

INTRODUCTORY

POCKET GUIDE:

HOW TO FIND AND HIRE THE PERFECT INBOUND MARKETER FOR YOUR AGENCY.



Learn How to Set Up Your Hiring Process, Screen Candidates, and Conduct Interviews to Find a Stellar Inbound Marketer For Your Agency.

A publication of

HubSpot

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INTRODUCTORY THIS GUIDE

Introductory content is for marketers who are new to the subject. This content typically includes step-by-step instructions on how to get started with this aspect of inbound marketing and learn its fundamentals. After reading it, you will be able to execute basic marketing tactics related to the topic.

INTERMEDIATE

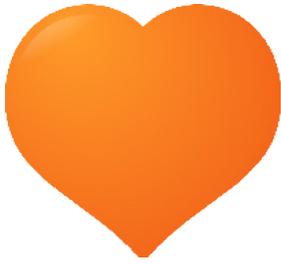
Intermediate content is for marketers who are familiar with the subject but have only basic experience in executing strategies and tactics on the topic. This content typically covers the fundamentals and moves on to reveal more complex functions and examples. After reading it, you will feel comfortable leading projects with this aspect of inbound marketing.

ADVANCED

Advanced content is for marketers who are, or want to be, experts on the subject. In it, we walk you through advanced features of this aspect of inbound marketing and help you develop complete mastery of the subject. After reading it, you will feel ready not only to execute strategies and tactics, but also to teach others how to be successful.

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POCKET GUIDE: HOW TO FIND AND HIRE THE PERFECT INBOUND MARKETER FOR YOUR AGENCY.

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Introduction.

Finding candidates who are uniquely qualified to take on the inbound marketing industry can be a challenge. While traditional marketing is taught in colleges and universities around the world, inbound marketing is often significantly ahead of current business school curriculums. This occasional scarcity of formal digital marketing education can make finding and hiring the perfect candidate daunting - open job reqs can often seem more like a treasure hunt than a talent search.

At HubSpot, we understand how difficult it can be to find a well-rounded inbound marketer, especially one who can successfully support his or her own set of clients. Executing inbound marketing for another company requires a skillset that can be incredibly difficult to pinpoint. To help, we've put together a basic guide that discusses what qualities to look for in your candidates, how to find these marketers, a checklist of skills necessary for a marketing role, and a final tear out sheet that includes helpful interview questions and scoring. In fact, the content in this guide is strongly influenced by HubSpot's own hiring process.

With this "pocket guide" to finding and hiring the perfect inbound marketer for your agency, you'll be able to successfully pinpoint the right potential candidate, instead of sifting aimlessly through piles of resumes in search of prospect gold.

01

CHAPTER

SETTING UP YOUR JOB REQ.

Develop Your Job Description.

The first step in your search for the perfect inbound marketer is to develop (and post) a clear, helpful job description. Before you find the ideal marketer, you need to know what you will be asking them to do. Ask yourself, what does this job specifically entail? To ensure that you're screening and interviewing the right candidates, create a job description that carefully details the responsibilities involved in the position. Include the basic skills required, what experience the candidate should bring to the table, as well as any other "intangibles" that will make someone successful in your position.



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Here's an example of a HubSpot posting for an Inbound Marketing Manager.

HubSpot is looking for a smart, hungry marketer who has passion and expertise in creating online content including blog posts, ebooks, webinars, etc. Do you wish you could write and create content everyday? Have you used data to improve business content? Do you love educating others through writing? Do you have a keen eye for grammar, or are you a design ninja? Yes? Awesome: we want to hear from you!



The ideal candidate will:

- *Have excellent written and verbal communication skills*
- *Be analytically-inclined with a knack for understanding data and how to apply it for problem-solving*
- *Be organized and detail-oriented enough to manage projects with many moving parts*
- *Have two to three years of marketing and content creation experience*

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Responsibilities will include:

- *Writing blog posts for blog.hubspot.com*
- *Producing ebooks on a variety of marketing topics*
- *Developing strategies for improving visitor-to-lead conversion of content*
- *Optimizing online content for search engines*
- *Managing social media content and accounts*
- *Writing, writing, writing....*
- *Additional responsibilities as the organization scales*

Along with the emphasis on detail, you also might notice the personality of the job description. Why not use a tone of voice in your job postings that communicates the character of your team or company culture? As you can see in the example above, our job description illustrates that we are looking for fun, creative, driven individuals with a natural knack for content creation and marketing - who also will fit in with our HubSpotty company environment.

