

## Hiring Knowledge Workers . . .

"Hiring the right people means the difference between success and failure. It's not enough to hire 'good enough' . . . you need to hire the best, and nobody knows more than Johanna Rothman about that. This clear and comprehensive book joins *Peopware* and *The Mythical Man Month* as must-reads for technical managers."

—**Joel Spolsky**  
Founder, Fog Creek Software

"Rothman lays out the tasks and the issues, then addresses actual situations that might arise. She covers the entire subject thoroughly. . . .

"If you are a hiring manager in a high-tech field, you must read this book."  
—**Richard Mateosian**  
*IEEE Micro*

"If you are involved in any way with hiring techies, you need this book—not just as a one-time read, but as one you will refer to repeatedly."

—**Earl A. Everett**, Director of Engineering, Vauban Advanced Technologies, posted on *Amazon.com*

"I'm not aware of any other book like this. It's a humane, yet tough-minded approach to hiring. Any technical manager who wants to hire well will be thankful for it."

—**James Bach**  
CEO, Satisfice, Inc.

". . . practical, pragmatic advice on finding and hiring the right person. . . . full of examples, templates, and true stories that will help you make the best use of your time, fine-tune your hiring process, and hire the best."

—**Esther Derby**, President  
Esther Derby Associates, Inc

## About the Author



Johanna Rothman is a highly regarded speaker, author, and consultant; she is known for her pragmatic approach to the problems of managing high technology product development and workers. During the past twenty years, she has been influential in the hiring of hundreds of technical

people, including developers, testers, technical editors, technical support staff, and their managers. Based in Arlington, Massachusetts, she is the president of Rothman Consulting Group ([www.jrothman.com](http://www.jrothman.com)).

## Partial Contents

### Foreword

### Preface

#### Part 1: Defining Requirements for Yourself and Your Potential Candidates

- 1: Developing Your Hiring Strategy
- 2: Analyzing the Job
- 3: Writing a Job Description

#### Part 2: Sourcing and Selecting Candidates to Interview

- 4: Sourcing Candidates
- 5: Developing Ads for Open Positions
- 6: Reviewing the Résumés

#### Part 3: Preparing to Interview Candidates

- 7: Developing Interview Questions and Techniques
- 8: Creating and Using Phone-Screens
- 9: Planning and Conducting the In-Person Interview
- 10: Following Up After the Interview

#### Part 4: Bringing In the Candidate

- 11: Checking References
- 12: Creating, Timing, and Extending an Offer

#### Part 5: Making the Most of Hiring Opportunities to Control Uncertainty and Risk

- 13: Creating a Great First Day
- 14: Hiring Technical Managers
- 15: Moving Forward

### Appendices

- A: Walker Software Case Study: Hiring Multiple People:
- B: Templates to Use When Hiring Technical People

### Bibliography Index

# Hiring the Best Knowledge Workers, Techies & Nerds

The Secrets & Science of Hiring Technical People

by Johanna Rothman

foreword by Gerald M. Weinberg

*Proven Methods for Attracting, Interviewing, and Hiring Technical Workers*

Good technical people are the foundation on which successful high technology organizations are built. Establishing a good process for hiring such workers is essential. Unfortunately, the generic methods so often used for hiring skill-based staff, who can apply standardized methods to almost any situation, are of little use to those charged with the task of hiring technical people.

Unlike skill-based workers, technical people typically do not have access to cookie-cutter solutions to their problems. They need to adapt to any situation that arises, using their knowledge in new and creative ways to solve the problem at hand. As a result, one developer, tester, or technical manager is not interchangeable with another. This makes hiring technical people one of the most critical and difficult processes a technical manager can undertake.

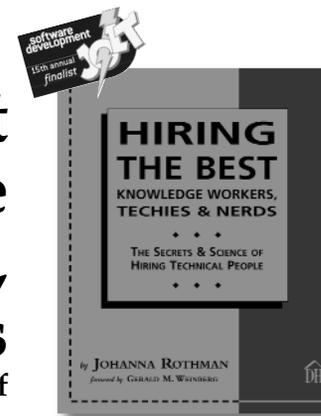
Hiring the Best takes the guesswork out of hiring and dimin-

ishes the risk of costly hiring mistakes. With the aid of step-by-step descriptions and detailed examples, you'll learn how to

- write a concise, targeted job description
- source candidates
- develop ads for mixed media
- review résumés quickly to determine Yes, No, or Maybe candidates
- develop intelligent, nondiscriminatory, interview techniques
- create fool-proof phone-screens
- check references with a view to reading between the lines
- extend an offer that will attract a win-win acceptance or tender a gentle-but-decisive rejection
- and more.

You, your team, and your organization will live with the long-term consequences of your hiring decision. Investing time in developing a hiring strategy will shorten your decision time and the ramp-up time needed for each new hire.

Read more about this book at [www.dorsethouse.com/books/hire.html](http://www.dorsethouse.com/books/hire.html)



ISBN: 978-0-932633-59-0  
©2004 352 pages softcover  
\$43.95 (includes \$6 UPS in US)