

How to Interview Temporary Talent for Learning and Development Positions:

FINDING THE BEST FIT FOR YOUR NEEDS



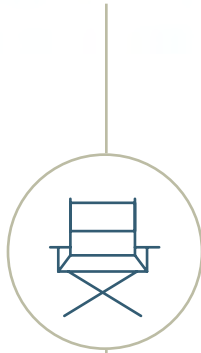
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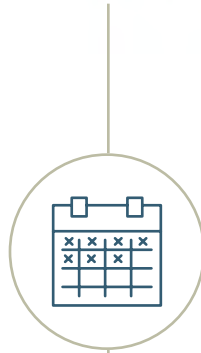
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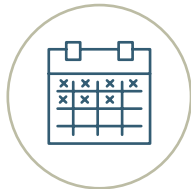
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Getting Started

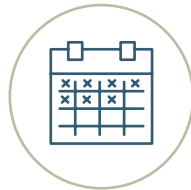
The gig economy is still as strong as ever and we do not see the use of contingent labor going away anytime soon. Freelancers love the variety of projects, the project-based work, the idea of being your own boss, and downtime in between projects if they so choose.

As a learning and development professional building your team, you want to create the strongest, most productive, most innovative—and most *kick-ass*—team you can. To do so, you can leverage and mix and match a few options: hiring and building a great internal team, using vendors as need be, and augmenting your team with temporary talent.

When does temporary talent make sense for learning & development?

Here are just a few examples:

- You have a short-term, mission-critical project and you need specialized skills that your team does not have, such as a psychometrician or videographer.
- You need someone who can fill in for a team member on leave.
- You do not have a requisition for a full-time employee (FTE), but your budget can absorb temporary talent in the form of staff augmentation.



The Staff Augmentation Profile in Learning & Development

Why?

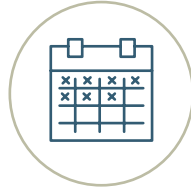
Experienced, seasoned learning and development professionals have progressed in their careers and usually have either developed a focused area of specialty or they have end-to-end experience and a broad range of skills that enable them to take on projects from start to finish, or from analysis to development.

Yet when you're hiring an individual on a temporary basis, there are some important differences versus hiring for a full-time position. We'll get into specifics later on, but generally speaking, you want someone who can **jump in and add value from the word "Go!"**

When you need someone to join your team, you're always searching for that perfect fit: an individual who has the right experience, skills, and attitude, and who will make a positive impact and help get your work done.

Another reason hiring staff aug for learning and development is different than making a full-time hire is the type of talent that tends to be needed.

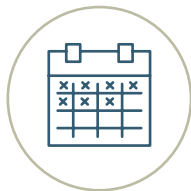
In our experience, clients typically come to us to augment their team with an experienced high-performing consultant rather than a more junior professional. You are not hiring with an eye to growing the talent over time.



These happen to be three very common client requests for staff augmentation:

- You need an expert in an area that you don't have in house (think: analysis, curriculum mapping, eLearning development, or video creation and editing), or
- You need a generalist who is able to take on a project end to end, or
- You need the expertise of a specialized subject matter expert (SME).

It's an interesting benefit that with the general workforce demographic shift, **a senior professional who brings experience, maturity, and a strong sense of ownership can also bring a special element to an internal team of younger employees.** This might not be the specific reason you're bringing on the temporary talent, but it's a perk you may be able to leverage.



Choose Once, Choose Right

Let's assume that you've made the decision to go with staff augmentation to fill a critical role in your learning and development team. What's the best way to ensure you make the right hire?

Working with so many clients like you, we've gained tremendous insights about the end-to-end process of recruiting, vetting, selecting, hiring, and onboarding temporary talent.

There are so many interesting aspects to talent management as it relates to staff augmentation, and we debated what to share in this eBook.

Calling it for what it is, the interview stage is the singular most important aspect of landing the right resource, because it's when you'll narrow down the

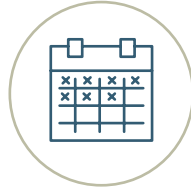
candidates and make your talent selection. So, there's a lot at stake.

First, we give you a glimpse inside the interview process and what to expect. Then, we break down three specific areas that your interview should address:

Our logical choice, ultimately, was to focus on interviewing—the first major milestone in the process of finding great talent.

- Is this person the right fit for a temporary role?
- Is this person the right fit for my specific learning and development needs?
- Is this person the right cultural fit for my organization and my team?

Bottom line: You must be thoughtful and intentional while interviewing to select the right talent for your particular needs. This eBook is full of tips and sample questions to help you do that well.



Ann Cathers
TALENT SOLUTIONS LEAD

Ann Cathers is the Lead for Talent Solutions at SweetRush, where she and her team of four Talent Solutions Consultants recruit and hire top Learning & Development talent for both SweetRush and our clients in a staff augmentation capacity. Ann's recruiting philosophy is relationship-focused as opposed to transactional. For many recruiters, it's about the "placement." For Ann and her team, it's about the people — hence the relationship.

