How many Candidates Do We Need to Find to Identify a Suitable One?

NEWSLETTER

Recruiters often follow the "**Rule of Three**" interviewing at least three candidates per job opening. However, this isn't strict, and other metrics may also be used to identify suitable candidates.

What the Data Says: Industry Benchmarks

Specific benchmarks for the US market show that sales and customer service roles average around 14 interviews per hire, while IT and engineering roles average 15, and marketing roles average 17.

The general ratio of candidates interviewed per hire can vary widely, ranging from 4:1 to 20:1, depending on the industry and the complexity of the role.

In some industries like automotive, the "applicants per hire" ratio can be as high as 131, suggesting a large initial pool from which candidates are selected for interviews.

There are a few metrics that are required to calculate the number of candidates that must be interviewed for an ideal candidate in an interview

Recruitment Metrics for Candidate Identification

Several key recruitment metrics can help recruiters identify how many candidates are required to find a suitable one. These metrics assess different aspects of your recruitment funnel and allow for optimization

Applicant-to-Hire Ratio

The "candidates per hire" metric specifically looks at how many candidates were interviewed before one was hired for a position. To calculate this, divide the number of interviews conducted by the number of hires made.

For instance, if a hiring manager interviews 12 people and hires four, the candidate per hire rate is three. Improving this metric can save time on interviews.

Interview-to-Hire Ratio

The interview-to-hire ratio in 2024 was 27%, meaning that for every 100 applicants, only 3 were invited to an interview, and 27% of those interviewed were eventually hired.

This metric suggests that while initial screening might yield many unqualified candidates, the interview stage is more efficient in leading to hires.

AI, ATS & Automation

Where tech adds value:

- **Wider reach:** AI tools can identify passive candidates you'd otherwise miss.
- **Faster sorting:** ATS can prioritize applicants based on pre-set qualifications.
- **Bias reduction (if implemented right):** Structured evaluations can reduce human error or unconscious bias.

Where tech can fail you:

- **Over-reliance on keywords:** Great candidates can be overlooked due to rigid filters.
- **Quantity over quality:** A bloated pipeline doesn't mean better outcomes it can actually delay decisions.
- **Misaligned algorithms:** Tools must be tuned to your real hiring needs, not generic metrics.

elite-recruit.co
+1 (518) 205 3549
info@elite-recruit.co