



SPRINT TEMPLATE · FREE GUIDE

From JD to Hire in 14 Days

The day-by-day plan founders and hiring managers use to go from open headcount to signed offer in two weeks.

BUILT BY SCREEQ

Screeq is the AI recruiting platform that screens hundreds of candidates with structured async interviews, ranked shortlists, and audit-ready scoring. Start a free trial — no credit card — at screeq.com.

Why this guide exists

The honest disclaimer first: 14 days does not fit every role. It works for individual-contributor roles in active labour markets with well-defined scopes and a single decision-maker. It doesn't work for executive search, deeply specialised technical roles with thin candidate pools, or anything requiring extended background checks.

For the roles it fits, the cost of *not* hiring fast is brutal: the top 10% of candidates remain on the market for roughly 10 days, the global median time-to-hire is 38 days, and 38 % of candidates report being ghosted by an employer in the past year. A 14-day sprint solves the speed problem without cutting corners on rubric or references.

01 - The 14-day Gantt

Owner abbreviations: HM = hiring manager, R = recruiter, OP = ops/coordinator.

Days 1–2 · Foundation

- **Day 1 AM** (HM + R, 60 min) — Kick-off: scope, must-haves, nice-to-haves, salary band, success metrics.
- **Day 1 PM** (R, 2 hrs) — Draft JD using template. HM reviews same day.
- **Day 2 AM** (R, 2 hrs) — Build sourcing list: 30–50 named candidates + post to 3 channels.
- **Day 2 PM** (R + HM, 30 min) — Finalise scorecard: 4 weighted criteria, 1–5 anchors.

Days 3–7 · Async screening

- **Day 3** (R, 1 hr) — Send async interview to every qualified applicant: 5 questions, ≤ 10 min.
- **Days 3–6** (rolling) — Review async responses at 1.5x speed as they come in. Score against rubric.
- **Day 7** (R + HM, 60 min) — Calibration call. Lock top 5 candidates for the live round.

Days 8–11 · Structured interviews

- **Days 8–9** (HM + panel, 45 min each) — Live structured interviews with the top 5.
- **Day 10** (OP, 2 hrs) — Reference checks on top 2: 3 references each, structured questions.
- **Day 11** (HM + R, 60 min) — Debrief. Decision: offer / no-offer.

Days 12–14 · Offer & close

- **Day 12** (HM, 30 min) — Verbal offer call. Walk through package.
- **Day 13** (R + OP, 2 hrs) — Written offer sent. Candidate has 48 hrs.

- **Day 14** — Signed. If declined → activate runner-up (already vetted).

02 · Templates — JD, scorecard, references

JD template (4 sections, ≤ 400 words)

- **The mission** — 2 sentences. What this person will own and why it matters.
- **The first 90 days** — 3–4 outcomes, not 'responsibilities'.
- **Must-haves** — 3–5 non-negotiables. If you list 10, you're not hiring fast.
- **How we work together** — remote/hybrid, reporting line, team size.

Scorecard template (4 weighted criteria)

- Domain knowledge (weight ?%) — 1–5 with anchor answers.
- Problem-solving signal (weight ?%) — 1–5 with anchor answers.
- Communication clarity (weight ?%) — 1–5 with anchor answers.
- Stakeholder navigation (weight ?%) — 1–5 with anchor answers.

Reference call (15 min, structured)

- How do you know [candidate] and how long?
- What did they own when you worked together?
- What is one thing they did better than anyone else on the team?
- What is one area where they have room to grow?
- If you were starting a new team, would you hire them again? Why / why not?

03 · The 'first-touch within 24 hours' rule

Candidates drop the moment they feel ignored. The two highest-leverage moments to be fast:

- **Application acknowledgement (within 1 hr)**. Auto-respond. Tell them what happens next and when.
- **Decision after each stage (within 48 hrs)**. Yes or no. Either beats silence — 34 % of candidates assume they've been ghosted after just one week.

04 · When to slow down, when to speed up

Slow down when

- Two strong candidates with similar scores — take 3 extra days for one more interview.

- Reference call surfaces a red flag — pause, investigate, document.
- HM and recruiter disagree on the top candidate — debrief, re-score, then decide.

