



HIRING

GOOGLE CLOUD PLATFORM (GCP) TALENT

10 BEST PRACTICES FOR SUCCESS



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Background

Google Cloud Platform (GCP) is a Top-3 Cloud Service, after AWS and Azure. Its recent accelerated adoption by companies of all sizes – and across industry verticals – has caused a hiring spurt in the market. For instance, GCP is [ranked at about #46 in the UK jobs market](#) in terms of demand for Permanent jobs, and at #58 for Contract roles. (For a ranking perspective, the tech skill ranking by [ITJobsWatch](#), a well-referenced job openings website, goes on till about #770, so we are talking about GCP being in the top 7% of the in-demand jobs). Our understanding of the GCP hiring market in the UK for our clients has given us deep insights on how companies can vastly improve their GCP hiring, retention and productivity for their GCP work.



Audience

This whitepaper speaks to four groups of the GCP Ecosystem, and advises how they can get better with their GCP hiring:

- [GCP Consulting Partners](#), who provide consultancy to end-user GCP deployments
- The ISV or the Developer community that are [building native apps](#) on the GCP platform
- The [End User organizations](#) using the GCP Platform
- The [Google Cloud unit](#) of Google

Related Whitepaper

While this white paper is intended to advise the hiring community in GCP, we will soon be releasing a similar document covering the Candidate Community focused on GCP. This candidate-facing white paper will cover areas such as GCP hiring activity, key use cases requiring people, best practices to use in interviews, choosing the right companies to interview with and work for, key certifications to have, etc. To express an advance interest in this document, please provide us with your contact details here.

This White Paper is filled with practical ideas that you can use as an Employer of GCP talent to improve your hiring. There's a battle for tech talent currently waging for GCP and related skills, and to stay ahead of the competition, you've got to make smarter planning and hiring decisions as a Company. However, sourcing and retaining the right tech talent for your company presents its own specific set of challenges.

Here we present the Ten Best Practices to hire and retain top specialists for your Google Cloud solutions.

01



Go to the GCP haunts of the candidates

So where are they? Unless you hire GCP professionals in single digits in a year, you must position your company in the right locations. That includes in social media first and foremost.

- The top hashtags for GCP job aspirants are #machinelearning, #kubernetes, #aws (yes) and #serverless. If you are tweeting your open positions on Twitter or advertising in LinkedIn, you need to cover these. We often find outstanding candidates apply to us if we use some of these (or other niche hashtags as required). Don't search in the wrong place. Job Boards like Glassdoor and Indeed are popular, but they may not be where your target GCP candidate pool may be. Aligning your company presence on the right platforms widens your reach. Talk to recruitment experts on which are the most appropriate platforms for your specific needs.
- Additionally, establishing your company on the tech scene further extends your talent reach. Tech-related conferences and events are a fruitful opportunity to build valuable networks for future hiring processes. Are your recruiters and executives (involved with GCP) attending the [Google Next event](#) happening in 2021 between Oct 12-14? Remaining ahead of the curve can include sponsoring and hosting such events, encouraging attendees to associate your company with a tech-oriented image. What better way than to target passive talent, which is our next best practice.



