

The Definitive Guide to Using Google Hire as Your Applicant Tracking System

HR technology is all the rage these days. Human resource departments across all industries are turning to tech solutions to streamline their recruiting, screening, interviewing, hiring, and onboarding processes. Companies are relying on this technology to improve the overall applicant experience, to maximize hiring success, and to reduce employee turnover. Simply put, it is redefining the way that organizations handle matters of human capital.

The Heart of HR Technology: Applicant Tracking Systems

One of the most popular forms of HR technology thus far is the applicant tracking system, also known as an ATS. Applicant tracking systems are typically applied to resume sorting. Employers receiving hundreds or thousands of applications for each job opening can't possibly hope to review each resume in depth. A key function of an ATS is to sift through resumes and pull out high-potential candidates based on specific criteria. For instance, an ATS might look for resumes with keywords that relate to particular skills or denote leadership experience.

However, the truth is that resume sorting is just one function of an applicant tracking system. A fully-functional ATS is meant to simplify virtually every step of the recruitment, screening, and hiring process. It might automate job postings to different job boards around the web, or offer a convenient way to keep candidates updated about their job consideration status.

This multi-functional capability explains why applicant tracking systems are so important, and why they are currently at the very heart of the HR technology trend. By automating much of the hiring process, an ATS can reduce the strain that hiring places on employers while also ensuring a more positive applicant experience. Less stress for the hiring manager means a more productive process, while a more positive applicant experience helps with organization reputation, employee morale, and candidate database development.

Now you know.

Introducing Google Hire

With so many benefits to offer, it's no surprise that applicant tracking systems are highly in-demand right now. Brands such as BambooHR, Greenhouse, and ZipRecruiter are frequently listed among the biggest players in the ATS game. As of July 2017, though, there's a new behemoth in the market: Google.

Last summer, Google launched Google Hire, a service designed to help employers managing their recruiting processes. Hire includes multiple tools for candidate relationship management, recruitment, and candidate database sourcing. In short, Google Hire is an applicant tracking system. The question is, where does Google's software land in relation to other more firmly established ATS products?

A Note on Complementary Platforms and Integration

Before we delve into the individual features of Google Hire, it's worth noting one of the program's biggest strengths: its integration potential with other Google platforms. For instance, Google Hire integrates directly with the G-Suite, including Gmail and Google Calendar. We'll go into greater detail about how those integrations work later in the guide but suffice to say that they make life easier for hiring managers and applicants alike.

There's also Google for Jobs, a platform that Google launched around the same time as Hire. Google for Jobs integrates job searching directly into your standard Google Search. If someone were to search for "engineering jobs in Detroit," for instance, Google would display relevant job listings right there on the search page, in a small widget that appears above the other results. The platform aggregates data from multiple job boards around the internet, including Monster, LinkedIn, CareerBuilder, ZipRecruiter, and Glassdoor. Employers can also directly upload job postings into Google for Jobs—something that happens automatically when you use Google Hire.

These integrations underline one of the most significant benefits of choosing Google Hire: Google itself. Google is one of the biggest companies in the world and has an extensive reach. Few other HR tech companies can compete with Google when it comes to creating an ATS that integrates with several different platforms and software..

Using Google Hire as Your Applicant Tracking System

Integrations only count for so much, though. To be a competitive applicant tracking system, Google Hire needs to bring powerful standalone functionality to the table. Luckily, Google Hire can stand on its own two feet. The platform is intuitive and user-friendly. Below, we've walked through the entire recruiting and hiring process, to display just how easy it is to use Google Hire for a range of distinct functions.