With a background in both Learning & Development and Talent Acquisition, Ann merged the two about 15 years ago and began to specialize in recruiting L&D professionals.

Feel free to contact Ann at ann.cathers@sweetrush.com to say hello or to start a conversation.

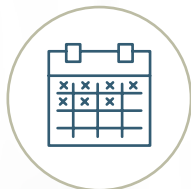


Rodrigo Salazar
DIRECTOR OF TALENT SOLUTIONS

Rodrigo Salazar leads Talent Solutions at SweetRush, where he and his team work with clients to help them find talent and augment their teams in learning and development, a people-centric field that impacts all lines of business within the enterprise. In previous roles, Rodrigo discovered that it is the people—and by extension the team—who really are the driver for and enabler of business success.

Today, he focuses on the world of talent management: how teams are built, how individuals are taught to perform better at their jobs, and how engaged, motivated people are the secret formula organizations need to thrive.

If you need talent...or want to talk 'talent management', please reach out to rodrigo.salazar@sweetrush.com anytime.



Wishing you the best of luck with your interviews and
your new hire!

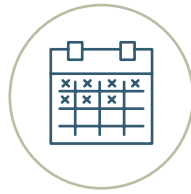


This eBook unabashedly reflects our unique experience and perspectives building teams and producing custom learning solutions for the last 23 years. While most of the work we produce is on a fixed-bid basis, over time clients began to ask if we could supply an individual to augment their team.

From those first requests, our Talent Solutions division was born and has become a vibrant and vital part of the services we offer. We approach staff

augmentation quite differently than classic recruiting organizations—because we do this work ourselves and have a deep understanding of what you face in building your own teams.

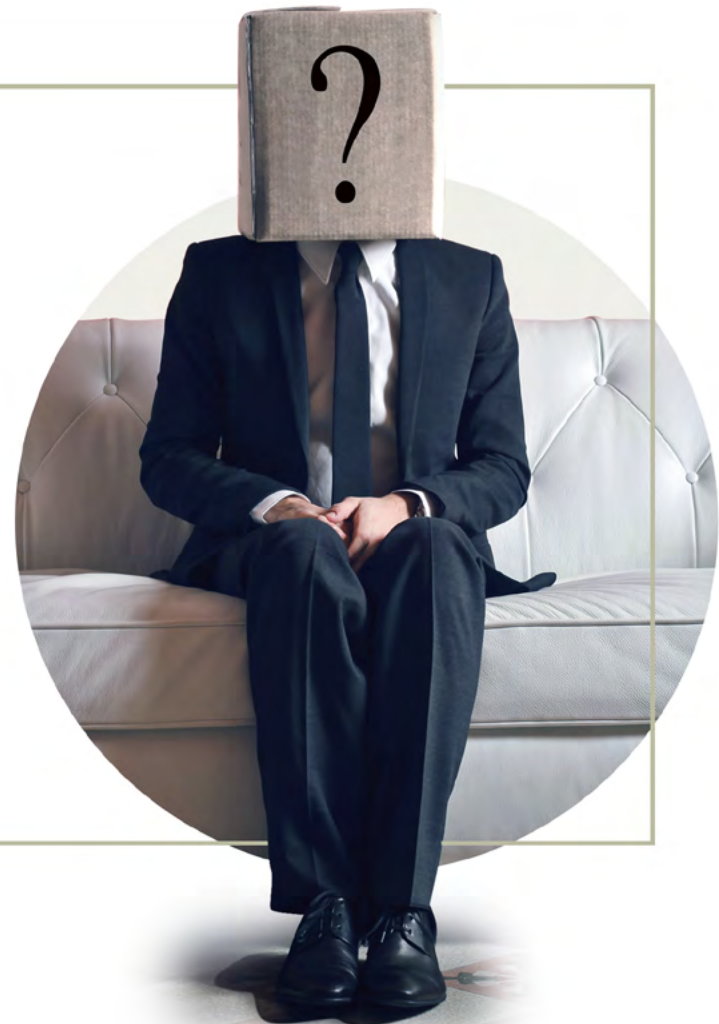
We hope the information in this eBook is of value.
**Always feel free to contact us with any questions,
and your feedback is greatly appreciated!**

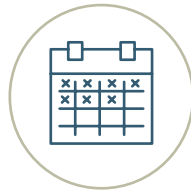


CHAPTER 1: What to Expect from the Interview Process

How Much Time Will You Invest in This Process?

There are two ways you can acquire temporary talent: taking on the effort in house, or bringing on a vendor, such as SweetRush, to help you with these staffing efforts. There are many reasons to consider using a vendor, and one is certainly to save you a tremendous amount of time, which you most likely just do not have.



