# Recruit Using Github, Quora, Dribbble & More

Here at Entelo, we've observed a growing trend where candidates' professional data is becoming increasingly distributed across a number of different websites, and it is our belief that this trend will continue to manifest itself in the coming years.

Sites like Github and StackOverflow are now the hubs for projects and discussion pertaining to software engineering. A candidate's Github profile may show many relevant projects they've worked on and their StackOverflow profile may show different topics where they've answered questions and demonstrated their expertise. This professional data augments existing resources like resumes and Linkedin profiles to give more context about a candidate's true skills and abilities.

The same holds true for other professions. Designers are building their public portfolios on sites like Dribbble, Behance and CarbonMade. Mechanical Engineers are posting their CAD models to GrabCad and data scientists are engaging in Kaggle statistical competitions.

These social sites house valuable data for recruiters to research candidates better than ever before, and those that make these resources a valuable part of their recruiting arsenal will reap the rewards in a highly competitive recruiting environment. In this series of comprehensive guides, we'll examine how you can leverage these new social sites to diversify your recruiting efforts and ultimately hire the best people for your organization.
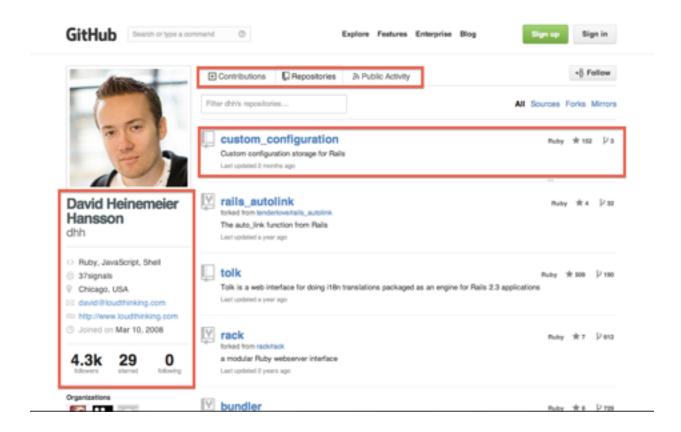
## How to use Github to Recruit

Before we start examining how to effectively leverage Github for recruiting, let's take a look at some of the stats:

- Github was founded in 2008
- Boasts **over 3.3 million users** with **over 3.5 million repositories**
- Raised **$100 million** from one of the most respected VC firms, Andreesen-Horowitz

What does this all mean for Github? The service is growing fast and it will be around for the long haul. Understanding how to effectively use Github for recruiting will allow you to position yourself better in the coming years, especially as more engineers join and become more active on the site.

But what exactly is Github? Github is a cloud-based hosting service for software development projects that uses the Git version control system (1). Effectively, developers can collaborate with others on both private and public projects all within the cloud. This allows developers to rapidly build off each others work, promoting quick development cycles and innovation especially on open-source projects. In fact some of the most famous projects are housed on Github including Rails, the open-source framework for Ruby that has become wildly popular amongst startups.

For recruiters, this is incredibly important as developers will oftentimes have public projects that can be viewed, providing great insight into developers' portfolios, professional interests and influence. Let's take a look at David Heinemeier Hansson's (aka DHH, the creator or Ruby on Rails) Github profile:

On the left side of these profiles, you'll notice some valuable information including:
- Most common languages he or she uses (i.e. Ruby, Javascript, Shell)
- Current Organization he or she is a part of (i.e. 37signals)
- Location (Chicago, IL)
- Email address
- Personal website
- Number of followers, starred repos and number of people he or she is following
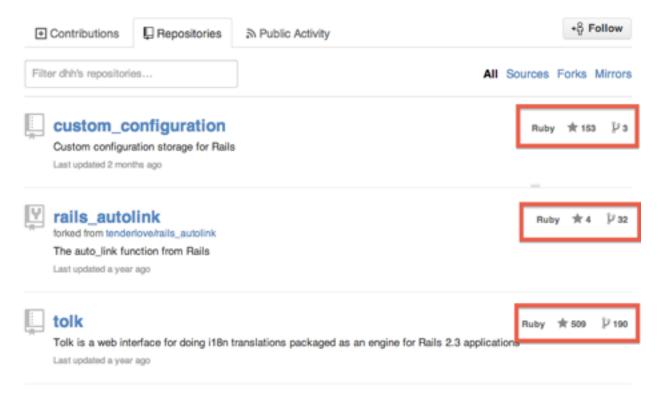
While this data may not always be fresh as not all developers frequent Github often, we can still derive some great meaning for the purposes of recruiting. For one, understanding languages that a candidate has posted projects in provides a quick perspective of his or her specialties. Additionally, between an email address being readily available and a personal website (frequently), many candidates will have provided a way of reaching out to them directly.