Step 1: Post the Job

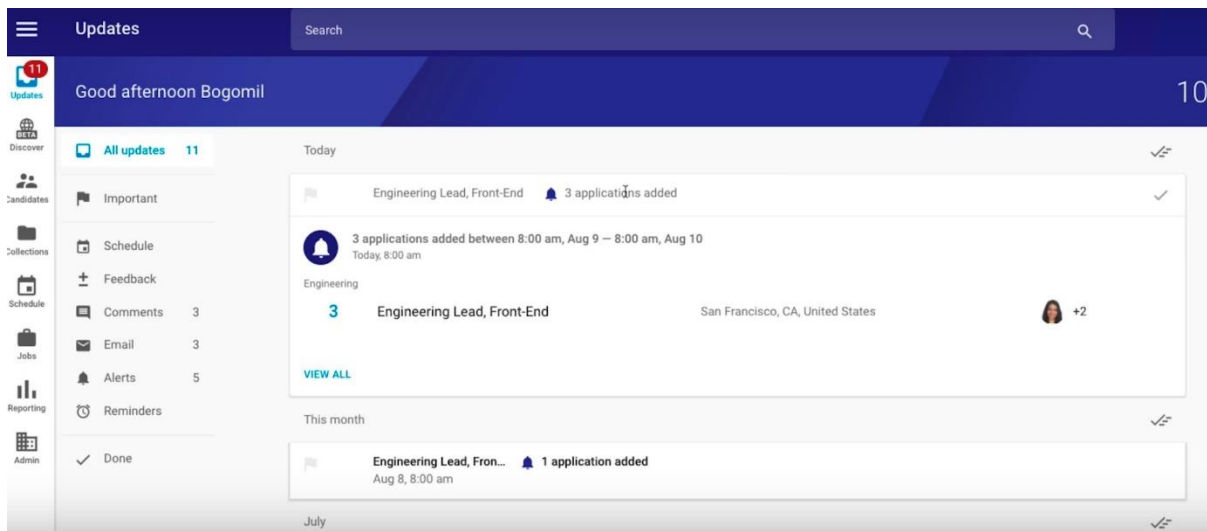
As was mentioned above, Google Hire integrates seamlessly with Google for Jobs. This integration makes posting a new job easy. Google will create a career site for your company and optimize your job postings for Google search. If you want to maximize the reach of your posting, you can also use Google Hire to post to other job boards, including both the general-use ones (Indeed, Glassdoor, etc.) and the specialized, industry-specific ones. Going forward, Hire will track each job board source to tell you which ones are delivering your sharpest candidates. Since some job boards charge for career postings, these metrics are helpful for deciding where to spend your money.

Now you know.

