



**MOUNT  
INDIE**  
EXPERTS IN CLEARED RECRUITING

# 6 TIPS

## To Cleared Recruiting Success In 2022

Whitepaper  
Mount Indie 2022





# OVERVIEW

## **Security clearance recruiting has never been easy...**

And 2022 is going to present unique challenges in our GovCon space from the impact of remote work, COVID, the security clearance process and the already razor thin candidate pool. When faced with challenges in recruiting, many companies look for new tools or technology thinking it will be their silver bullet, but great technology will not fix bad process. Process is where everything falls apart in recruiting and in process is where we find the greatest improvements leading to better hires, decreased cost to hire and decreased time to hire.

## **The challenge facing many small to mid-sized companies in this space is...**

They are not experts in hiring and their talent acquisition function often times roles up to someone who does not necessarily have the specialized experience it takes to be successful in this competitive market.

We developed this white paper from years of experience working with teams in the DOD space and seeing what works. The information contained, if implemented, will lead to an increase in hires and more revenue to your organization and best of all, it takes only time to fix, not additional investment.

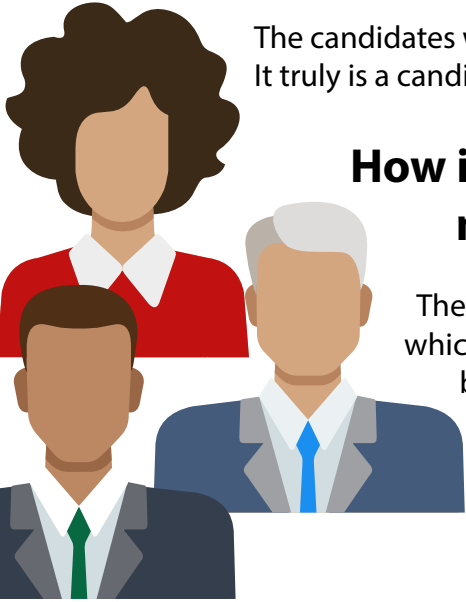
We approach optimizing your recruiting performance from a process standpoint and influencing that process with data derived from your process. Once implemented you will be able to use performance data to help further guide your workload prioritization and team performance.



# Industry Candidate Profile

Recruiting in the cleared space must be approached as a supply and demand issue. Demand is at an all time high and supply is low and trending downwards. Any great recruiting process starts with first understanding what is happening in the market, what other companies are doing and what you are competing with when trying to hire.

Simply put, competition is fierce and all cleared candidates are getting contacted multiple times a day about opportunities in their market. Many candidates have seen remote work is efficient and are very hesitant to take opportunities that don't have some component remote. Candidates have also been willing to let their clearance lapse in favor of remote work in the commercial sector.



The candidates we are attempting to recruit have options, great options at great companies. It truly is a candidate market flooded with opportunity.

## How is this different than previous candidate driven markets?

The obvious difference is the pandemic has created a thirst for remote work, which is driving a large amount of candidate activity. Additionally, as recruiting becomes more sophisticated, the candidate pool has gone into hiding.

Out of the 4.2 million cleared candidates in world, less than 25% can be found with an advertised resume on-line. Candidates have become very weary of recruiting teams as they are continually spammed and contacted about jobs that are not relevant to them.

**Q** Great, so you're saying cleared recruiting is hard and going to get harder, should we just close up shop now?

**A** **NO WAY! The tips in this white-paper are your first steps at optimizing your hiring process to compete!**

The market is tough and you will be fighting for every hire, but success in this space comes from first understanding the challenge at every level of your organization. It is not enough for the Executives and Recruiting leads to understand the market, it has to be felt at every level of your company; this is the only way to implement a successful process. The message to be understood is not "Recruiting is hard", but rather **"We are competing for every hire we make due to market forces outside of our control. We need to treat every candidate hire as critical to the companies growth, because it is."**

# 1. Workload Prioritization

## Gate Reviews are not just for Business Development

Let's start by examining where your team is actually spending their time working. This can be one of the most challenging steps to implement. Every program has "critical" needs, but your recruiting resources have a limit and this is a great way to ensure the right openings are getting those resources. Successful workload prioritization aligns the workload of the recruiting team with the greater vision of the company.

You most likely are already doing gate reviews for your proposal efforts, it is very effective to apply this similar approach when determining where to spend your recruiting resources. Below is an example, and there may be some factors that are important/unique to your company not represented below. This gives a great snapshot of how the requisition aligns with the goals of the company, not the goals of an individual manager.

Essential to this method is the agreement of ranking between the Executive, Operations and Business Development team. This is not something that recruiting can manage up, it will not work and will manifest itself into "Recruiting is not supporting my programs." This methodology has to come from the top down in order to be successful.

Determine what job features are important to your company and develop a numerical ranking that corresponds. Again, the below is an example, but includes some features to consider. The higher the ranking, the higher the job moves up in priority.

