continuously earned.

Depending on Experience (DOE)

when the compensation for an open position is not fixed but depends on the candidate's previous experience in the field.

Diamond Candidate

an IQT-specific method of sourcing and recruiting that includes the 4 C's, collaboration, calibration, candidate, and culture.

Direct Reports

people for whom another is directly responsible; subordinates.

Elevator Pitch

a brief summary of why a company and/or position is attractive. The message should be short enough to recite during an elevator ride.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

an employer-sponsored program that offers a variety of support arrangements to help employees through personal issues such as addiction, mental health, financial stress, marital strife, bereavement, and various other conditions/issues. EAP is a benefit offered by some employers.

Employee Referral Program

a sourcing tactic used by recruiters where current employees are rewarded for recommending candidates for open positions. Often this sourcing method can reduce time to hire and cost per hire.

Employee Value Proposition (EVP)

the combined rewards and benefits that an employee will receive in return for satisfactory performance.

Shareholder Equity (Equity)

refers to ownership in the company usually through shares. Can be a part of compensation especially for executive employees.

Fixed-Term Contract

a contract signed with a recruiter that has a specific beginning and end date. The recruiter will only be paid for the work completed between those dates.

Full Lifecycle

recruiting that begins with sourcing passive candidates and ends with an offer. The entire recruitment process.

Ghosting

when a candidate suddenly stops communicating with a recruiter or potential employee.

H1B

a visa in the United States under the Immigration and Nationality Act, section 101 that allows U.S. employers to temporarily employ foreign workers in specialty occupations.

Executive Search

a specialized recruitment tactic to seek out and recruit highly qualified senior-level candidates to fill open positions.

FTE

an abbreviation for full-time employee.

Function

type or level of job. The combined list of responsibilities and competencies that you expect from a potential employee, closely aligned with job title.

Gig Worker

an individual who works a job for a specified period of time only.

Halo and Horns Effect

coined by psychologist Edward Thorndike in 1920, this term refers to a cognitive bias in which our general impression of a person influences how we feel and think about their character.

Headcount Mapping

a method of predicting how many vacant positions will need to be filled within a set period (often a year) and what the cost of hiring for those positions will be.

HM

an abbreviation for Hiring Manager.

Incentive Pay

compensation awarded to a limited number of high-performing employees and meant to motivate employees.

Insourcing

filling an open position with someone already employed at the organization.

JD

an abbreviation for job description.

Job Hopper

one who is inclined to jump from job to job quickly, generally staying with any one company less than two years, often, but not always younger professionals.

Hidden Job Market

refers to available positions that are not listed on job boards or online.

In-House

existing within an organization; without assistance from outside the organization; internal.

Individual Contributor (IC)

someone who does not formally lead or manage other people.

Intake

the act of taking in the information about a role from a client or hiring manager. Details include function, responsibilities, culture, experience, etc.

Job Board

a website that allows employers to post open positions and accept applications.

Keyword

any significant word or phrase that you would expect to find within a resume, profile, or other database entity.

Keyword Family

a collection of keyword groups that are highly related and tied together conceptually. In general, you should build Boolean using 'OR's within keyword families and 'AND's between families.

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities (KSA)

the knowledge, skills, abilities required to perform a job well.

Lead Generation

the initiation of interest into products or services of a business.

LIR

an abbreviation for LinkedIn Recruiter.

NERD

a member of our IQT sourcing team at our Nashville headquarters. Our NERDs are experts in research and candidate outreach (Nashville Executive Research Division).

Keyword Group

a collection of iterations on a single keyword, phrase, or concept that may appear within a profile or resume. In general, you should build boolean using 'OR's within keyword groups and 'AND's between groups.

Lateral Job Transfer

a move to another position at the same organization with relatively the same level of responsibility and pay.

Lead Nurturing

the process of developing relationships with buyers at every stage of the sales funnel, and through every step of the buyer's journey.

Mail Merge

most often used to print or email form letters to multiple recipients. Using Mail Merge, you can easily customize form letters for individual recipients.

Offer

when a candidate is formally extended a job opportunity.

Onboarding

a series of events (including orientation) that help new employees to understand how to be successful in their new role and how their work contributes to the organization.

Panel Interview

a job interview in which an applicant answers questions from a group of people who then make the hiring decision.

Pre-Employment Screening (PES)

a background check and validation of previous work experience meant to uncover criminal history, workers' compensation claims, or previous employment issues related to the candidate.

Pipeline

a ready pool of candidates with the right qualifications to be considered for a specific role.

Post and Pray

a passive recruitment method in which a recruiter places a job opening on an online job board and hopes that great candidates respond with the right qualifications.

On Target Earnings (OTE)

the estimated amount of earning an employee receives when they meet their targets.

Passive Candidate

an individual who is satisfied in their current role and not looking for new career opportunities. These candidates are typically more difficult to reach than active candidates.

People Aggregator

a sourcing tool that collects data on professionals via the social web and creates composite profiles for evaluation. Examples are Entelo, Connectifier, TalentBin, and Dice Open Web.

Poaching

"stealing" an employee from a competitor.

Probationary Arrangement

a new employee and employer agree that the new employee will work for a set amount of time on a trial or probationary period.

Purple Squirrel

the rare, perfect candidate who meets every requirement for the position.

Resume Spam

the act of submitting resumes to a multitude of job postings with little attention to the job description, required qualifications, or general job fit.

Returnship

an internship for professionals returning to the workforce.

RSUs

restricted stock or letter stock, is stock of a company that is not completely transferable until certain conditions have been met. Once those conditions have been met the stock becomes unrestricted and transferable to the person holding the award.

Sign On Bonus

money paid upfront to a new employee by a company as an incentive to join that company.

Query

string of boolean keywords and operators; can also refer to any search generally speaking (sometimes in the context of SQL and/or relational databases).

Retained Recruiters

the recruiter will charge an upfront fee to the client to conduct a search. The recruiter will provide a shortlist of qualified candidates for the client to choose from.

Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO)

a business model in which a company outsources the management of talent acquisition in whole or in part to a third-party firm.

Screen

a phone call or video chat to determine whether a prospect has the qualifications and interest to interview for the position.

Social Hiring or Social Media Recruiting (Social Recruitment)

attracting candidates by using social platforms for advertising and to find information on candidates.

Sourcing

the use of one or more strategies to attract or identify candidates to a certain open position. Internal and external recruitment advertising may be used.

String

a combination of keywords and boolean operators used in a search.

Target Company

any company whose talent is desirable for a number of reasons, e.g. working on a competing product, holding desirable degrees, participating in a similar culture, etc.

Time to Fill

the average time it takes to fill an open position.

Turndown

post-interview when a recruiter tells the candidate they didn't receive the job.

Zoom

an abbreviation for ZoomInfo which is a subscription-based software as a service company that sells access to its database of information about business people and companies to sales, marketing and recruiting professionals.

Stock Options

a label that refers to compensation contracts between an employer and an employee that carries some characteristics of financial options.

Talent Acquisition

the strategy used to attract and hire the best people.

Temp

a temporary employee.

TN Visa

a special non-immigrant classification in the United States that offers expedited work authorization to a citizen of Canada or a national of Mexico.

Wage Drift

the difference between the negotiated salary and the one that is actually paid to an employee by the end of a certain work period. Wage Drift is most common in industries with unpredictable demand and seasonal hikes.