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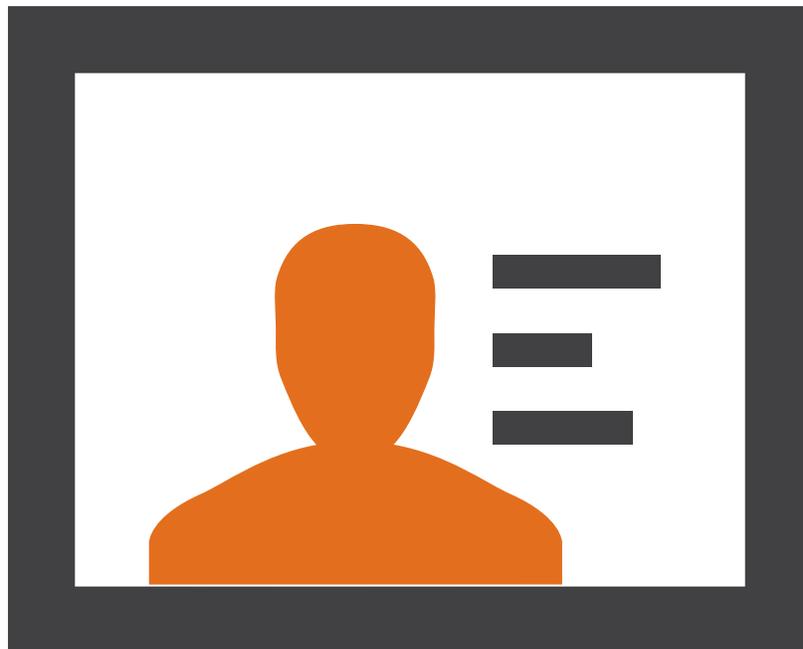
CHAPTER

HOW TO SPOT A TOP INBOUND MARKETER.

Scope the Position's Core Competencies.

In addition to outlining the perfect job description, you need to understand exactly what skills and personal traits this role will require. What kind of person does it take to be successful in the job you just outlined? Frequently, determining a job's core competencies occurs in tandem with developing a great job req, but for clarity sake, we broke them into two sections.

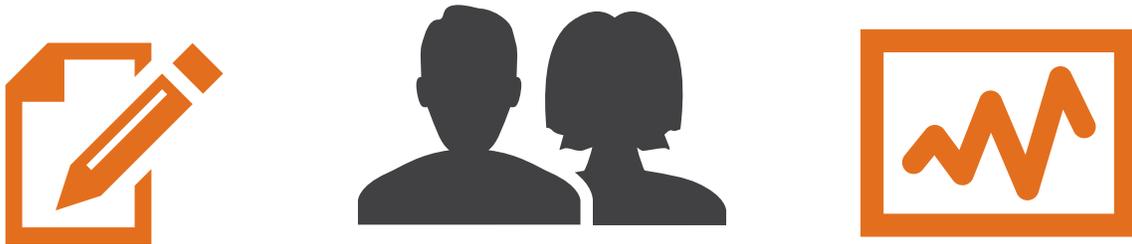
In this section, we will provide a brief overview of an inbound marketer's essential skills and traits. Ideally, you should begin looking for indicators of these core competencies during the resume screening process. Keep an eye out for past positions, responsibilities, accomplishments, and projects that showcase the following valuable inbound marketing skills and characteristics.



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To discuss these core competencies, we've broken this chapter into two sections. The first section focuses on the particular *behavioral traits* that your marketer should show naturally when handling his or her inbound marketing responsibilities. The second section will focus on the *specific skills* that your marketer should have in order to successfully deal with the technical aspects of the job.

