

How to Hire the Best Software Developers

While hiring software developers is not always a straightforward matter, being negligent in the hiring process is the easiest way to endanger your project. Nevertheless, the type of exchange depicted below is not only prevalent in job interviews around the globe, but is particularly common when seeking [software developers for hire](#):

A Typical Job Interview

The circus director looks mysteriously across the table at the strapping young man before him and quickly gathers his notes for the standard interview questions.

“Ok, Mr... Bennet, is it?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Can you juggle more than three items at once?” the director asks, patiently scanning the candidate from behind tiny, round spectacles.

Phew. He won't have to lie for this one.

“Oh, yes, sir. Of course. I can juggle up to seven objects at once! I've been asked to perform at schools, birthday parties, talent sh—”

“Good, good” the director cuts him off. “And do you work with knives or anything of the sort?”

He gently pulls down his sleeves to hide the wound from when he nearly chopped off his finger, before gracefully managing to say “sharp objects are my specialty! Been practicing since I was six.”

“Excellent! And how are you with flaming objects?”

Blast. This is it. He gulps down now, as he cannot seem to shake the image of the entire circus on fire out of his head. Steady now.

“I’m like a dragon!” he finally blurts out, ferociously nodding as he does. “Or... a phoenix. Anything to do with fire, Mr. Barnum, I’ve got you covered.”

“Right, then!” Mr. Barnum gets up, smiles and tightly shakes the amateur’s hand. “You’re hired. I shall see you on Monday morning.”

“But sir!” the man yells after him, as the director is already halfway out the door — “I haven’t even shown you my juggling!”

No matter how convincing the candidate’s CV looks, or how confidently he or she comes across, do not fall victim to the charms of the first impression.

A Better Way to Hire Dedicated Developers

Looking past the artistic license in this story, another worrying truth is quickly revealed: when companies hire dedicated teams, it is far too easy to confuse expediency with efficiency. Having operated in the software industry for over 20 years, Software Planet Group has had its share of customers who didn’t adequately prepare for the hiring process. So with that in mind, we would like to present a few simple, yet highly effective suggestions that can help you evaluate candidate software vendors and bring aboard the best developers for your project.

1. Examine your candidates' portfolios

Just like a picture is worth a thousand words, a portfolio will have a lot more to say about a potential team's collective abilities than a job interview could ever convey. For this reason, we recommend taking a long, hard look at every candidate's body of work.

When doing so, bear in mind that a series of small, consistent projects will likely be a lot more significant than an attention-grabbing, individual achievement, as this will tend to indicate greater knowledge, more prior experience and overall faster speed of delivery. So as a rule of thumb, if a team's portfolio has a minimum of 3 to 5 projects that were implemented individually over a period of at least two years, then you are likely to be fishing in promising waters.

2. Check Github accounts

As the largest source code host in the world, odds are that at least a few of your potential hires will have already uploaded their projects to Github or at least contributed to some public projects. Consequently, we recommend asking all your candidates for a link to their personal Github accounts, as this will serve as an accurate portrayal of their individual, real-world capabilities.

3. Request code snippets

While many projects today are protected by non-disclosure agreements, you can always ask any software vendor for a selection of insightful code snippets. These may then be evaluated by a technical specialist who should be able to inform your company if the development team lives up to your standards. But do bear in mind: these snippets will showcase the very best work your candidates have to offer, so do not expect the code in your project to be in any way superior to the samples you have been shown.

4. Do not focus purely on hourly rates

As a customer, it is often tempting to compare providers by solely focusing on the price on display — but this is wrong on a number of levels. Imagine, for instance, that a team charges \$170 an hour while its main competitor provides the same services at an hourly rate of just \$47. Though it might seem obvious that you should always go for the lowest cost, in reality, this decision is a lot more complex than it initially lets on:

A. Remember that you are dealing with a global market. This means vendors with countless technical differences and even more wide-ranging price tags.

B. Oftentimes, the team that is charging more will also be equipped with superior performance. This will probably lead to better and faster results, and in the long run, could end up saving you wads of cash.

C. A less expensive and equally less experienced team will be likely to generate a vast amount of technical debt, and thus inevitably slow down development.

5. Remember that English fluency ≠ skills and intelligence

Understandably, when companies hire offshore dedicated developers, they will often evaluate software vendors based on the quality of their spoken English. Yet a programming language is called a language for a reason. So be mindful that your developers' native tongue will in no way affect the quality of their code.

In fact, suboptimal English can be more than made up for by the sheer robustness of the final application. While communication in software development is undoubtedly important, never assume that an articulate team of Shakespearean verbosity will bring you greater performance than a well-developed skill set.

The Most Important Thing to Remember

In the end, as the old saying goes, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. So whatever you do, when seeking to hire a dedicated team of software developers, make sure you never behave like that foolish circus director!

Instead, by following the simple recommendations outlined in this article, you can turn your attention towards demonstrable results and let the ideal development team provide a knockout performance.