02

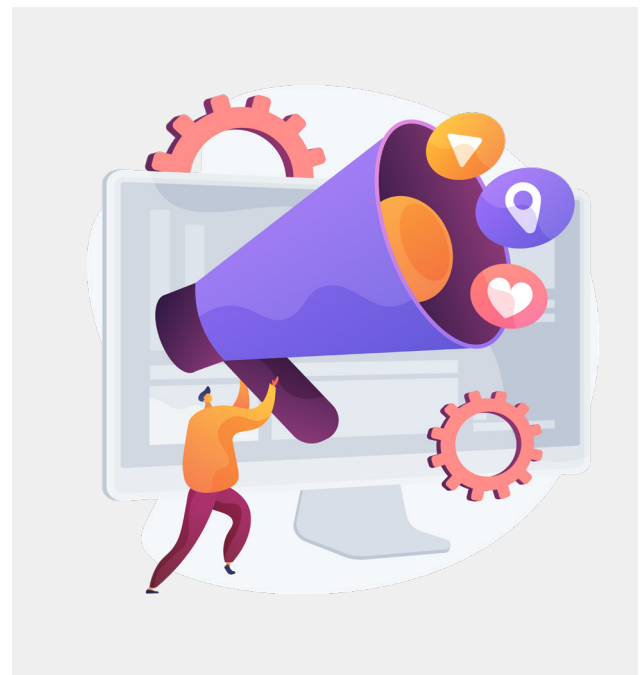


Target passive GCP talent by digging into Level 2 or 3 social media

The heading of the section is a no-brainer but let's apply it to the GCP hiring world. We are in August 2021, and we have seen enough trends in Google Cloud tools this year to say that you will find it impossible to hire active candidates in hot GCP tools such as [Dataplex](#), [GKE Autopilot](#) or [Database Migration Service](#). Passive would be the way. GCP candidates in such tech areas are highly coveted by businesses of all types. Most of these prime candidates are not putting any energy into looking for a new role. A huge [70%](#) of the global workforce is made up of passive talent, which requires recruiters to gain the attention of these people.

Two quick ways to illustrate how to track passive talent:

- One, leverage the Level 2 social media. LinkedIn has been a Level 1 social media for some time and is now perhaps overcrowded with recruiters now but Level 2 social networking sites like Twitter and Facebook can be an asset in connecting with passive talent. A whole chapter can be written on how to hire from these so-called Level 2 media. Suffice it to say that Level 2 is not an overnight "advertise and receive CVs" game. So, this media needs to be given time and space to yield results. Then there would be Level 3 social media - those would be the likes of GitHub, Stack Overflow and Reddit. Your business needs to be out there in these zones to receive recognition, and then CVs!
- In our work, we have seen a sizeable positive uptick with Employee referral programmes - both from inside (meaning existing employees referring new candidates) and outside (a non-employee in Reddit when approached recommends someone else).



03



Tune your job ad with GCP Role-specific M/S/N's

There are good job ads and there are mediocre ones. [Here is one](#) that illustrates the point we are trying to make in this section. Here is [one more](#). We can provide a lot of mediocre examples – they are the majority – but we will not go there!

Much as you want to do passive hiring, you will need to do job ads for some other roles or times. How you market your company and the position you are advertising is key. The goal is to present the relevant information upfront and engage your candidate.

- The best place to start is with a clearly defined job title. Why? Because publishing an attractive job description (JD) online means nothing if no one can find it, or the title is too generic.
- Does the JD clearly provide your M/S/N's in the candidate – these are the 'Must have', 'Should have' and 'Nice to have' attributes in the ideal candidate.
- Pivot to the candidate side now – what are their M/S/N's in your company? If their "Must have" is an opportunity to work with new and innovative technology, then do you offer this? Saying this explicitly would be great.
- Not talking overall compensation offered in explicit terms is fine, but giving no indication is not good either. The salary isn't always the most important component. While the pay is still the main point of consideration when choosing a new job, [92% of candidates](#) are willing to accept a lower salary in exchange for other benefits. So don't underestimate the value of including the perks of the role you're advertising.
- Say this explicitly if your company is open to personalizing and tailoring your benefits packages for some candidates – this can provide a cutting-edge advantage over your competition. Ask yourself, what can your company offer top talent?
- In passing, we have to say this – are you driving traffic into your Careers page through PPC ads, for example? Very useful if you are Company A (competing with Company B) and someone is searching for a GCP job in Company B, but you are then advertising to seek that diversion? Ad-based hiring is selling and not an HR activity alone!

04



Perhaps a micro-site for GCP specific hiring branding?

For a lot of techies, their specialization is a religion. In this case we are talking GCP techies or managers who live and breathe GCP. What makes your company special to them? Does your company have a distinctive “GCP culture”?