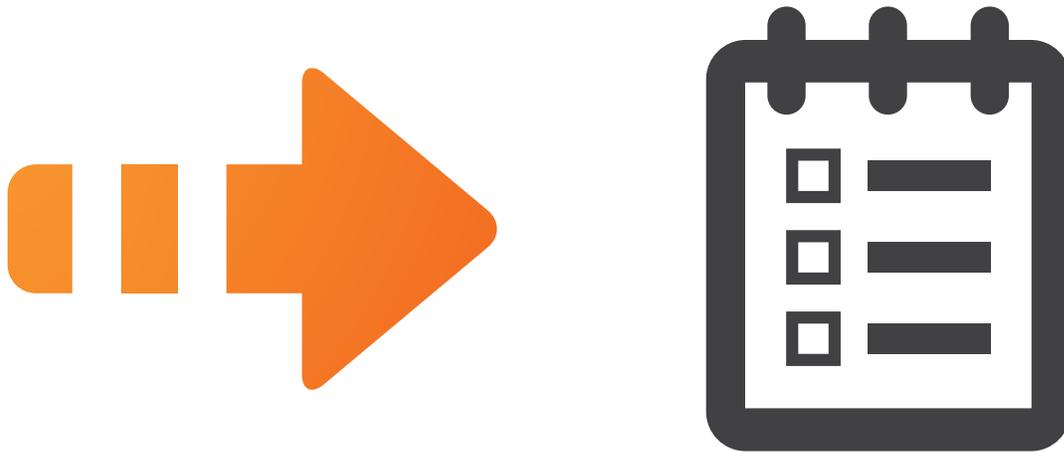


Overall, the ideal inbound marketer should be a dynamic professional who has a strong understanding of digital marketing and can flexibly move between the different responsibilities of a successful inbound marketing campaign. This marketer is clearly intelligent, ambitious, and willing to roll up his or her sleeves to get things done. He or she will have a thirst for knowledge and a willingness to try new things. And of course, this marketer should be able to convey the heart of your company to the world via the content he or she creates.

The following pages detail a few critical attributes your next inbound marketer should possess.

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Core Behavioral Traits.

How does your candidate handle day-to-day responsibilities? Is there a method to their marketing madness? Identifying the style in which a potential employee tackles his or her tasks and projects is important when evaluating someone for a crucial role on your team. Here are the key behavioral traits we think are critical in a stellar inbound marketer:

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Inquisitive: The online world changes every day, so it's important that your candidates have a natural inclination to question ideas, processes, and tactics — both old and new. An inquisitive marketer will be helpful in revealing weaknesses, flaws, or even additional opportunities in their work by asking the right questions about your marketing and methodologies.



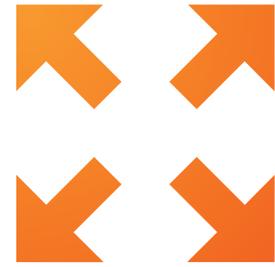
Decisive: Surprises are the M.O. for most marketers - a campaign could unexpectedly underperform, or sales leads could suddenly plateau. A good inbound marketer can pivot quickly and make decisions on how to prioritize their time and capitalize on these surprises. For example, your candidate must be comfortable making decisions about which of multiple landing page offers, blog posts, etc. will generate the best ROI, and then stand by their decisions. We have found the best inbound marketers take responsibility for their actions and act as decision makers in their work life.



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Adaptable: As we've discussed, the challenges that your marketing team faces will inevitably change. For this reason, your teammates must be comfortable adapting to these changes, and "roll with the punches" when necessary. For example, are you refocusing your team from creating advertising to content? (Good for you!) However, now your team needs to learn and adapt to this new role. Make sure they can.



Get Sh*t Done (GSD): Wait, WHAT?! While this competency is ... ahem ... direct, it is also quite simple: inbound marketing takes work! Sometimes, generating results means working harder, better, faster, or stronger - big campaign successes often require a major, strenuous effort. You want a candidate that can face that kind of challenge with grandeur. For example, if you are behind your goal for the month, is your candidate ready and willing to produce an ebook overnight to make up the deficit? If the answer is yes, you have a super hero on your hands - one that is capable of going to great lengths to save day. And we call *that* an applicant who can GSD.



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Key Marketing Skills.