Number of followers also serves as a good proxy for the developers influence on Github. The more followers a developer has, the more people that pay attention to projects that they post which generally correlates to the strength of their contributions. As a general rule of thumb, having 2-10 followers is good, 11-25 followers is great, 25-75 followers is exceptional, and >75 followers are people that will be extremely difficult to recruit as they're usually avid open-source contributors from notoriously difficult organizations to recruit from (i.e. 37signals, Github, Heroku).

One note on this: having many followers (i.e. DHH having 4.3k) usually signifies that a candidate is extremely good and difficult to recruit, but not having many followers **does not** mean that the candidate is necessarily lacking. Some people simply aren't active on Github, so do be careful to use this data in the proper context.
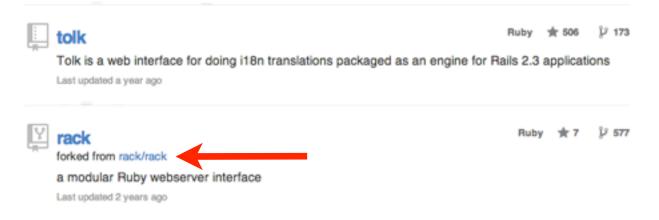
If you happen to come across a developer that you really respect but know won't be someone you can hire, taking a look at their starred repositories and people they follow could also prove to be a great resource for discovering developers that may have the skillsets you're looking for.

Now let's take a look at the individual projects, or **repositories** as they're referred to on Github.

Next to each repository you'll see the language it's been written in, the number of developers that have starred that repository and the number of times that repository has been forked. Let's clarify some of the terminology:

- **Stars (pertaining to repositories):** Stars refer to the number of people that explicitly follow that particular project. You can think of a Star as a Facebook "Like" within Github where the more a repository has been starred, the more valuable that project has been deemed by the Github community. Even a couple stars is usually a good sign that that repository is valuable to the community while some repositories (like Rails) will have thousands of stars.
- **Forks:** The number of forks signifies the number of times that other developers have taken that repository and built off of it. You can think of it as a Twitter "Retweet" where you can add additional commentary to someone else's comment. A high number of forks signifies that that repository has been quite valuable to the community as others have actually built off of it. Looking through the candidates that have forked that repository could also provide another means of discovering new candidates that may be working on projects you're interested in.

You'll also notice that within developers' list or repositories that some are original repos (ones that they started themselves) while others are forked (they've built off of someone else's existing project). While original work shows what someone is capable of creating from scratch, forked repos can be a great proxy for understanding what types of projects developers may be working on. For example, if a developer forks a bunch of repos pertaining to location APIs, they may be using that code for an app that requires geolocation and could be valuable prospective candidates for Uber or Lyft.
For those that are technically savvy enough to read code, you can always click through the actual repository and take a dive into the code and evaluate yourself. And if that's not the case, you can always send to one of your developer colleagues to take a look and evaluate.

Lastly, Github also provides a powerful search for finding various repositories and candidates. We've detailed how to search on Github in a [separate blog post](#) that you're welcome to read through.

**IMPORTANT:** Do NOT spam developers on Github! Just because they provide their information doesn't give you the right to send them erroneous job opportunities. Use the information on their profiles to get a deeper sense of their skills and interests. Only contact them after you've done your research and have determined that your opportunity is relevant to the candidate based on what they've posted.


Be sure to check out the [next post](#) in this series, which details how to use Quora in your recruiting endeavors!