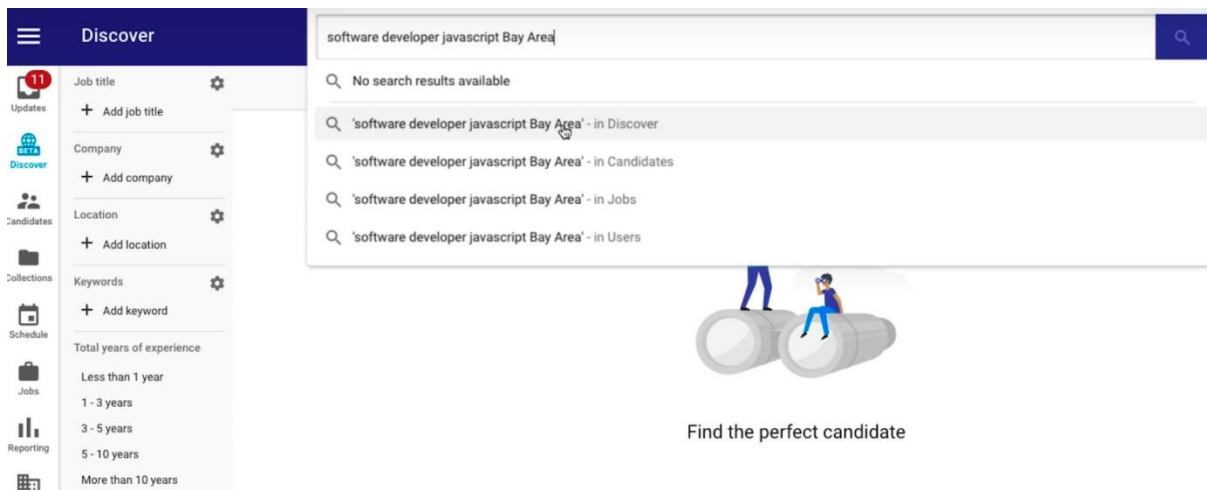
Step 2: Customize the Hiring Process

Every hiring process is different. Sometimes, you might have a multi-tiered interview process, with phone screens, in-person interviews, skills tests, and more. Other times, you might only have one interview. With Google Hire, you can map out a hiring process based on the job at hand. This mapping is important, because it affects how your applicants will be tracked going forward.

You can also customize interview feedback and grading for your hiring process. Some companies use numerical systems to rank candidates, while others use an A-through-F scale. With Google Hire, it's easy to configure things to match what your business has always done.



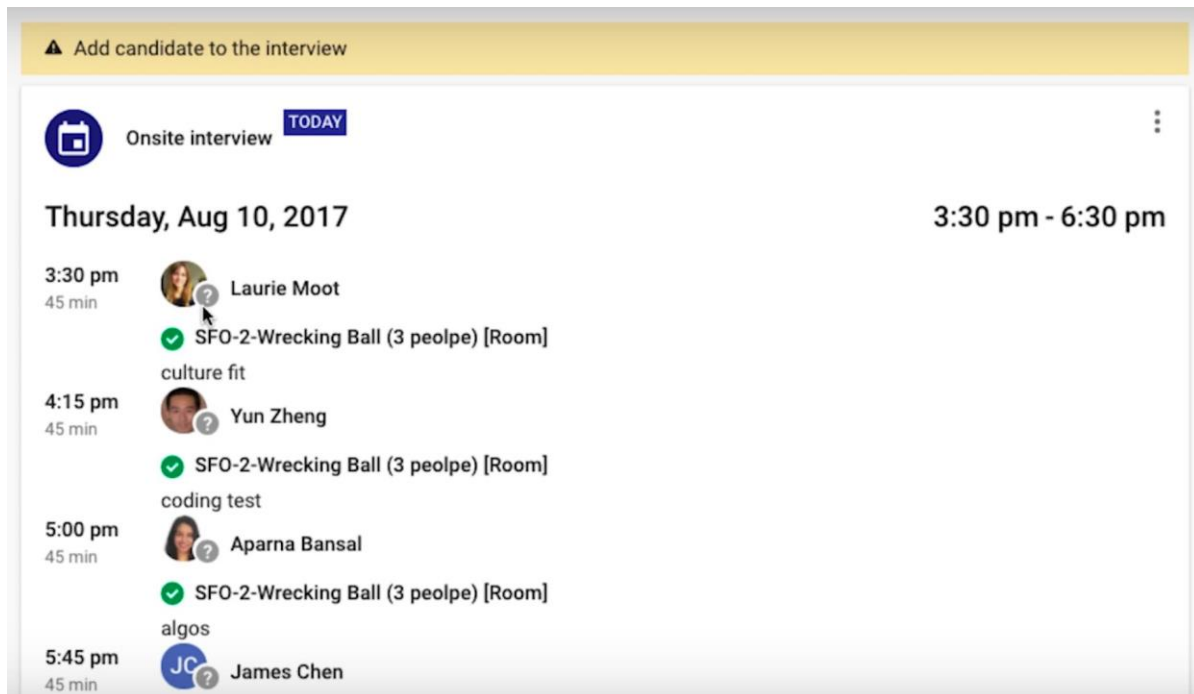
Step 3: Narrow Down Your Candidates



Now you know.