Now that we've discussed the behavioral characteristics of exceptional inbound marketers, let's discuss the other side of the coin: the basic skills all inbound marketers need to successfully execute in their role. When looking for these skills, we consider the technical knowledge and additional expertise required to execute as a killer inbound marketer. (Note, these skills are also in the checklist at the end of this pocket guide.)

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Writing: The ability to write is one of the most important skills in the inbound marketing world. Every day, marketers write ebooks, social updates, and emails that attract customers to your business and represent your company.

Why do we prioritize writing over marketing ability? You cannot attract people to your company if you can't engage your audience, and content is the best way to engage your audience to draw people to you! In fact, we have found that strong writers with little-to-no marketing experience can grow to be phenomenal marketers.



Ability to Teach: What good is a deep understanding of your industry if your candidate can't share that knowledge to your market? The ability to teach is integral to inbound marketing, especially if you want to create educational content that can establish your company as a thought leader and attract new business to your company.



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Comprehension Skills or “Smarts”:

As important as being able to teach is a candidate’s ability to learn and understand new things. Your marketer might need to create content, analyze metrics, and implement tactics that he or she may have to learn on the fly. Your team can be more nimble when staffed by people who can learn and comprehend new strategies quickly.



Industry Understanding: Your marketer should have a firm understanding of your industry in order to teach its best practices through content. The deeper industry understanding that your marketer has, the more authority your content will hold. (It should be pretty obvious whether a candidate has a strong understanding of your industry or not when reviewing a resume, but it is worth asking in person.)



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Analytics: Inbound marketing is becoming increasingly data-driven. Marketers need an analytical brain to process all the information we see every day. Make sure your potential marketer can review ROI, spot metric-driven trends, and understand important marketing metrics.



Capacity to Multi-Task: Handling multiple clients and content creation projects at once is no easy feat. This type of work requires a strong organizational and multi-tasking ability. Your marketers should be able to spread their attention across multiple projects and still deliver high quality services.



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Project Management: Depending on the size of your agency and clientbase, your candidate might have the opportunity to work with a handful of different clients from many different industries. It is important that your marketer have prior experience managing projects - large and small - to properly support those clients and communicate results.



Presentation Skills: Presentation skills are key to your marketer's ability to create and present professional content, ideas, and analytics - as well as win new business. Make sure your candidate can be confident in front of a room and communicate clearly.



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Specialized Marketing Skills.

If a candidate has most of the traits listed in this guide, he or she probably has what it takes to grow into a complete soup to nuts inbound marketer. If you have a larger team and your employees are beginning to specialize, however, the following attributes are incredibly valuable skills that you may want to consider to supplement your team's more general inbound capabilities.

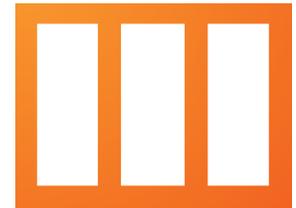
Design: If your team prioritizes the design of ebooks, infographics, images, and other visual content, a candidate who has experience with Adobe Photoshop, InDesign, or Illustrator can be a major asset to your marketing team and your company as a whole.



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Advanced Excel: Excel is a powerful tool that we sometimes take for granted. With the right training and experience, marketers with an advanced understanding of Excel can create powerful spreadsheets to break down important metrics, and allow your marketing team to better understand the numbers behind your strategies. If you are having trouble sorting through all your data, or proving the ROI of your marketing, look for an Excel star.



Video Production: With video content on the rise, having a marketer with a background in video production can give your team a competitive advantage. Video is a terrific platform for creating and sharing loveable content. A skilled video producer on your team makes creating video content in-house on a regular basis possible. Consider if that is part of your longer-term strategy, and find the next inbound video superstar!