Speed up further when

- A clearly top candidate is interviewing elsewhere — get the offer in 24 hrs of debrief. The top 10 % is only on the market for ~10 days.
- The role is revenue-generating and vacant — every day costs roughly 1x daily salary in lost contribution.

The numbers that should shape your strategy

Eight current data points — every one drawn from a 2024–2026 primary or peer-reviewed report. Tap any superscript on the next page to open the source.

<p>38 days</p> <p>global median time-to-hire (89M applications, 95 countries).</p>	<p>26%</p> <p>faster hiring at companies using AI vs those that don't.</p>
<p>68.5 days</p> <p>average US time-to-hire in 2025 — up from 36–44 days in 2023.</p>	<p>~10 days</p> <p>the top 10 % of candidates stay on the market before accepting.</p>
<p>38% / 34%</p> <p>of candidates ghosted in the past year / assume ghosted after 1 week.</p>	<p>82%</p> <p>of candidates say experience directly influences offer acceptance.</p>
<p>57%</p> <p>of seekers lose interest if the process feels too long.</p>	<p>41%</p> <p>of UK employers had new hires resign within 12 weeks (CIPD, 2024).</p>

Sources & citations

Every URL below was fetched and verified before publication. If a link breaks, the publisher name and report title will let you re-locate it.

- [1] Global median time-to-hire is 38 days (89M applications, 95 countries).
SmartRecruiters Recruiting Benchmarks 2025-2026 ·
<https://ta.smartrecruiters.com/rs/664-NIC-529/images/Recruiting-Benchmarks%202025-2026.pdf?version=0>
- [2] Companies using AI in recruiting hire 26 % faster than those that don't.
SmartRecruiters Recruiting Benchmarks 2025-2026 ·
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- [3] Average US time-to-hire rose from 36–44 days in 2023 to 68.5 days in 2025.
Labor-market analysis, The Interview Guys (2025) ·
<https://blog.theinterviewguys.com/60-of-candidates-drop-out-after-2-weeks/>
- [4] Top 10 % of candidates stay on the market only ~10 days before accepting another offer.
Corporate Navigators (2025) ·
<https://www.corporatenavigators.com/articles/candidate-sourcing/time-to-hire-top-10-candidates/>
- [5] 38 % of candidates report being ghosted in the past year; 34 % assume ghosted after 1 week of silence.
Criteria Corp 2024 Candidate Experience Report (n = 2,516) ·
<https://www.criteriacorp.com/2024-candidate-experience-report>
- [6] 82 % of candidates say their hiring experience directly influences whether they accept an offer.
JobTwine 2025 (citing IBM 2024 Talent Report) ·
<https://blog.jobtwine.com/blog/2025/04/01/candidate-experience-statistics-for-hiring-success/>
- [7] 57 % of job seekers lose interest if the process feels too long (SHRM).
TreeGarden Average Time-to-Hire 2026 benchmarks (citing SHRM) ·
<https://treegarden.io/blog/average-time-to-hire-benchmarks-2026/>
- [8] 27 % of UK employers had new starters fail to show on day one (CIPD & Omni RMS, Sept 2024).
CIPD & Omni RMS Resourcing & Talent Planning Report 2024 ·
<https://www.cipd.org/uk/about/press-releases/over-quarter-of-uk-employers-been-ghosted-by-new-recruits-day-one/>
- [9] 41 % of employers who recruited in the past year had new employees resign within 12 weeks.
CIPD & Omni RMS Resourcing & Talent Planning Report 2024 ·
<https://www.cipd.org/uk/about/press-releases/over-quarter-of-uk-employers-been-ghosted-by-new-recruits-day-one/>
- [10] Average software-engineer time-to-hire is 95 days; offer-acceptance fell from 73 % → 51 % in three years.
Dev.to analysis (citing Indeed & LinkedIn 2025) · https://dev.to/d_v_/time-to-hire-for-engineers-95-days-in-2026-2dbn

Ready to put this guide into production?

Screeq compresses the screening half of this sprint — JD grading, async interviews, AI-assisted scoring, branded careers page — into a single product. Days 3–7 of the sprint go from days to hours. The template works without Screeq; with it, the 14-day timeline becomes the default, not the aspiration.

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