Once you've customized everything to your preferences, you can go ahead and publish your job posting. You'll be able to collect applications and resumes directly through the Google Hire system. From there, you can sort through resumes one by one or use Google Hire's candidate database functions to search for specific keywords, skills, or experience. Flag resumes with qualifications that match what you are looking for in an ideal hire or enrich candidate profiles with Google search. Google can pull data from sources such as LinkedIn or the United States Patent Database to tell you more about your candidates and their accomplishments.

Step 4: Start Interviewing



▲ Add candidate to the interview

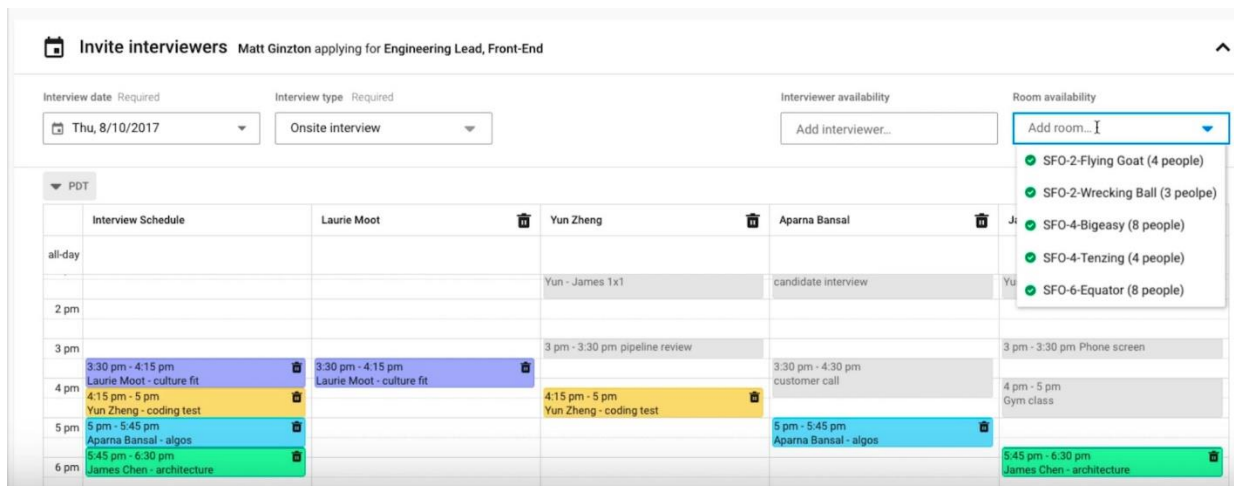
Onsite interview **TODAY**

Thursday, Aug 10, 2017 3:30 pm - 6:30 pm

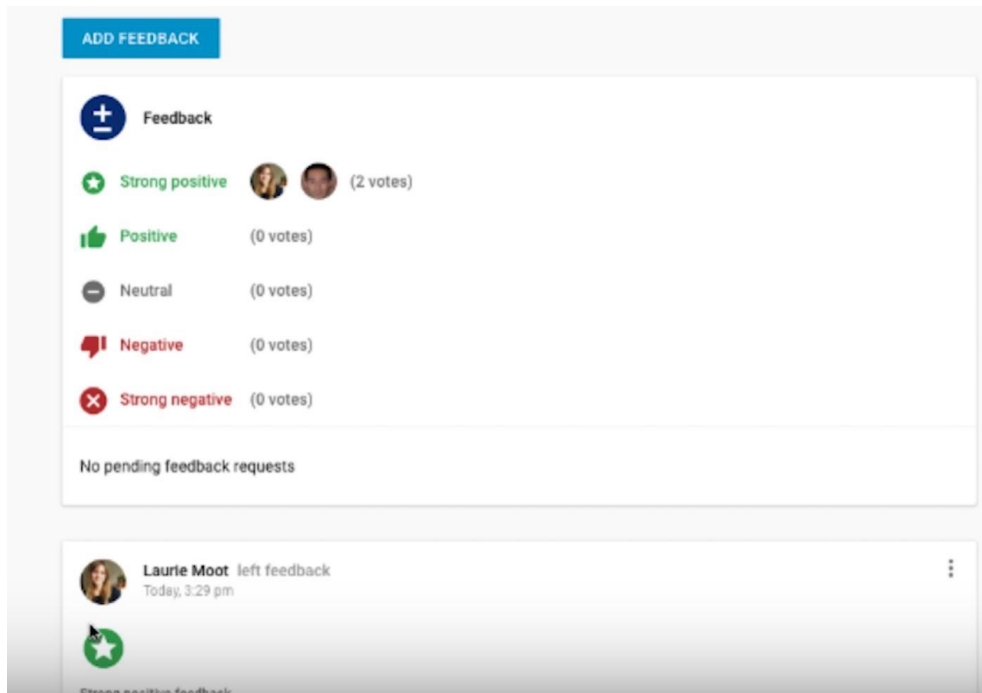
- 3:30 pm 45 min Laurie Moot
✓ SFO-2-Wrecking Ball (3 peolpe) [Room]
culture fit
- 4:15 pm 45 min Yun Zheng
✓ SFO-2-Wrecking Ball (3 peolpe) [Room]
coding test
- 5:00 pm 45 min Aparna Bansal
✓ SFO-2-Wrecking Ball (3 peolpe) [Room]
algos
- 5:45 pm 45 min James Chen