- Know your unique value proposition and how it appeals to candidates, not just in absolute terms but in relative terms. Relative to your competition, to your clients and perhaps in some cases, to Google themselves. Are the hiring team able to articulate these 5-point differentiators (for ex.) in a similar and consistent manner?
- Does your company offer new and exciting challenges in the areas based on your candidate hiring strategy? If a candidate set is mid-level and is seeking industry oriented GCP challenges ([industry specific use cases](#), in Financial Services as in this example), you need to articulate that. If another candidate set requires pure tech evangelizing (for ex., [High-performance GPUs on Google Cloud](#)), then that is another subset. The right employer branding can set you apart from the competition, and the competition is fierce.
- Around [50%](#) of talent would not work for a company with a bad reputation, even if the wages were attractive, [46%](#) read reviews on Glassdoor even before they consider speaking to a recruiter or hiring manager. On the contrary, companies with a positive reputation receive [twice as many](#) applications as those with negative employer branding. Remember, on average, your employees’ network is tenfold the size of your company’s. Recruiting top talent can be a battle and your current employees are the perfect recruiting army, if they are a happy lot.
- Why go all the way to a micro site? Because it is not all that difficult to build one! But more seriously, one hurdle preventing talent from deciding whether to work with a company is not knowing what to expect from the working environment. Promoting testimonials from your employees in this micro site gives prospective talent an idea of what your culture and values are and what it’s like to work for your company. Providing value-rich content such as videos and pictures depicting your company culture can convince a candidate to work for you.

05



... or try out outsourced employer branding may be?

While we are no direct relation to Stack Overflow, we quite like their [employer branding solutions](#). We have helped clients get on to this platform which is a natural watering hole for GCP geeks, nerds and evangelists alike. Head over there to explore the art of the possible.

06



Know your GCP-hiring competition

At the outset, we had set out how difficult – and how much of a priority – GCP hiring has become recently, with stats that GCP jobs are now among the hottest in the UK market.

- In the tech field, we at Stack have seen a unique imbalance between demand and supply. Top tech talent is getting scarcer, and training capacity remains tight, while demand rises exponentially. How are other companies attracting top talent to work for them? It's likely your competition is offering exactly what top talents value, so focus on the overlap. Doing your research on the playing field can set you apart from the rest. When did you last do a [talent market assessment](#) of the type that perhaps Mercer do, but something sharply focused on your GCP needs?
- Recently, a permanent remote work option has become less of a calling card for companies. The pandemic has seen many companies switch to a remote or dynamic way of working and for most of the talent, this feature is a minimum expectation now when choosing where to work.
- Opportunities for learning, career advancement, and filling data skills gaps are also becoming increasingly popular with top talents when they are deciding who to work for.

07



Involve your “most needy” employees in the recruitment process

About 60% of the GCP’s tech skill sets are possibly stable (tech has been around for more than 4 years with periodic top-up releases), [20% in evolving and remaining 20% are emerging](#) (beta in nature). Which means that for the first set of stable skillsets, you might have internal employees to interview the talent. Possibly even the 20% evolving. So that is nearly 80% and so get those employees who would gain the most from this new hire joining in, into the process. Or lose if the new hire turns out to be a wrong fit.

Talents are [three times more likely](#) to trust the employees of a company, as they can

give your potential candidates an added perspective that the hiring manager simply cannot. For candidates, it is important for them to feel that they can fit into the culture of your workplace and engaging with current employees during the recruitment process can help. Equally, your current employees will likely have a better instinct on which candidate would make a better fit when deciding who to select.

For the areas that you don’t have internal interviewing capability, use of external agencies may not be a bad idea.