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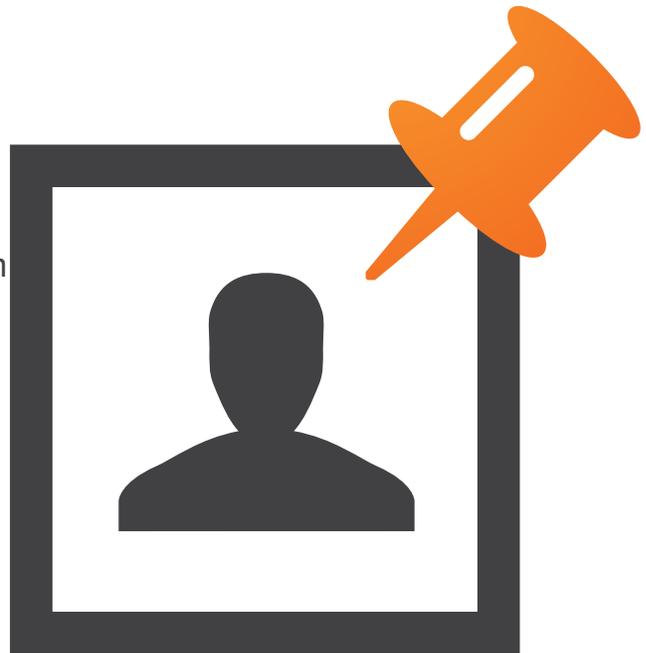
03

CHAPTER

MASTERING THE INTERVIEW.

Holding a Great Interview.

Once you've narrowed down your candidates via their resumes or phone screens, it's time to invite them into the office to meet you face-to-face. When interviewing candidates, be sure that each interview question has a particular purpose and will reveal specific information you need to choose your new inbound



marketer. Don't waste precious interview time: use each question to uncover some element of the competencies you identified as critical to your inbound position. This section includes information on interviewing best practices that you can use in your hunt for that perfect marketing employee.

Note: If you are looking for a list interview questions, the last section of this pocket guide includes recommended interview questions to tease out each of the core skills and behavioral traits we list earlier in this guide.

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Setting the Stage: Interview Best Practices.

Ready to plan for your next interview? Here are a few general interview tips and best practices to get you in the right frame of mind.

Use Open-Ended Questions:

To learn as much as possible, you want to get your candidates talking. Questions that require simple “yes” or “no” answers rarely give you perspective into a candidate’s knowledge base or motives. By keeping your questions open-ended, you’ll give your candidates the opportunity to be thorough in their answers. Open-ended questions will also be more challenging for those candidates who aren’t prepared or the right fit for your company.



Follow Up With Probing Questions:

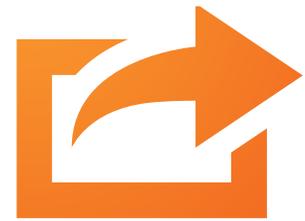
Don’t feel forced to move to a new question immediately. Dig deeper into some answers with follow up questions designed to pull more detail out of the candidate’s response. Specifically, try to get to the “why,” “how,” and/or “who was responsible for that” in a particular story. This strategy helps you learn more about the candidate’s decision-making and problem-solving style.



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Listen: The way a candidate answers a question can tell you a lot about how the person feels about the topic. When listening to a response, take into account the candidate's confidence level, amount of detail or knowledge, use of examples or data, and even the tone of voice. Did a person take a long time to think of an answer? That might be a sign of his or her limited experience on the matter.



Be Aware of Body Language:

Similarly, you can tell a lot about a candidate through his or her casual movements and other unspoken cues. Keep an eye on how the person sits, leans, fiddles, and makes eye contact. You can tell how confident, nervous, or uncomfortable a candidate is about a particular question by paying attention to body language.



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See If You Enjoy the Conversation:

Did you like spending time with the person? This candidate is someone that you and your team might have to work with everyday. If you can't stand talking to the person for half an hour, how will you be able to work together for eight hours a day?



Have the Interviewee Ask

Questions: The questions the candidate asks can give you insight into what your candidate absorbed during your conversation and how interested the person is in your company's goals or industry. Remember, you want inquisitive marketers!



As we mentioned before, it is very important that you properly plan your interview questions to ensure your conversation will give you insight into the specific skills and behavioral traits that you would like your inbound marketer to have. The final section of this pocket guide includes a list of interview questions and interview techniques categorized by skill to help guide a productive conversation. Before we get there, let's review where to find great candidates.