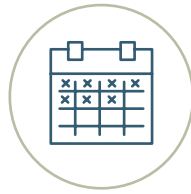


So, assuming you're using a vendor, how much time should you anticipate investing in this effort?

First, you need to articulate and refine the role you are seeking, either by yourself or with your internal team. You'll need to meet with your vendor and allow them to ask a lot of questions so they can understand you, your company culture, and your specific need. It's likely that from this effort, they'll want to create or revise your job description, and you'll then need to review and approve this version.

The next step is reviewing resumes sent by your vendor, and choosing which individuals you want to interview. This shouldn't really take much time.

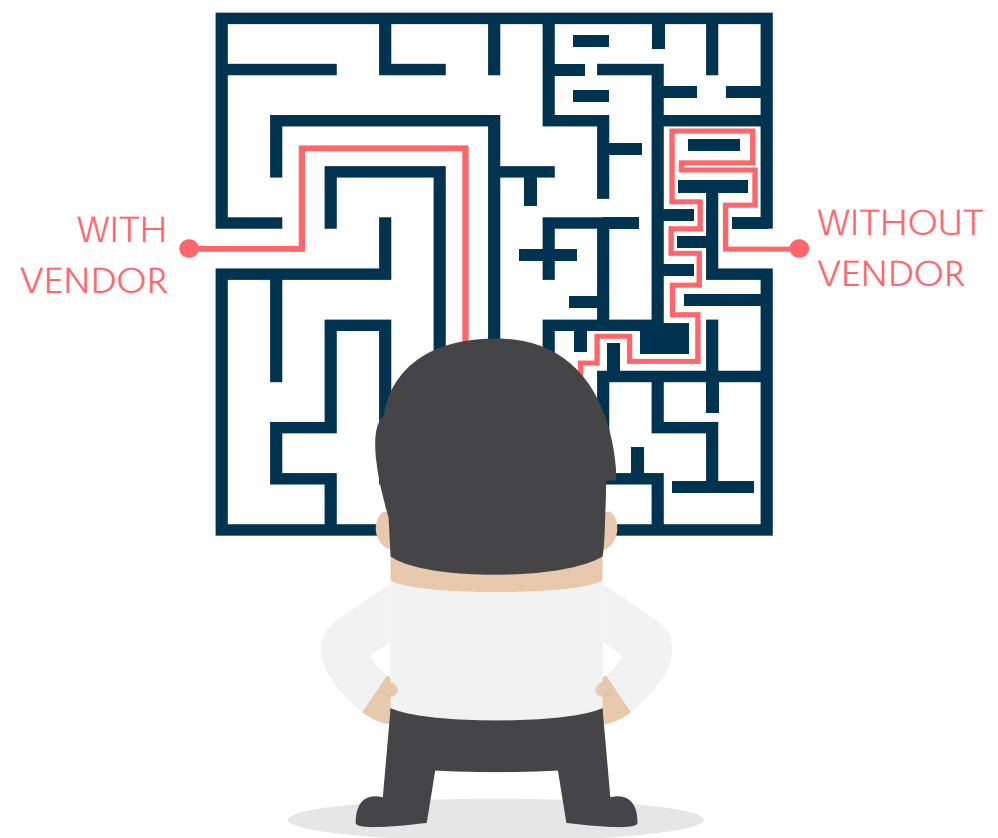
Then, you will engage in the interview process. This is where you'll spend most of your time, but in reality, it's a small fraction of the time your staffing vendor will spend. Your staffing vendor will pre-screen candidates (interview and sometimes an assessment) and send you only those they have filtered and think are worthy. They should be queueing up only qualified candidates; if they are not, you've chosen the wrong vendor.

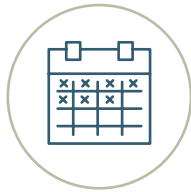


From our experience, you can anticipate interviewing three to five candidates, depending on how difficult the role is to fill. Each interview will run between 30-60 minutes.

Some clients—and this is your choice—prefer to have multiple team members interview candidates, either in separate interviews or in group interviews. And, as you narrow down the candidates to a very short list, you'll likely want to set up a final interview.

So, as you can see, it's somewhat variable how much time it will add up to for you and your team. It could be a 10-hour effort, or much more depending on the role and how many of your team members you want involved.



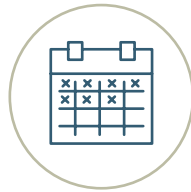


In all cases, you and your staffing vendor should discuss this process up front so you can be clear about your desired interview process and what your time involvement will be.

On the other hand, if you choose to take on the effort internally, be prepared to spend a lot of time managing a complex, focused effort. You'll need to create the job description, post the position, be ready for a flood of candidates within an applicant tracking system, and respond, in some fashion, to them all.