Now you know.

Once you've narrowed applications down to a dozen or so candidates, you can use Google Hire to schedule interviews. Whether your interview is a phone screen, a video chat, or an in-person meeting, Hire integrates with Google Calendar and keeps track of RSVPs and interview times. This scheduling feature makes life easier, both for hiring managers and candidates. Managing your time is easier when you know exactly who you are meeting with at precise times.

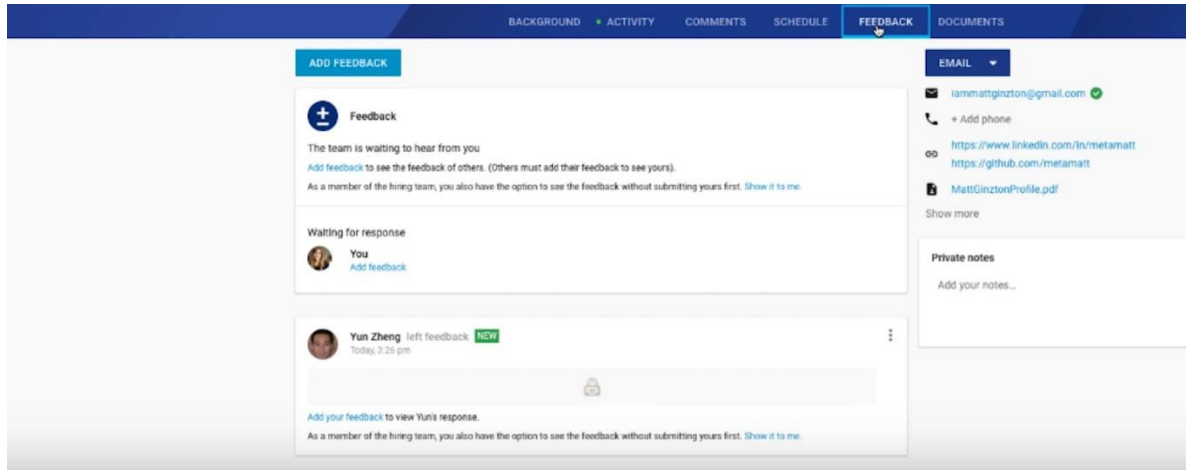


Step 5: Deliberate with Your Team

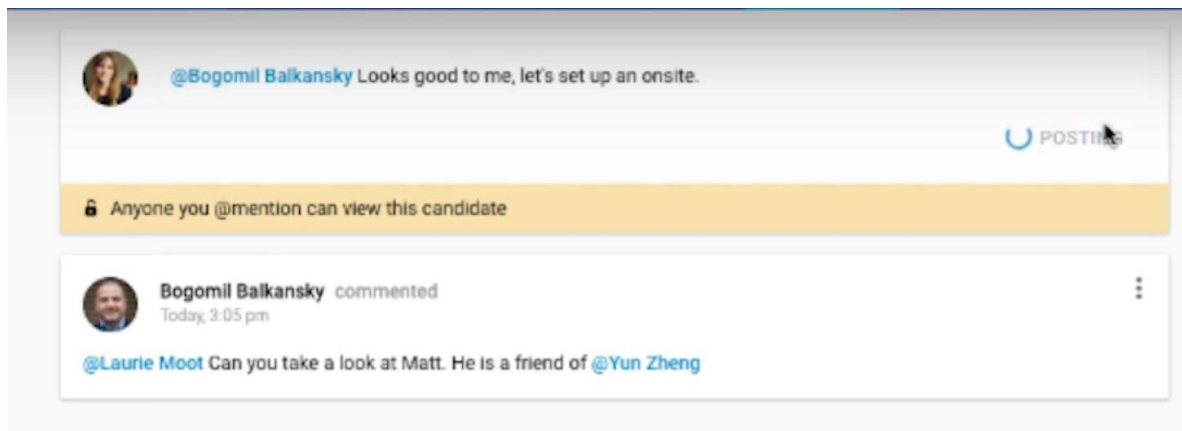


Now you know.

From the preliminary stages of collecting resumes to the final decision phase, Google Hire offers a social element that makes it easy to consult with your hiring team. Early on, you might flag and share promising resumes with colleagues, to narrow down your candidate pool and decide who to interview. Later, after you've conducted the interviews, you can use Google Hire to submit grades and feedback for each candidate.