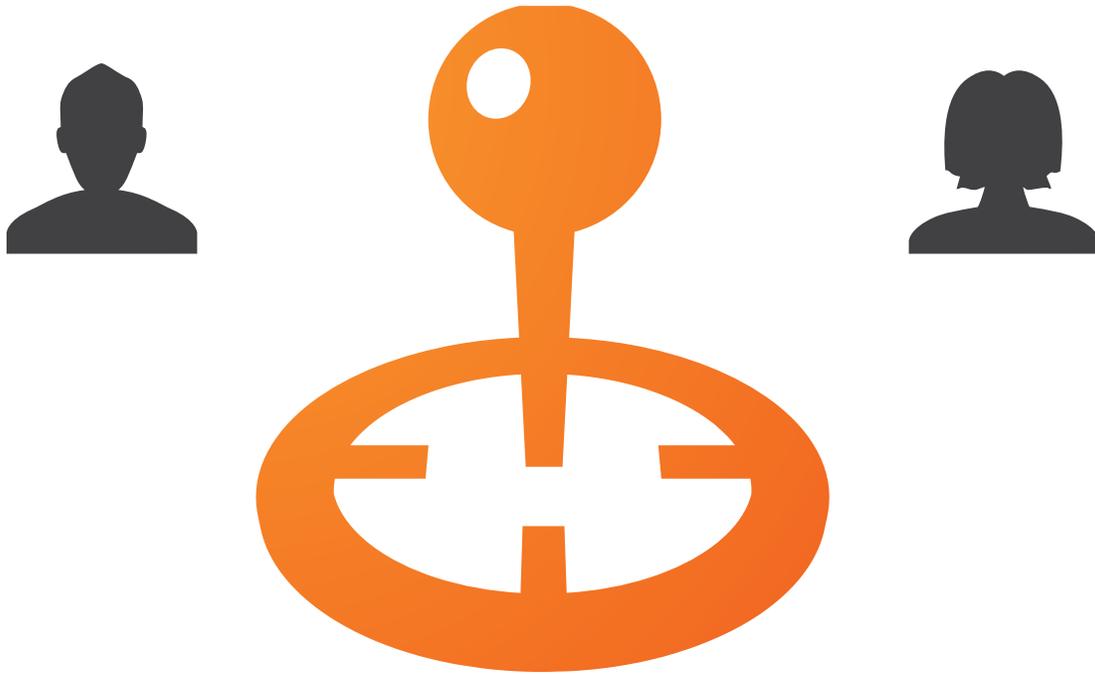
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04

CHAPTER

SCOUTING AND RECRUITING FOR TALENT.



Where to Find Your Marketers.

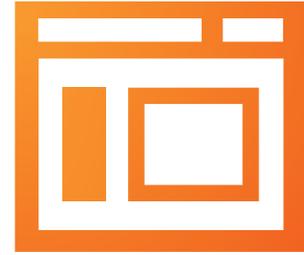
Locating marketing talent is not an easy task - especially when we're busy doing marketing ourselves! There are, however, some great resources to help you start your search.

While by no means exhaustive, here are some tools and resources to help you find your next stellar marketer.

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LinkedIn: As a network of over 100 million professionals, LinkedIn is the perfect place to start your search for digital marketers. Not only does LinkedIn offer the ability to search by categories, expertise, companies, and more, but it can also show you whether or not a candidate has actually put time into maintaining his or her LinkedIn profile.



Use the following LinkedIn tools to find a good candidate:

- LinkedIn Groups
- Paid Search
- Organization Search
- Experience/Expertise/Interest Search
- School Search

Industry Events: Events are great opportunities to meet potential hires in-person and speak face-to-face with candidates before they come in to interview. Look to see what relevant events you can attend. They could provide a pool of potential new inbound rock stars!



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Your Favorite Blogs and

Publications: Are there any blogs that you read every day? Why not reach out to the writers of those blogs and see if they're interested in writing for your company? That would help you find a candidate with both writing ability and industry knowledge.



Nurturing Interns: Almost every company has an intern program, but not all companies put the effort into nurturing their interns for long-term employment. Interns can be wonderful job candidates - they have already shown an affinity to learn and an interest in your company. Spend the time to teach interns the ins-and-outs of a full-time marketer role and let them take leadership once in a while. If they're successful in those moments, you might have a great potential hire on your hands.



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An Inbound Talent Search Strategy:

Why not attract potential candidates using the same strategy to attract leads through your inbound marketing efforts? Create content that shows what it's like to work for your company. Then use social networks, blogs, and your website to promote that content.