FEATURE		
BACKFILL	NO	0/50
PRIME/SUB	PRIME	10/10
FUNDED	NO	0/10
BEST ATHLETE	YES	0/10
STRATEGICALLY RELEVANT TO FUTURE WORK	YES	50/50
CONNECTIVITY TO DECISION MAKER	NO	0/10
RATE AT OR ABOVE MARKET	YES	15/15
CLEARANCE LEVEL	TS/SCI	15/15
BELOW 50 RED 50 - 70 YELLOW 70 - 90 GREEN 90 - 100+ BLUE	SCORE	90

**High Priority Fill!  
Let's go!!!**







## 2. Candidate Journey Optimization

Now that we understand how we are prioritizing workload and have a clear understanding company-wide of what will be worked, it is time to start digging into our process.

### **Removing barriers to entry is all about putting yourself in the candidates shoes**

Remember, in most instances you're trying to recruit people away from other jobs, and if you are a small to mid-sized contractor, most likely they have not heard of your company before. Simply put, future great employees are not waiting around to jump through hoops for you... roll out the red carpet and make it painless. This is where first impressions about your brand are formed.

The best way to remove these barriers is to go all "undercover boss". Apply to one of your jobs on your company's website and experience your hiring process from start to finish through the candidates perspective. Just so we are on the same page, the candidates perspective is "I have multiple offers at a variety of companies, how much am I willing to put up with in this process?"

- 📍 Are there multiple points of redundant data entry in your process?
- 📍 Is there an easy apply button – how hard is it for a candidate to get into your ATS
- 📍 What happens to an applicant if they apply on an outside job board, do they have to complete 2 applications?
- 📍 How many clicks from landing on your website does it take for a candidate to actually read your job descriptions?
- 📍 When is the candidate asked to fill out a long form application?
- 📍 Is there a skills test that needs to be completed before talking to a hiring manager?

**TIP: If you are going through the process and something does not make sense, dig in and look for an alternative.**

### 3. Create a Culture of Hiring

Now that we know the workload prioritization and have eliminated all barriers to entry making sure we have an easy and painless candidate application experience, let's look at the process of aligning our internal team to the hiring goals of the company. Unless you are building stuff, most likely you are one of the companies that helps make the government one of the largest "cheeks in seats" contractors in the world. Look, whether you like it or not, if you are generating revenue through butts in seats, you are in the recruiting business. Sounds simple, but many companies spend so much time developing distinctions that they forget this is what drives their growth.

**Ask yourself, does every single person involved in the hiring process know exactly what they are supposed to be doing?**

Probably not, especially if they have not been explicitly told. Most of the time interviewers are being pulled away from their billable work to conduct interviews and have not gone through interview training. It is not their fault for not understanding the end goal or how to prioritize their hand in the hiring process.

If someone touches the hiring process, they need to understand the goal through communicated SLA's.

- 🚩 Does recruiting have an SLA related to responding to qualified applicants?
- 🚩 Does security have an SLA related to checking clearances?
- 🚩 Do Hiring Managers have an SLA about providing candidate feedback to the team/candidate?
- 🚩 Is there a process in place for how interviews are to be conducted?
- 🚩 Is there an SLA related to the time between candidate submitted and interview scheduled?
- 🚩 At a high level, what is an acceptable time to get a Qualified Candidate through the process?

**Bottom line is if recruiting and hiring is your number 1 priority for 2022, make sure your SLA's communicate this urgency.**





## 4. Ditch LCATS - Write Job Descriptions

Nothing, and I mean NOTHING is exciting about labor category descriptions yet many companies still use these as the basis of advertising their jobs. This is a very bad practice from a recruiting, company brand, marketing and competitive intelligence perspective. Using LCATS to drive your recruiting sends unintended messages to your internal recruiting team as well as potential applicants looking to apply or candidates being sourced.

### Hey, what do you have against LCATS? It's directly from our scope?

They do not give a true description of what a day in the life looks like to the candidate or recruiter

They often do not include relevant technologies that are critical to the position

They are frequently outdated and do not include updated information from option year awards