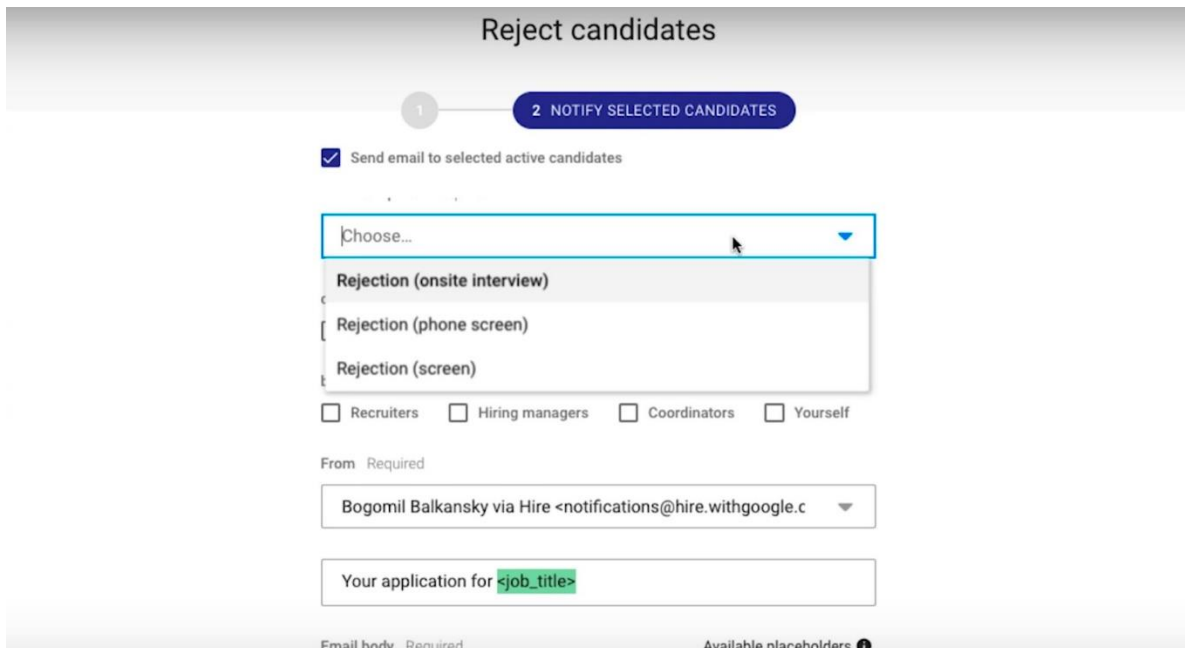
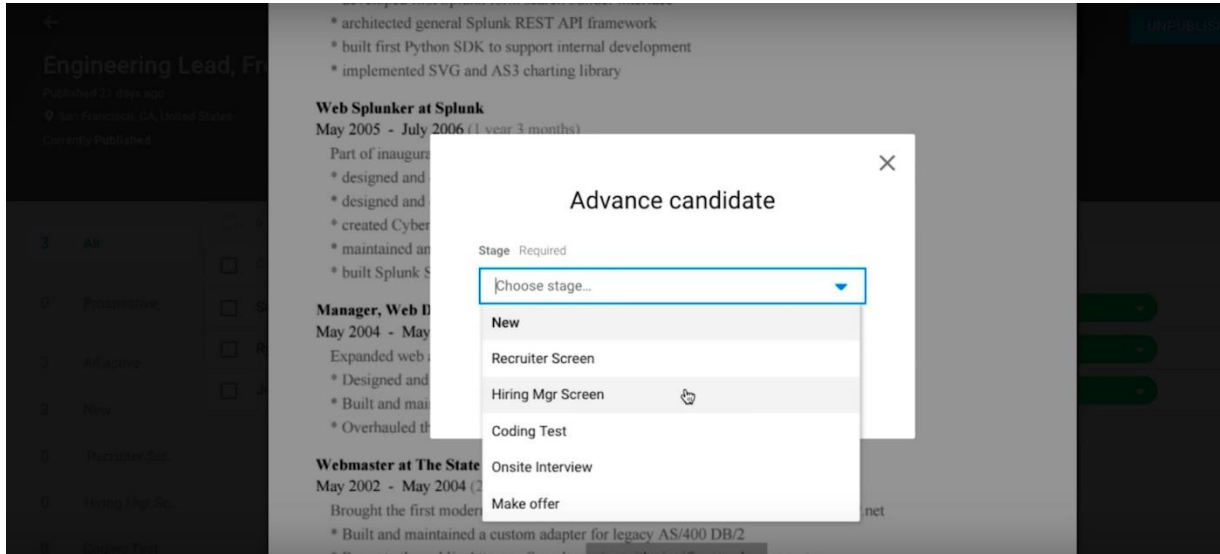
At the grading stage, you can submit feedback from any device, be it a mobile phone or a laptop. Google Hire lets you keep the job description and candidate resume in view, for reference, as you work through your feedback evaluation. You can also read feedback from other interviewers, but only after you have submitted your own. This system helps eliminate groupthink and biases from the hiring process, keeping each interviewer as raw and honest as possible. If there is disagreement, Google Hire helps bring it to the forefront for discussion.



Now you know.

Step 6: Hire Someone

By fostering honest conversation between members of the hiring team, Google Hire makes it easier to get everything out on the table. After considerable deliberation, your team should be ready to make a final hiring decision.



Now you know.

The Importance of a Good Applicant Experience

The core purpose of Google Hire is to simplify the hiring process. As you can see from the step-by-step walkthrough above, the Hire software offers subtle perks and features for different stages of the process; all meant to eliminate common pain points. If the primary purpose of an applicant tracking system is to make things easier for employers, though, then the secondary benefit is how they provide a better applicant experience.

In a “seller’s market”—one where employers have all the power, usually thanks to a job shortage of some sort—it’s easy for applicant experience to become a secondary or tertiary focus for employers. The idea that someone would be “lucky” to get a job often leads employers to drop the ball on candidate relationships.

