

Growing teams will remain hard in 2022

Last year will be unique in many ways, but one thing that will be repeated in 2022 is that hiring will still be tough. Unlike previous economic shocks there is no big pool of talent that has lost their jobs. We still have significantly less qualified people per job opening, so you'll need to work hard to capture the right people.

But this isn't simply a problem of hiring good talent. This is about recruitment and retention, and the latter part is often forgotten as a key factor in growing your team, rather than just standing still.

The companies that pay significant attention to retention will be the ones that find it easier to grow their team sustainably.

Good people won't stay in bad roles

There's a lot less friction in changing roles now. Without the need to work in an office full-time, candidates don't need to adopt a new commute or consider relocating.

A 3-stage hiring process that used to take 6 weeks can now be done within 10 days. Most people stay sat in the same seat in their home after changing jobs. Before, relationships with valued colleagues might have been something to keep you but is that still the case when you're not seeing them every day?

If someone's taken a role that's not right for them, previously the effort of finding a new one might have made sticking it out the likely choice. That's not the case now, and in a world where shorter tenures aren't judged in the way they once were people will move on if things aren't right.

The Great Expectation

We've all heard about the Great Resignation. People are leaving jobs like never before, and many of the new ones they are taking are paying them significantly more.

In many cases this increased reward is justified, but in other cases maybe not. Companies that have had to pay more will understandably expect more, and some candidates, through no fault of their own, won't have much chance of meeting those expectations.

I think this year we'll see quick action when those new hires have taken extra money, but aren't able to perform at a level to justify it. Companies won't be able to afford to keep them in the hope they improve.

To butcher advice given to Spiderman, with great pay comes great expectation.

Intentionally hiring for hybrid

After almost two years, we've all got used to not being in the office Monday to Friday. Although some will plan on returning full time (not something I'd advise in tech if recruitment and retention matters) and some will stay virtual forever, it feels that most will sit in a very broad middle of hybrid working.

Until now, I've not seen many companies consciously think about what capabilities they need to hire for have a team that works well in a hybrid world. We know that remote working involves shifting from synchronous to at least partly asynchronous communication. So, companies that include assessment of someone's writing skills will excel - writing is the new superpower in how our future world of work looks.

Maybe we'll also see more examples of async in the hiring process. For

example, a hiring manager using Loom to add significant colour to a job spec and help candidates understand what's really important. Or maybe using Notion to articulate key values and ways of working within the company, letting potential hires understand the detail of how life is without needing to feel guilty about asking twenty questions in an interview.

Purpose will attract talent

A continuing trend here rather than something new. I wrote in 2021 about how important purpose will be in attracting talent, and what you'll need to do to compete with big tech and big money. This year I think it will continue to be key.

Whether you're building solutions in women's health, improving mental wellbeing for underrepresented groups, or aiming to deliver groceries in 14 minutes you'll need to articulate a clear purpose. That might be linked to your mission or more focused on the impact of a particular role.

Purpose won't mean that people join you above all else, but it's a massively important part of how startups can hire great talent with limited resources.

Two salaries for one person

More remote work has meant less focus on how many hours people are working, and more importance placed on how much they are achieving.

Many people are looking to build portfolio careers, working with a number of employers over a period of time. Many companies are building flexible workforces, using part time, freelance and contract resources rather than defaulting to full time permanent hires.

One way these points could combine? It becomes acceptable for someone to take two roles at the same time, receiving a full-time salary equivalent for each one.

If an engineer can meet the expectations a company have a typical perm hires, meeting deadlines and communicating as needed along the way, then they can receive a reward based on output not hours.

And if they have the capability to do this simultaneously for two employers and are transparent about the situation, what's stopping them?

I've heard examples over the last 18 months of developers taking two full time permanent roles for different employers but keeping this secret. Maybe 2022

will the year that it becomes acceptable?

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