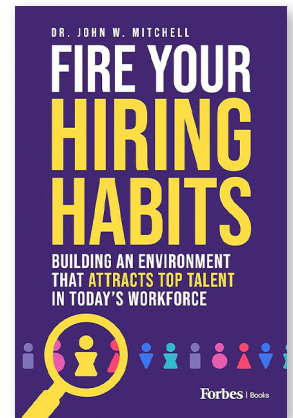


# Fire Your Hiring Habits

Building An Environment that Attracts Top Talent in Today's Workforce

by **Dr. John W. Mitchell**



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## THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

The famous Dylan song goes, “The Times They Are a Changin’.” But what most companies haven’t realized, however, is that the times are changing faster than ever. Corporate culture, the way today’s employees work, diversity, upskilling, and pathways, have traveled far, far ahead from the starting point of the modern workforce.

By urging us to rethink the way we hire today’s workforce, the book *Fire Your Hiring Habits: Building An Environment that Attracts Top Talent in Today’s Workforce* lays out result-oriented strategies to help us hire the right talent. Here, we learn to reimagine the way acquisition and retention work in today’s corporate landscape.

Dr. John W. Mitchell arms us with strategies to challenge the old recruiting models that are ineffective in today’s corporate landscape. By offering real and practical insights, the author helps us lead our teams and organizations into a positively transformed workforce landscape.

## IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- How to find the right employees.
- How to challenge the old recruiting models that no longer work.
- Why diversity and inclusivity are so important.
- How to best onboard, train, educate, and retain employees.

## Introduction

I set out to write *Fire Your Hiring Habits* as a way to open and expand the discussion on how we hire the right people; how we create dynamic, supportive, and innovative workspaces and places and environments – whether virtual or in person; and how to grow those employees and, in turn, our corporations, customer bases, profits, and contributions to the world.

This includes how to retrain and cross-train, how to find the right employees, and how to challenge the old recruiting models that no longer work. But at its heart, this book is human-centered. We can embrace this modern workforce age and do all of those things – hiring, retraining, and even parting ways – better than we used to.

Every chapter offers real and practical observations and insights to lead you, your team, and your workplace into a thoroughly transformed workforce landscape. In the pages ahead, we'll "fire" the old ways that no longer give us the results we need in favor of embracing the transformation possible right now – within our sights.

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## Chapter 1: Acquisition and Retention

The pathway of finding employees who are a fit for your company, onboarding them, training them, and then ensuring they want to stay has many moving parts. But in the end, most parts can be separated into either the acquisition or retention of talent. One issue related to acquisitions is the skills gap. There is not a shortage of people to hire – there's a shortage of people who actually have the skill sets you need to draw upon. "Acquisition" has several aspects, which we will center on in chapters three and four: recruiting and onboarding. "Retention" is about meeting the modern needs of today's workforce: pathways, upskills, culture, purpose, growth, and the ability to make a difference. Diversity and inclusion, essential to the modern workforce, are also discussed in chapters five through seven.

Chapter eight will discuss where to get help in accomplishing these kinds of activities. Finally, we will bring it all together and provide you with some tools to better assess where your workplace stands in the new employment landscape as well as with a framework to assist you on your journey to better practices.

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## Chapter 2: A Glance Back, a Vision Forward

We can't look at present and future ways of changing our hiring habits and work lives until we look backward first. So, if we recognize that times have changed – and changed rapidly – how did we actually get here?

In the 1800s life centered around the family farm or small villages and towns. With the Industrial Revolution, life began to migrate toward the cities and factory jobs. As the twentieth century progressed, we saw the emergence of the "knowledge worker." By the 1950s white men primarily led the march into the office. These men tended to stay at their desk jobs or sales jobs for decades until retirement.

Today's workers want to explore other ways of working. They also demand diversity, equity, and other changes to bring us into this century and beyond.