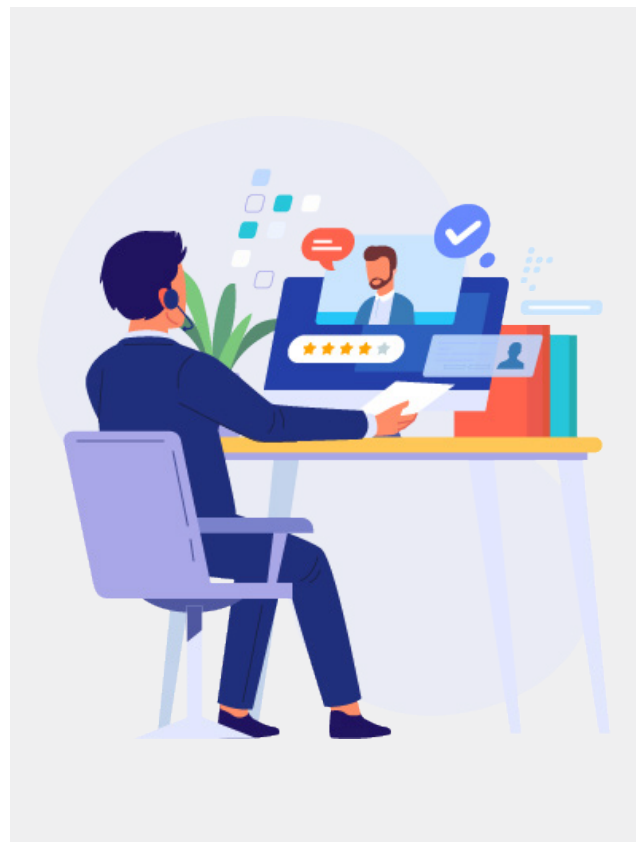
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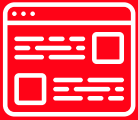
Refine (not 'perfect') your GCP hiring pitch & process constantly

There are many ways to improve the recruitment process and they are only limited by your innovation and creativity. Candidates who experience a positive recruitment process and onboarding are [likely to stay with your company](#) for up to three years, which is a benefit not only for recruitment but also with employee retention. Show them you're willing to go the extra mile.

- We have seen a couple of trends in GCP hiring recently on this contra idea: traditionally, interviewees have been expected to come to the hiring company's address for an interview. Instead of an employee interrupting their schedule to go to you, show them you value their talent and time by offering to meet them where they are. Consider sending a hiring manager to the candidates' locations for an interview.
- According to a report from [SHRM](#), the average length of the hiring process lasts 36 days, so try to make it as painless as possible for them. For starters, candidates value effective and prompt communication throughout the process regarding the status of their application. Keeping your candidate informed creates a smooth seamless interview experience. This includes informing your interviewees when you've filled the role. Even if your recruitment process is still ongoing and you haven't decided, a typical rule of thumb to follow is to contact your interviewee no more than 48 hours after your first meeting.



09



Improve your careers (and broader) website experience

The UX component of your company's website (and the careers section) is important to the overall experience of establishing the right image in your candidates' minds. Reports say that [47%](#) of web users expect a page to load in two seconds or less, and [40% will exit](#) a website if the load time exceeds three seconds.

Upon viewing your website, a visitor's attention span [lasts roughly eight seconds](#) before deciding to abandon. The lower your bounce rate, the higher your chance of engagement.

It's also worth noting that readers tend to [follow an F-pattern](#) when viewing web pages, according to an eye-tracking study conducted by researchers from Jampp.

This typically means that the three most important features of your webpage in those initial seconds are the horizontal content at the top, the second line of horizontal running content close to the top, and finally a slower scan down the left side of the page. Align your most important content to match.



10



What beyond GCP?

The average person spends two-thirds of their adult life working. Showing your employees you value their interests outside their working lives is a plus. People want to feel that they are being valued and they value feeling like they can make an impact. Perhaps showing you will match donations to their favourite charities, sponsoring organisations they care about or giving opportunities at work to pursue their passions?

This fosters a mutual sense of appreciation from the employee's side towards the company. Ideally, your employees willingly work overtime without expecting the hours to be billed for, but something they genuinely want to do because they and your company are actively seeking similar goals.



Bottom Line

Show that you are looking at Cloud specific hiring (and hence GCP within it) with a special nuance – and not just treat it as another piece of commodity hiring. At Stack, we believe a day's delay in onboarding a talent vacancy is several days of possible revenue loss.

Why leave (GCP) money on the table?



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