You'll want to proactively source qualified candidates using recruiting tools such as LinkedIn. Then, you'll need a process to filter resumes, contact candidates, and do initial screening interviews—and, finally, whittle down to an ever-shorter list of final candidates. Once you've made your decision, you must work through the HR and related legal issues involved in bringing staff augmentation talent onto your team.

It's key to weigh the time and effort of the end-to-end recruiting process against the cost of a staffing vendor. **For many clients, just the urgency of filling the role and getting the work started validates bringing on the focused effort a staffing vendor will bring.**



Be Responsive!

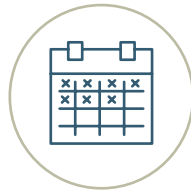
If we could put this one in flashing neon lights, we would.

Not being responsive is often the weak link in the entire recruiting process, and we always hammer this issue home in our discussions with clients.

This means responding to emails, scheduling interviews in a timely manner, making decisions about whether to keep a candidate in play or focus on others, and, ultimately, choosing which candidate gets the job.

We engage with the best talent in L&D and they are in high demand! Assume your candidates have other offers on the table, so be proactive and engage in your process. Otherwise, all of your work will be in vain and you'll watch as great candidates disappear.

Another way to think of this is, if you're seeking a perfectly qualified and amazing individual, this is exactly the type of candidate who'll have many options and whom others will be seeking as well. **So, if this person has entered your orbit, keep them within your gravitational force.** Setting up an interview for next week just won't cut it in today's competitive environment for talent.



Use the first two interviews to refine your expectations.

Anticipate that the first couple of interviews will help you refine your thoughts about the position. This does not mean the first few candidates will be unworthy or not in contention! It's just a natural part of the process as you listen to candidates and reflect on the job description.

Importantly, this refinement process will help your staffing vendor gain important insights about you and the candidate you are seeking. Providing them detailed feedback is a critical part of the process. Sharing the reasons why candidates may not be the best fit will help the staffing vendor recalibrate.

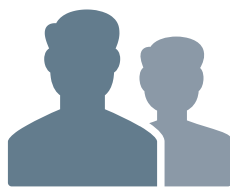
WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE STAFFING PROCESS?



CLIENT



VENDOR



WITHOUT STAFFING VENDOR

WITH STAFFING VENDOR

100%

- Define the role.
- Write job description.
- Review & revise job description.

Job Description

50%

50%

- Define the role.
- Meet and choose vendor who will interview you to embrace your needs.
- Vendor consults to write or revises job description for clarity and to attract talent.

100%

- Explore where to post position.
- Prepare for an onslaught of candidates applying to your ATS.
- Respond to applicants. There may be 100s!
- Review all resumes & select candidates to interview.

Sourcing

— 10%

90%

- Vendor posts position and reaches out to its talent network.
- Vendor databases and keeps track of applicants in applicant tracking system.
- Vendor responds to ALL applicants.
- Vendor reviews ALL resumes & selects candidates to engage in initial discussion.
- Vendor holds initial interviews and decides which candidates to send to the assessment.
- Vendor decides which candidates to send to client.
- Client reviews vendor-selected resumes & selects candidates to interview.

100%

- Arrange & schedule interviews.
- Conduct all interviews.
- Respond to all candidates & keep them abreast of the process.
- If no candidates are chosen, process starts again at Sourcing.

Interviews

20%

80%

- Vendor arranges interviews (or makes introductions to clients to arrange interviews).
- Client interviews selected candidates.
- Client provides feedback on candidates.
- Vendor responds to candidates & keeps them abreast of the process. Candidates are all eager to know what is happening!
- If no candidates are chosen, process starts again at Sourcing.

100%

- Decide on best candidate.
- Reject candidates who do not make the cut.
- Make offer & negotiate terms. Finalize contracts for freelancer. (Work with procurement?)
- Onboard your talent. Do you have a temporary talent onboarding?
- Coach your talent to ensure all is going well.
- Deal with issues if they arise.

Decision

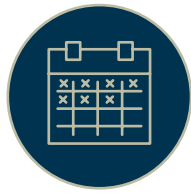
— 10%

90%

- Client decides on best candidate.
- Vendor rejects candidates who have not made the cut.
- Vendor runs background and reference checks on final candidate.
- Vendor makes offer, negotiates terms, finalizes contracts for freelancer.
- Vendor onboards talent to temporary talent best practices.
- Vendor also onboards client to best practices for maximizing temporary talent experience.
- Vendor checks in and coaches talent to ensure all is going well.
- Vendor assists talent as needed if issues arise.

Follow-Up

Congratulations! YOUR NEW HIRE IS ON BOARD.

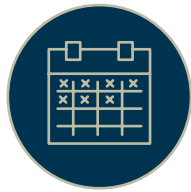


CHAPTER 2: Tips for Interviewing Staff Augmentation Talent

Does Your Candidate Have the Right Stuff for Short-Term Work?

