

Hiring manager intake form

Thirty intake meeting questions to ask a hiring manager before a search starts, grouped by purpose, with space for the answers and a summary to agree before anyone contacts a candidate.

- Send the form to the hiring manager a day before the meeting, so they arrive with answers.
- Write the hiring manager's answers in their words during the meeting, and summarize only at the end.
- Agree the summary rows before the meeting ends, and confirm them in writing within a day.
- Reopen the form if the search changes: a new must-have, a new pay range or a new decision-maker.

#	Question	Why it matters	Hiring manager's answer
The role and why it's open			
1	Why is this role open now: a new role, growth or a replacement?	A replacement tells you what to repeat or avoid. A new role needs its purpose defined first.	
2	If this role stays empty for three months, what happens?	The real urgency, and the case for the timeline.	
3	In one sentence, what will this person own?	The summary every candidate will hear in their first conversation.	
4	Who held the role before, and what made them succeed or struggle?	Concrete evidence of what the role demands.	
What success looks like			
5	What must this person have achieved after 90 days?	The outcome every interview question should point at.	
6	And after a year?	Whether the role grows, and what candidates should be able to grow into.	
7	What does the best person in a similar role do differently from the rest?	The behavior to listen for in candidates' answers.	
8	How will you measure performance in this role?	The measures to ask candidates about.	
Must-haves and nice-to-haves			
9	Which three skills or experiences must every hire have on day one?	These become the competencies the interviews score.	
10	Would you turn down an otherwise excellent candidate without each of them?	The test that separates real must-haves from preferences.	
11	Which of the other requirements could someone learn in their first 90 days?	Moves trainable skills off the must-have list.	
12	Which requirements in the job description are nice to have?	Keeps the posting from putting off good applicants.	
13	Do you require a degree, certification or a number of years of experience? Why?	Checks whether a credential is standing in for a skill you could test directly.	
Knockouts and deal-breakers			
14	Is there a license, certification, shift pattern or location the role can't do without?	Your knockout questions, asked early in every screen.	
15	What would make a candidate a definite no, whatever else they offer?	Deal-breakers, written down before anyone gets attached to a candidate.	
16	Has a past hire not worked out? What would have shown it earlier?	The warning sign to probe for in interviews.	

#	Question	Why it matters	Hiring manager's answer
The team and the manager			
17	Who will this person work with most closely?	Who should meet the finalists, and what collaboration looks like day to day.	
18	Do you manage with close direction or a lot of independence?	Lets you describe the job honestly and check candidates' working styles against it.	
19	What's hard about this role or this team that candidates should hear early?	Honest framing keeps the wrong people from accepting.	
20	Why would a strong candidate choose this role over a similar one elsewhere?	Your pitch, in the manager's words.	
The candidate market			
21	Where have good people for this role come from before: companies, titles, schools, referrals?	Where to source first.	
22	Is anyone already in mind: an internal candidate, a referral or a past applicant?	People to contact before the job is posted.	
23	If we can't find every must-have, which one would you trade, and for what?	The fallback, agreed before the search stalls.	
Pay and logistics			
24	What is the approved pay range, and is there any flexibility?	Lets you share the range in the first conversation.	
25	Where will the person work, and how often in the office?	The location answer every screen needs.	
26	What's the latest start date that still works?	Sets the hiring deadline, counted back from the start date.	
The interview process			
27	Which stages will candidates go through, and who runs each one?	The plan you can share with candidates up front.	
28	Which competencies will each stage assess, so no two stages ask the same thing?	Avoids repeated questions and extra rounds.	
29	Who makes the final decision, and who else must agree?	Names the decision-maker before the first interview.	
30	How soon after each interview can you give feedback, and which interview slots can you hold each week?	Keeps the search moving: held slots and a feedback deadline.	
Summary to agree before the meeting ends			
S1	The three must-haves	Each one agreed and written down.	
S2	Knockout questions	Asked early in every screen, and flagged for review rather than rejecting anyone.	
S3	Interview stages, owners and competencies	One owner and a different focus for each stage.	
S4	Pay range	The range to share in the first conversation.	
S5	Target start date and hiring deadline	Both dates, written down.	
S6	First check-in	The date to review the first candidates together.	