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reacting to the counteroffer: how to ensure top talent wants to work for you?

You've just extended an offer to the most qualified candidate and you're sure they're going to quickly accept and begin making preparations to join your company. Then it happens - they tell you their current company has issued a counteroffer to keep them.

What do you do?

establish the candidate's sincerity

When your target candidate is offered an improvement in their package by their current employer, you need to take action before you can decide to increase the salary and benefits you've put forward.

You'll need to work out whether that candidate was just using your offer to negotiate with their current employer. Not all applicants are equally interested in the opportunity you're offering, so it would be worth trying to gauge their seriousness before reacting to a counteroffer.

According to the [Jobvite Job Seeker Nation Study 2017](#), some 21 percent of workers on the US' west coast used a counter offer to negotiate a higher salary. This means that hiring managers can't be complacent about a candidate's interest.

This is why it is so important to establish the level of seriousness shown by a candidate during the interview process. Video interview software firm [Spark Hire has advised hiring managers that if a candidate has no questions during an interview](#), or if they have no concrete reason for wanting to leave their current role, it could be a sign that they might be liable to turning down your offer.

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ensure company culture is showcased

The best way of preventing a candidate from accepting a counteroffer is to ensure they wouldn't even consider it in the first place. This is why [employer branding](#) is so important. It's vital to ensure candidates know that you would offer a better employee experience than the one they currently have.

Your organization should be highlighting its [company culture](#) and publicizing the benefits employees will enjoy. Social media is a valuable tool that enables you to reach jobseekers and showcase your company culture. Encourage your employees to post their own experiences online, as [candidates want to hear from them](#) about what it's like to work at your organization.

Jobvite found that 25 percent of job seekers use Facebook to research prospective companies, while 28 percent of those aged 18 to 29 are now using Instagram to gain an insight into company culture.

Company culture is becoming an increasingly important differentiator for candidates, with [13 percent reporting that they have turned down a job offer because of it](#). This is compared to 42 percent who said salary was their reason for declining an offer. It means that you should consider it an essential factor in your recruitment or talent acquisition strategy.

reacting to a counter offer

When a candidate receives a counteroffer, they might be swayed into remaining where they are. This could be down to wanting to stay somewhere they are comfortable, or because they are promised greater career progression, for example. You can't control a counteroffer, but you can control your reaction to it.

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Reminding them of the reasons that they were looking for a new position could help the candidate put things into context. This could be done through pointing them in the direction of the material you've shared about your company culture and how you value your employees. It will be up to them to decide where they want to be. However, it is important to consider whether your organization wants to bring someone on board who may not be fully committed to the new position.

Ultimately, what you decide to do when a candidate reports that they have received a counteroffer from their current employer depends on their ability. If you know you would struggle to find someone else with their skills, then increasing your offer could be a reasonable step. However, if your 'silver medal' candidate - the one who was just beaten to the position - could easily step into the role, it might not be worth it.