Even if you have a great track record with your full-time hires, you'll want to read this section. Staff Augmentation positions really are different than full-time positions!





Can your candidate hit the ground running?

Staff Aug consultants usually don't have the luxury of extensive on-boarding; they're expected to hit the ground running.

You need to hire candidates who have the ability to take ownership in a situation where their hands won't be held. They must have the experience to get traction without heavy oversight.

A good way to spot this trait in candidates is talking with them about their job history: Find out if the person has previous experience with successful consulting engagements or short-term contracts.

Explore the specific situations and challenges they faced, and listen for clues that they have the ownership and perseverance to succeed.

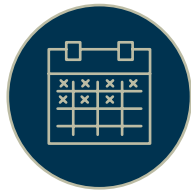


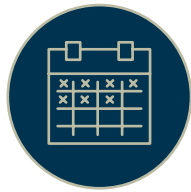
Does your candidate have project management skills?

People working in a staff augmentation capacity, no matter what the role, need to have some project management skills. They must manage their own tasks and closely track their time.

Typically, staff augmentation talent will need to complete a job on a deadline and work by the hour. You will need to have a good assessment from them that they can reasonably accomplish whatever you need from them within your allotted time frame and budget. **This means they must be able to get their arms around the engagement, break down, and assess the process and steps toward the end goal.**

So, ask questions about process.





Is staff augmentation work the “sweet spot” in their career at this moment?

This is a vital perspective we bring to recruiting talent.

The right candidates will be in the professional moment when the staff aug engagement is both fulfilling for them and something they will commit to.

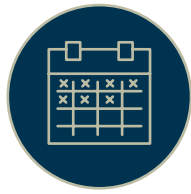
No one wants to bring on a candidate only to have them resign after finding a full-time job.

You need to gauge if this role and the nature of the engagement (being temporary) is right for them in their life and career. And to protect your investment, you need to feel comfortable that the candidate is seriously looking for a staff aug assignment and not just biding time until something better comes along.

This is all about speaking honestly with them and doing your best to truly understand their needs.

Assess whether staff augmentation roles are truly a fit for your candidates. For some, taking temporary gigs is a chosen career path and they're intentionally finding these types of roles.

Ask about the course of their professional lives and where they find themselves in this moment. Why does a staff aug position make sense, and are those reasons likely to change?



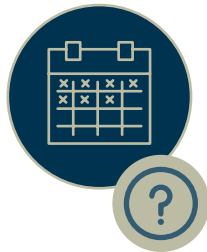
Are you in “try before you buy” mode?

It's perfectly reasonable to hire staff aug talent for a role that you expect to become full-time in the future.

You may need time to see if this role is needed on a full-time basis, and if the person you hire is the right fit for your needs and your team. “Try before you buy” is one reason clients like to engage a staffing vendor first—before making a more permanent decision.

However, if this is your intention, it's best to be up front and have an honest conversation with your candidates. Don't assume that everyone interviewing for a staff aug role eventually wants to work full-time; it might not work for their lifestyle or career preferences and goals. It's better to know about that now, before you hire them, rather than learning later that full-time is not an option. **Make this intention known to your staffing vendor as well: Is this an absolute need, a strong preference, or just a nice-to-have?**

At the same time, don't make promises you can't keep. If you're not sure if the role will turn into full-time, it's best not to “dangle the carrot” and bring on someone who is ultimately looking for a full-time gig, only to disappoint them later. Again, being up front and honest is the best policy.



QUESTIONS TO ASK STAFF AUGMENTATION TALENT TO GAUGE FIT

1.

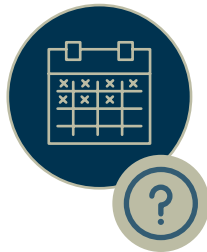
Why are you interested in applying for a staff augmentation position?

Do you have the sense that this position could transition from staff aug to full-time? Be up front with your candidates about that possibility, but don't make false promises. If you know the position will remain temporary, be clear about that as well. Some candidates are open to the idea of full-time work with the right organization; others prefer the flexibility and variety of contract work.

2.

What is your availability and appetite for working hours?

Analyze if candidates can meet your deadlines based on their availability. It's very important to set clear expectations regarding available hours/days and any flexibility therein. Some projects have short timelines and demand intense efforts beyond a regular 40-hour week. You should be up front about this expectation, and you should understand the cost implications of overtime, which your staffing vendor can explain.



QUESTIONS TO ASK TEMPORARY TALENT TO GAUGE FIT

3.

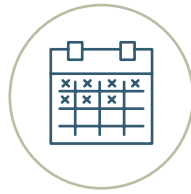
Tell me about the software tools you have worked with. Tell me about a situation in which you had to learn a new tool quickly.