They are not optimized from an SEO or search perspective

They often include non-relevant skillsets

They do not sell the job or create excitement

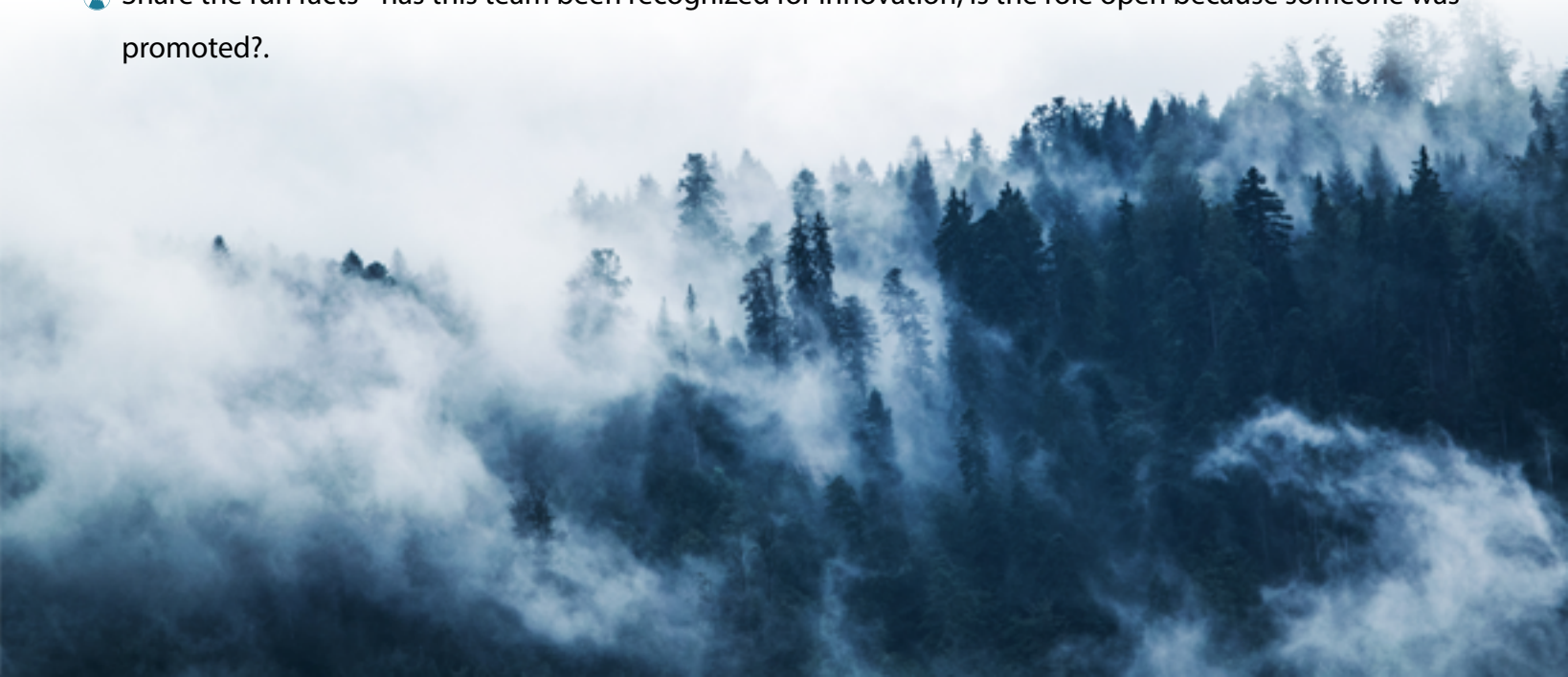
### What to do instead?

Write job descriptions that speak to qualified candidates!

"What's in it for them?"

All too frequently we're hit with "job descriptions" that ought to be called laundry lists of requirements. Ditch the technology word soup and indicate what is truly required per the contract and in order to be successful in the role. Think of the job description as marketing material for your company and don't just include what you want out of this person, but what will you be providing them? For example:

- 🏔️ What is exciting about this project and who will they be working side by side with?
- 🏔️ What challenges and goals will they have in their first 90 days?
- 🏔️ What growth opportunities and longevity does this role present
- 🏔️ Share the fun facts - has this team been recognized for innovation, is the role open because someone was promoted?.



## 5. Own and leverage your Data

What is beautiful about defining SLA's for your recruiting and hiring workflow, is you can use this data to influence performance management. Most companies have incredibly powerful systems called Applicant Tracking Systems, but most don't harness the true power of the data that lies within. I would highly recommend meeting with your ATS vendor, explaining the data you want to extract or the SLA's you want to track and let them show you how to do it.

A great place to start with Data is "time in workflow" - This report will show you how long each candidate sits in every stage of the hiring process. This is a telling report as it shines a light on every stage in the process and allows you to refine.

"Get me candidates as quickly as possible" does not work, if that candidate sits in the interview stage for 2 weeks.

Leveraging this data may open your eyes to bottlenecks you never new existed and help you avoid wasting time on trying to fix a problem that doesn't exist.







## 6. Make a decision and Execute

When you have followed the 4 preceding steps, this should be the easiest step to follow. If you know what you are looking for, when you get it, or don't... take action. Get to a "yes" or a "no" in a reasonable amount of time, but resist throwing candidates on the maybe pile. If a candidate meets the job requirements as defined, interview them and make a decision. A key item for all of your hiring team to know is you are not comparing candidates against each other. You are comparing candidates to the position requirements

Companies of all sizes struggle with this part of the process and time kills all deals. If your team is prepared, informed and engaged in the hiring process, there is no reason offers can't be made within 24 hours from an interview. Dragging candidates through unnecessary rounds of in person interviews says more about your team's inability to make a decision than the candidates' qualifications.



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## 7. Bonus Tip - Partner with Mount Indie

With as challenging as our market has become, we need to adopt agile processes in recruiting that are understood and followed at every level of the company. Focusing your attention to data, process and communication will take your hiring efforts much further than any tool or technology on the market.

The team at Mount Indie are experts in cleared recruiting. We provide a variety of Talent Acquisition services to supplement your existing recruiting programs.

Qualified and cleared candidates in 72 hours

**DRIVEN BY DATA**  
**EMPOWERED BY AI TECH**  
**PROVEN WITH PROCESS**  
**FUELED BY GRIT**



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