However, the fact is that candidates are human resources, just like existing employees. Failing to give your employees good experiences often leads to significant problems with retention. Failing to provide your candidates with good experiences sends the message that you don’t care about them and may not want them to work for your company. Applicant experience determines whether your top candidate accepts your job offer or not. It also influences whether you burn bridges with people you don’t hire or keep them on file for future jobs.

If you want to offer a positive applicant experience, communication is the key. Candidates want to be kept in the loop. It’s usually unrealistic to respond to every single person who applies. Once you have interviewed a candidate, though, the best practice is always to update them on the status of their application. Whether you decided to hire someone else, opted not to move the candidate to the next phase of the interview process, or are taking some time to interview a few other people, it’s preferable to let people know where they stand.

Google Hire makes communicating with candidates easier. Say a candidate reaches out to follow up on his or her application status. Google Hire notifies everyone on the hiring team about the communication, even if the email only went to one interviewer. Hire also makes it easy to set up email templates, which you can send to your candidates to notify them of their status.

Another benefit of Hire is that it retains all the information you have on a candidate, from resume and profile information to communications. If a candidate blasts your company on Glassdoor for an unpleasant applicant experience, you can look back at past communications to figure out where something might have gone awry.

All the data retention is also beneficial for building a candidate database. If you receive 300 applications for a job, interview 25 people, and hire one person, there’s a good chance that someone else in that applicant pool is going to be a perfect fit for a future opening. Google Hire allows you to go back and search your database for specific skills or qualifications that might match a current vacancy. It lets you view candidate profiles, see communications with applicants, browse feedback, and jog your memory on why you liked a candidate (or why you decided not to hire them).

Just recently, Google added a “candidate discovery” tool to this system, which automatically looks at a job listing and finds the candidates in your database that are the best fit. This focus on database sourcing is one of Google Hire’s strongest features, as it helps get you better hires with less effort and spending.

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Improving Your Hiring Process with Google Hire

In addition to increasing your reliance on candidate databases, Google Hire also provides another efficient way to improve your hiring process: analytics.

We already mentioned that Google Hire can monitor the efficiency and performance of different job boards or candidate sources. It can also track other metrics, such as your time to hire on various jobs and your disposition reasons (or reasons that you chose not to recruit specific candidates). This information makes it easy to evaluate your hiring process from a mathematical standpoint, to determine where it is running into roadblocks and how you can make it more efficient.

For instance, if you are trying to minimize time to hire—a useful way to decrease your spending on the hiring process—keeping an eye on Google Hire stats can help you identify strategies that seem to add or subtract time. Keeping track of reasons for disposition, meanwhile, could influence how you write job descriptions or go about recruiting candidates in the future.

Incorporating Background Checks

While Google Hire offers tools for a wide range of different hiring functions, there is at least one thing it lacks: background checks. If you decide to use Google Hire, make sure you don't get so caught up in the software and its features that you forget to vet your candidates properly.

To conduct criminal background screenings, verification checks (for employment history, education, professional licenses, and more), or other types of checks, use backgroundchecks.com. Once you and your hiring team have used Google Hire to select a finalist, switch over to backgroundchecks.com. You can use details tracked in Google Hire (such as name, address, college information, employment history, etc.) to order the right background checks. By running background checks on your candidates before you finalize the hiring decision, you can avoid any issues with negligent hiring.

The Verdict

If your business is looking for a feature-rich applicant tracking system that is intuitive and ready to use out of the box, then Google Hire is a good bet. If you are interested in trying Google Hire, do note that the software isn't open to all businesses right now. Currently, the software is only available to United States businesses with fewer than 1,000 employees. If your company meets these criteria, you can apply at hire.google.com/request-demo. If your organization is not currently eligible, you can still fill out the demo request form to make sure you are notified once the software availability expands. Either way, Google Hire promises to be a major player in the ATS market going forward, thanks to Google's big-name status and the useful integration features of the software.

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