With staff augmentation talent, you'll be less able to invest time having someone come up to speed on the tools your organization uses. Assess the candidate's experience with your preferred communication and document-sharing tools, eLearning authoring tools, LMS, etc. If you use proprietary or less widely known tools, assess the candidate's ability to acclimate to software tools quickly.

4.

Describe a time when you had to adjust to a new situation or a major shift in priorities.

All employees need some amount of flexibility no matter their positions, but even more so with staff aug talent. They often have a short time frame in which to adjust, and they must continue to be high-performing even when priorities change. The way your candidate answers this question will give you an insight into their personality and ability to roll with the punches.



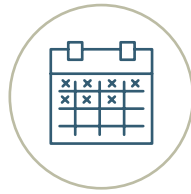
CHAPTER 3: The Learning & Development Skills Assessment

Does Your Candidate Bring the Right Skills to the Table?

Finding the best temporary talent for your learning and development and instructional-design projects means drilling down into candidates' specific skills and experience. Your perfect fit will be able to produce the deliverables you need, whether that be an eLearning course, creating a video, a needs analysis and curriculum map, or integrating games into your learning solutions.

Even if you have a great track record with your full-time hires, you'll want to read this section. Staff Augmentation positions really are different than full-time positions!





Have you written a great job description?

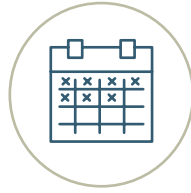
First things first: your job description. You need to get very specific about what you need this person to do. Getting specific will be a great boon to you and your team as you interview candidates, as well as for your staffing vendor.

When you break down what you need your staff to do, that becomes a filter when you're looking at talent, and it's the guide your staffing vendor needs. Instructional background and experience related to the job at hand are important. If the task is for upfront analysis and curriculum mapping, they must be well adept at it. If the job is about video creation or psychometrics, or if it's an eLearning development effort, they need to have the relevant skills to get the job done.

Our experience is that some clients already have a detailed and accurate job description and others do not. Ultimately, it's critical that an on-target job description be developed, and we often help in that effort.

One tendency of clients is to throw every possible skill and attribute into the job description. Doing so opens the door to a lot of unqualified candidates who fit just one or two of the attributes you're seeking. As you can imagine, this makes the process more difficult. So, an accurate and narrowed-down job description is important.

You should have the job description on hand during the interview, and craft questions relevant to the specific tasks you want the person to do. If you do not have interview questions already prepared, ChatGPT or other AI tools can do this for you quickly.



Are your expectations realistic?

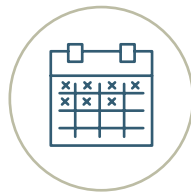
One of the most common mistakes learning and development professionals make during the hiring process for staff aug talent is having unrealistic expectations. As we said earlier, this manifests by throwing everything and the kitchen sink into the job description!

You may be seeking truly experienced and awesome talent, but they are not saviors, so be practical about your prospects.

One role we are often asked to fill is a “one-person band” who is capable of taking on a project from start to finish. They are instructional designers who can also do eLearning development, and graphic design and have excellent client-facing skills. They may be pretty good at everything, but they’re still going to be better at some things than others.

For example, a candidate might be great at instructional design and eLearning development, but weaker in visual design. You may decide that this means they’re not the right fit—in your case, visual design skills may be more important than technical skills. Or, you may decide that you can augment that aspect of the work with an internal team member or another staff aug talent. Hone in on the essential skills, and be open to augmenting non-essential skills.

Our Talent Solutions service line is unique in that we can also, as needed, augment our placed talent. If our placed staff aug talent needs support—say with design, a technical issue, or a peer review—we have the entire SweetRush team of specialists who can help overcome these gaps.

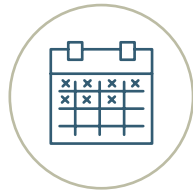


How closely aligned are their capabilities and experience to the real work you need them to perform?

Seasoned talent is more likely to have well-rounded experiences. But if you have some very specific things you need to accomplish, those are the skills you need to focus on in the interview to ensure they can execute your specific learning and development tasks.

In most cases, experience overrides theory. Don't judge candidates solely on their degrees or certifications. Theory is good, and experienced learning and development professionals should have that foundation. But in the real world, the most important skill is knowing how to get the job done and done well; for that, candidates must have hands-on experience.





Should you request samples and/or require an assessment?

Let's talk about samples first. This can be a smart way to assess whether the candidate has the specific skills you're looking for. If you need someone to write highly creative and engaging audio and video scripts, you can ask the candidate to show you examples of this type of work.

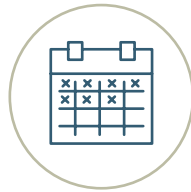
Ask for the background on the project: business objectives, learning requirements, and the deliverables the candidate created or contributed to. Be sure to inquire about the results and the impact of the work.