Referral Program: A company referral program can be very helpful in attracting well-qualified candidates. By offering referral incentives to your employees, they'll be much more inclined to refer qualified friends, family, and peers that could add value to your team.



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Conclusion.

When it comes to hiring the perfect marketer, each agency is looking for something different. The goal of this pocket guide is to help align your hiring strategy with an inbound philosophy - if you're looking to hire top inbound talent, it's important to show your candidates that you walk the walk, too.

Use the tools we have provided to set the foundation for your next inbound marketing hire. The additional effort and thought you put into your job description, competency models, screening process, and interview questions will dramatically improve your chances of recruiting the right candidate. Your talent pool is your most valuable company resource - take the time and effort to build a team that will grow with your company and can execute your evolving digital strategy.

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05

CHAPTER

HIRING TEAR OUTS AND SCORE SHEET.

Behavioral Traits & Skills

Candidate: _____

Behavioral Traits

Inquisitive Score (1 2 3 4)

Decisive Score (1 2 3 4)

Adaptable Score (1 2 3 4)

GSD Score (1 2 3 4)

Skills

Writing Ability Score (1 2 3 4)

Ability to Teach Score (1 2 3 4)

Comprehension Skills Score (1 2 3 4)

Industry Understanding Score (1 2 3 4)

Analytics Score (1 2 3 4)

Project Management Score (1 2 3 4)

Ability to Present Score (1 2 3 4)

Capacity to Multi-Task Score (1 2 3 4)

Marketing Specialization Skills

Design Score (1 2 3 4)

Advanced Excel Score (1 2 3 4)

Video Production Score (1 2 3 4)

Interview Questions

Writing Abilities

Exercise:

- Ask your candidate to complete a 30-minute writing assignment during the interview.
- Read and review a piece of their published work. Ask the person what the goal of the content was.

Questions:

- What do you love about writing?
- What makes a piece of content remarkable?
- What writers do you appreciate and why?

Ability to Teach

Exercise:

- Ask your candidate to teach you something step-by-step.

Questions:

- Give me an example of a time you taught someone something new. What was hard about teaching that person?
- Who was your favorite teacher and why?

GSD

Questions:

- You're in a room with 1,000 people; what are you most likely better at than all those people?
- What is your "super power" that we would be crazy not to use?
- What is the most remarkable thing you've done in your life?

Analytics

Questions:

- Tell me about an important project and the outcome that project drove.
- How did you set the goal of the project and measure it?
- Tell me about a time you didn't hit your goal and what you did afterward.
- What is the most important metric for your current company and what do you do to drive that metric?

Industry Understanding

Questions:

- What is the most difficult challenge that this industry faces?
- What should we do to overcome these challenges?
- Who do you think are the three most influential people or companies in this industry and why?

Decisive

Questions:

- Would you rather deliver a good project on time or a perfect project late?
- What was one of the most difficult decisions you've ever made?
- Tell me about a time where you made the wrong decision.
- How did you resolve the problem?

Inquisitive

Questions:

- Do you have any questions for me about this position? If so, what are they?
- What particular subject or topic are you the most curious about in life? Why?
- Tell me about a time where asking the right question solved a major problem for your company.

Adaptable

Questions:

- Are there instances where you have had to take on multiple roles at work?
- How did you prioritize which roles needed the most attention?
- Tell me about an instance where you had to learn and execute an entirely new skill.

Comprehension Skills

Questions:

- What is the most difficult thing you have ever had to learn?
- What is your process for learning something quickly and effectively?
- Do you learn best when self-taught or taught by others? Why?

Project Management

Questions:

- Who was your toughest client and how did you work with them?
- You and a client disagree on something; how do you handle the situation?

Ability to Present

Exercise:

- Explain to me why my company should start blogging.
- Talk about three best practices your client should be adopting within its marketing.
- Explain inbound marketing to me using the whiteboard or piece of paper as a visual aid.

Capacity to Multi-Task

Questions:

- You have eleven clients. How do you prioritize their needs?
- How do you deal with pressure when you are overwhelmed by projects?
- Talk about the most hectic work experience you've ever had and how you got through it.