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## Chapter 3: Modern Recruiting – Fire Your Old Recruiting Methods

Modern recruiting has largely changed the landscape of finding people and enticing them to come to your team. As Alan Deutschman said, "Change or die," – the needs of workers are constantly evolving and it's critical for organizations to keep pace. Accept and embrace this brave new world. Acknowledge that we have a skills gap impacting many industries, especially electronics.

Disruptive forces are changing every aspect of our lives, especially technology. Human resources departments are disappearing. Recruiting firms are fading away. With the advent of LinkedIn, other employment apps, and technologies that help in recruiting, there are entirely new ways of finding people. Managers must be involved in finding talent. Make sure you're always on the lookout for talent – and then pursue candidates.

The old model of staying at a job for decades is gone. People switch jobs with more frequency. It's time we accept it and reframe our thinking. Different cohorts want different things from their jobs and careers and we must adjust our messaging accordingly to appeal to each. To compensate for the skills gap and to ensure you find the people you need, you must develop your own pipelines. These can include:

- Innovative job fairs
- The Rule of Three application during the interview process. This involves narrowing down three different candidates, interviewed three different times, by three different people, at three different venues.

- People you know or referrals
- Programs like the Gauntlet that train and bring people aboard quickly – and are based on learned skills and competencies, not specific requirements.

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### Chapter 4: Welcome Aboard

Now that you know how to find your people using new and innovative recruiting methods, it's time to understand how to bring them on board.

Take advantage of new technology including online learning and virtual simulations. Avoid “death by PowerPoint,” and make content as engaging as possible instead. Never forget the “little things,” that form your overall culture including how people usually do lunch hours or how to dress. This can help ensure employees know their way around their surroundings and know whom to go to when they have questions.

Find cost-effective programs for repeatable elements that are not unique to your company. Don't tie up your best resources (your people) where standardized programs can do much of the work. Deploy only documentation and manuals for practices and onboarding that employees can easily refer to on their own as well as for the basics of benefits and employee policies. Ensure your onboarding is consistent, and not dependent on who your new employee's team leader is.

Get people involved in hands-on ways where possible. Remember, today's factories for top companies look nothing like the dark factory days of the 1960s or 1970s. This isn't the I Love Lucy episode with countless chocolates coming down a conveyor belt at high speed and Lucy and Ethel stuffing them in their mouths and under their hats.

Artificial technology, the latest technology, and safer, cleaner, brighter workspaces are the norm today. Production and technician positions can be ideal fits for many people. For instance, older people should be part of your recruitment plan as well because today's factory jobs – with some cross-training – are far less physically demanding than walking miles and miles stocking shelves in a big-box factory or warehouse.

Make sure you are utilizing the latest research on retention and learning. Use tactile, visual, and aural methodologies. Repeat information in manageable chunks. Ensure that employees can refresh their skills. Finally, utilize solutions like filming repeatable onboarding elements so that employees can go back and access them at any time.

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### Chapter 5: Pathways and Upskilling

Pathways take an employee from a job to a career. They are the roadmaps to advancement and growth along a career path and a desired future position. Pathways demonstrate to your employees that they have future paths with your company. They transform jobs into careers. To ensure maximum efficiency, the pathways you create should have short rungs where possible, especially on the manufacturing floor.

Remember, the top motivator for people is not always money (though money is certainly part of it). What motivates people the most are growth and passion. So, create systems to ensure your employees see their progress. Upskilling is to be viewed hand in hand with pathways. It involves adding new capabilities relevant to changes in the industry or additional skills needed to enhance capabilities. Upskilling can help resolve some of your pipeline issues. Rather than parting ways with a good employee, upskilling can help grow them into a new position or new skills.

“Reskilling” is sometimes used interchangeably with “upskilling.” The difference is, generally, that reskilling is a pivot. It's a totally different skill, not advancing the skills you already have. Some examples of reskilling include an accountant re-training to become a data analyst or a warehouse receiver learning to repair robotic arms. Reskilling is a pivot to a completely new job type. On the other hand, upskilling may lead people to other jobs, but in today's employment environment, that's OK.