Acknowledge and respect confidentiality in all cases. Be sure the candidate does as well, redacting names and not providing you with a competitor's materials—

this is a red flag! You wouldn't want them showing off your materials down the road.

Assessments are another matter because they do require additional time from your candidate—and from you. Remember: You'll need to review the assessment and provide feedback, and you might also want to offer the opportunity to present a revised version.

Think about how you can assess your candidate's skills through a test while being respectful of their time and realistic with yours. A short writing assignment or outlining a process or strategy based on a scenario you provide may be an acceptable test.



In general, try to make the assessment as short as possible, and ensure it's focused on the specific tasks you need the candidate to perform—not on aspects that aren't part of the role. For example, if you have an instructional design role in which the candidate will work with a team of graphic designers and developers, frame the test to be about writing, the organization of content, and instructional creativity rather than graphic design or development.



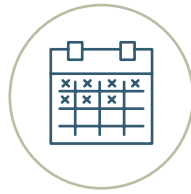
What if the candidates don't have experience with your industry?

We hold instructional designers in great esteem precisely for their ability to adapt and learn new subject matter, and to design ways to reach and teach a specific audience. So, generally speaking, it's not crucial that they have experience in your specific industry.

That said, if your subject matter is very complex—for example, it's deeply technical—or it requires a specific expertise or orientation—say, autonomous vehicles—then you should take this into account. In our experience, qualified instructional designers will be honest and let you know if they feel prepared to take on the engagement, or if your subject matter truly is outside their wheelhouse.

Remember, these are folks with many options, and they don't need to sign up for your work if they feel they will fail. So, be direct and ask them!





QUESTIONS TO ASK LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS TO GAUGE FIT

1.

Why do you think you're suitable for this position?

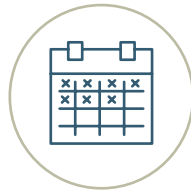
If applicable, you might also ask: Even though you don't have a lot of experience with [your industry or the task at hand], why do you feel you'll be successful with this engagement?

Look for answers that illustrate the candidate's knowledge of adult learning principles, understanding of organizational behavior, organizational skills, coaching skills, presentation skills, innovation, and so on depending on your needs.

2.

What is your favorite part of the instructional design process?

Every instructional designer will have their own favorite part of the process. Some will like analyzing and scoping the project. Others may be fond of design and development. This is one way to judge their skill sets and appropriateness for your needs. This is also a good question to assess their passion for the field.



QUESTIONS TO ASK LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS TO GAUGE FIT

3.

Tell me about a challenge that you faced on a recent project.

In the candidate's response, you should look for how they approached the situation and found solutions to overcome the challenge. If you're already aware of a potential problem, ask a question geared to that reality. For example, if you know the subject matter experts (SMEs) on your team are difficult, you might ask: **Tell me about a time you encountered a difficult SME and how you overcame that challenge.**

4.

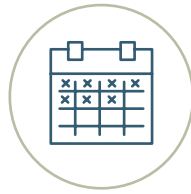
How do you know when a learning solution is effective?

This question can help you assess the candidate's understanding of training ROI. Responses might include things like, when employees are engaged, learn new skills, and effectively transfer what they learn to their work.

5.

How do you stay well-informed about the trends in your industry? Which trends interest you?

With these questions you can assess their passion for the field, what has piqued their interests, and to what degree they're investing in their career and endeavoring to do an even better job. These are key indicators that they bring motivation to the table.



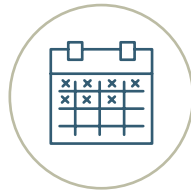
CHAPTER 4: Cultural Fit — And How to Interview for It

Will Your Candidate Thrive in Your Organization?

Vision, values, belief systems, behaviors, and habits of employees and leadership—all of these shape and influence an organization's culture.

If you want a smooth working relationship and better team dynamics, then you'll want to bring on a candidate whose values, attitudes, and preferences align with those of your team and organization.





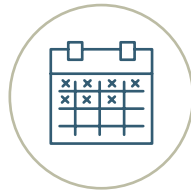
We see this as a foundational issue, which is to say, regardless of skills, if they don't fit within the culture, it's not a fit. (The one exception being if they bring highly specialized skills and are somewhat independent from the internal team or organization.)

Though it might not seem as important because of the temporary nature of staff aug, the value of cultural alignment is even greater for temporary engagements, because you want the talent to quickly integrate and work well with your team.

Your staffing partner should seek to understand your culture extremely well in order to present the right candidates. If your staffing partner does not understand your culture, the candidates they present might miss the mark. You know your culture better than your staffing vendor does, so be sure to communicate cultural values that are important to you.



Cultural fit works both ways. Your staffing partner also needs to assess whether the organization is the right fit for the candidate. Often, recruiters take only the view of the client or organization the candidate will be joining—that is, “Is the candidate right for our client?” For the engagement to succeed, we also must be confident that the organization is the right fit for the talent. At all times, we seek to find the “sweet spot” where it's a two-way fit, which is the ultimate formula for success.