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### Chapter 6: Diversity and Inclusion

Most of the elements of diversity and inclusion impact your corporate culture. If your corporate culture does not demonstrate that it promotes women, for instance, then you are unlikely to attract the best cross-sections of candidates. Therefore, diversity and inclusion impact your hiring habits and recruitment too. While culture and diversity and inclusion appear as different chapters of the book, they are intrinsically intertwined.

Diversity includes many axes – from age, race, religion, ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual orientation to education, disability, and veteran status. Diversity, at the end of the day, facilitates better decision-making.

Companies are increasingly making “diversity pledges,” and prominent CEOs tout diversity as a path forward to innovation. But diversity and inclusion mean nothing without action. You must do more than simply share a rainbow

during Pride month.

Different age cohorts are seeking different things in the workplace. Gender inequality is bad for business. When people are able to be their full, authentic selves at work and are accepted, they deliver better performances. If your company lags in diversity, you need to examine your diversity pipeline. It's not enough to say, "We're not getting diverse candidates." You need to figure out why that is and remedy it. Beware of unconscious bias in your recruiters.

Diverse and inclusive companies often have better financial outcomes. The truth is that you will never attract top talent without a commitment to diversity and inclusion. What's more, today's employees demand it. Increasingly, investors and stakeholders insist on strong diversity. Cultural diversity is policy in action. So ask yourself, "Does my company show its commitment to cultural diversity such as recognizing diverse religious holidays and offering PTO to recognize them?"

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### Chapter 7: What's Your Company Culture?

Corporate culture is essential to both acquisition and retention. You cannot attract the best people if your corporate culture is a negative one, and you cannot retain the best people in a troubled culture either. Culture includes values and attitudes, shared goals, and approaches to all aspects of a company – both internal and what it projects to the world. It is essential to a business's success or failure. A positive culture is always intentional. It never happens by accident. Employees will consistently rank diversity and inclusion and share values with a company over salary in importance.

A mission statement is a snapshot in time of a company's purpose and meaning. A vision statement is a forward-looking plan for where the company wants to be now and in the future. Changing culture takes time and often involves making significant personal changes along with other adjustments. Your company's culture starts with its management. Understand that management must lead by example. Ethics and integrity are essential to a company's success.

One of the biggest mistakes a leader can make when it comes to corporate culture is to allow bad apples to remain. Remember, a single bad apple is enough to poison the entire culture. Spot the bad apples in your workplace and make plans to part ways legally, respectfully, but firmly.

### Chapter 8: Getting Help

Education is absolutely essential to finding and retaining talent. While companies are not in the education business, it's important to create a solid training and education program. For this, you must determine what core competencies are needed and whom to partner with in order to create your pipeline.

Avoid the two extremes of core competency training: sink or swim. In addition, avoid handling all training on all things in house. Acknowledge that your company and competencies are not fully unique. Obtain broad training from outside sources. Use internal training for what is truly unique and specific to your company. Finally, figure out what requires hands-on training.

You can use internships as a way to "try out" a potential new employee and vice versa (give them the chance to check out as well, if they want to). Ensure credentials are stackable. Consider high school and community college as sources for certain positions.

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### Conclusion

I hope you have garnered ideas for how you, too, can Fire Your Hiring Habits and evolve into the most modern, diverse, equitable, inclusive, and successful company. From the very beginning of our journey with the "way, way back" time machine of human resources progress through new recruiting methods, the importance of onboarding to the progress in upskilling and reskilling employees, to addressing diversity, inclusion, equity, and culture, the modern workplace has never been more open to opportunities (even though we can still go further!). Now that you know how to "fire" your hiring habits, it's time to build a workforce designed for success!



**Dr. John W. Mitchell** is a thought leader who has transformed the way we look at advancing and resolving education, nonprofit leadership, and advanced manufacturing issues. As President and CEO of IPC, a global trade association representing all facets of the electronics industry, Dr. Mitchell has championed new solutions supporting standards development, improving member relations, advocating regulatory change, and new learning management platforms to address workforce issues.

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