What is your culture?

**Are you entrepreneurial and fast-paced?
Conservative? Innovative? How diverse is your
organization? Is the culture inclusive?**

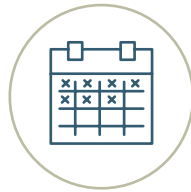
For example, working with high-tech clients, we tend to see fast-paced cultures in which the ability to ramp up on digital tools and technology quickly is highly valued. Candidates who are not able to quickly acclimate to new tools may not be the best fit for the organization, even though they possess other strengths important for the role.

Organizational culture is one level, and team culture is another. Within your team, is there an emphasis on teamwork, communication, and bringing the team together, or do you tend to work as independent players?

When you create your job description, be sure to include “soft skills” qualities your talent must possess. This will allow you, your staffing vendor, and ultimately the candidates to be clear about your cultural values.

Before your interviews, think about aspects of your culture—for example, work ethic, environment, and work hours. Then, with this lens, ask questions during the interview to ensure the candidate has a perspective that fits well with your team and company culture.

For example, if your organization tends to have a culture that emphasizes mentoring and nurturing, ask candidates about how they like to receive feedback and their own experience with mentoring others. If your culture is more about independent efforts (versus teams or teamwork), you might favor a candidate who values autonomy.



QUESTIONS TO GAUGE CULTURAL FIT

1.

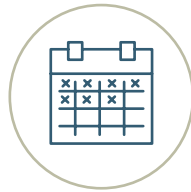
Why do you want to work for us?

You need to know what expectations the candidate has of you. If they respond by saying they think the opportunity will afford them more flexibility in working independently, think about your work culture and if it allows employees autonomy or emphasizes oversight by managers and team leads. Choose a candidate whose answers match your culture.

2.

What is your expectation from this position?

A candidate who can answer with concrete goals and has a vision for their career and how your opportunity aligns is likely a good candidate. Skills can be taught, not clarity of vision.



QUESTIONS TO GAUGE CULTURAL FIT

3.

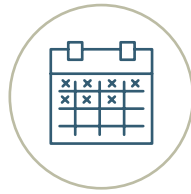
In what kind of work environment do you feel most successful and productive?

This question will help you gauge whether the candidate prefers to work in a team, to work solo, or some combination thereof. Assess whether the candidate's preferences align with your organizational and team culture, as well as the specific position.

4.

Tell me about your previous managers and their strengths and limitations.

The way your candidate describes their previous employers will give you insight into their cultural preferences. For example, if they say they liked the way their previous boss appreciated their ideas, consider whether your organization's culture supports recognition.



Interview Checklist

YOU'RE READY TO ROCK YOUR INTERVIEWS!

Without a doubt, interviewing and selecting the best candidate is the most important step in the hiring process. All the other steps, even if done right, will not make up for choosing the wrong candidate. Hopefully, with these tips and sample questions, you now feel confident you have a streamlined and effective interview process, and you'll be in a better position to find the right candidate for your needs.

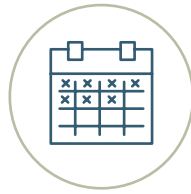
And finally, our unvarnished pitch: If you have a position to fill for staff aug talent in the learning and development field, we would love the opportunity to speak with you and help you meet your needs. Please contact me anytime if I (and the SweetRush Talent Solutions team) can help.



Continue on to the Interview Questions Checklist.



Be amazing,
Rodrigo Salazar
Director of Talent Solutions
rodrigo.salazar@sweetrush.com

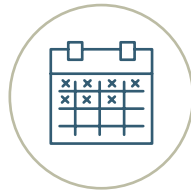


Interview Questions Checklist



The Right Stuff for Temporary Engagements

- Why are you interested in applying for a staff aug position?
- What is your availability and appetite for working hours?
- Tell me about the software tools you have worked with. Tell me about a situation in which you had to learn a new tool quickly.
- Describe a time when you had to adjust to a new situation or a major shift in priorities.



Interview Questions Checklist

Learning & Development Skills Assessment

- Why do you think you're suitable for this position? If applicable, you might also ask: Even though you don't have a lot of experience with [your industry or the task at hand], why do you feel you'll be successful with this engagement?
- What is your favorite part of the instructional design process?
- Tell me about a challenge that you faced on a recent project. (Or, be specific about a challenge you have and ask about that situation.)
- How do you know when a learning solution is effective?
- How do you stay well informed about the trends in your industry? Which trends interest you?
-

Gauging Cultural Fit

- Why do you want to work for us?
- What is your expectation from this position?
- In what kind of work environment do you feel most successful and productive?
- Tell me about your previous managers and their strengths and limitations.

Empower Your People. Improve Performance. Get the Job Done.

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