HackerRank

Zenefits Fills its Engineering Hiring Funnel for the Entire Year With One HackerRank CodeSprint

As one of the fastest growing SaaS companies in history, Zenefits creates a powerful funnel for hiring top-tiered engineers. The team built a time-saving strategy to scale its team by leveraging a HackerRank CodeSprint for easy sourcing and screening, and CodePair for follow-up interviews.
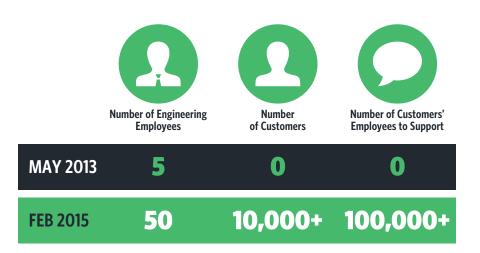
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For the first time in Zenefits history of record-breaking growth, we don't have to panic about developer shortage. The HackerRank CodeSprint creates a stream of highly qualified candidates that we can capitalize on all year

Zenefits Director of Engineering, Prasanna Sankar

About Zenefits

Zenefits is a free, cloud-based HR platform that automates and eliminates a slew of time-consuming administrative HR tasks that small and medium-sized companies otherwise have to handle manually – such as health insurance, benefits, payroll, hiring, taxes, compliance, employee life events, and more.

Companies can seamlessly connect their legacy payroll, health insurance, paid time off, and other HR systems with Zenefits in just a few seconds, so they can manage it all in one online dashboard. And if a company doesn't have any of those things yet, Zenefits can give them quotes and set them up in just a couple of minutes.

	Number of Engineering Employees	Number of Customers	Number of Customers' Employees to Support
MAY 2013	5	0	0
FEB 2015	50	10,000+	100,000+

Zenefits' Screening Practices Before HackerRank

45
Number of Engineering Jobs Filled in 9 months

450
Number of Top Candidates Invited for Whiteboard Test

50
Number of Whiteboard Screenings Per Month

The Challenge

As one of the fastest growing startups in history, the Zenefits engineering team grew from 5 to 50 people between May 2013 to February 2015. In February, Zenefits placed a benchmark for itself to hire 150 new developers by the end of 2015.

"We needed to hire at the scale of a much larger company with limited resources to conduct interviews," says Michelle Delcambre, recruiting manager at Zenefits. "And we have a very high talent bar."

Recruiting and hiring managers spent several days searching for highly skilled software engineers, relying on traditional sourcing channels such as LinkedIn and job boards.

"We were passing candidates through from phone interview to onsite without enough insight into technical abilities. We were spending a ton of time on interviews that weren't always leading to hires," Delcambre says.

After narrowing down to an average of ten top candidates per unfilled job, engineering managers spent an hour per candidate to conduct manual whiteboard tests during in-person interviews. This process took weeks to hire a single candidate. Because of the time intensive nature of in-person whiteboard tests, Zenefits was only able to screen an average of 50 candidates per month.

Zenefits had to further scale its engineering team to support its booming customer base, but the engineering team needed a faster way to both source and screen candidates to achieve their goal of hiring 150 new developers in 2015.

Solutions

Launched in Summer 2012, HackerRank's mission is to help companies hire talented programmers. With a rapidly growing active community of about a million programmers, the company's goal is to replace time-consuming and expensive outreach efforts with a forum within which technology companies can connect with a diverse population of talent around coding challenges.

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CodeSprint: Kickstart Candidate Sourcing

HackerRank and Zenefits teamed up to host a CodeSprint, also known as a 24 hour online hackathon. At the CodeSprint, dubbed "ZenHacks," over 1,000 passionate software engineers competed for a chance to win an interview with the Zenefits team. For the first time, Zenefits had over 1,200 candidates come to them and pre-qualify themselves without having to read a single resume or send a single LinkedIn message.

CodePair: Eliminate Whiteboard Tests

Zenefits also systematically replaced its traditional whiteboard tests with HackerRank's CodePair, a programming tool with video capabilities that enables hiring managers to view, edit and execute code in real-time while meeting virtually with their candidate over video. With CodePair, you can use built-in CodeChallenges from the HackerRank library, or write your own to tailor it to a specific role. You can also re-review an entire CodePair session and the candidate's code after the interview is over for easy candidate comparison. CodePair eliminates hours spent on in-person whiteboard screenings and saves travel costs due to effective virtual interviews.

Results

CodeSprint: Zenefits Extends 12 Offers in Just 1 Week After "ZenHack"

Over 1,200 passionate engineers competed in ZenHacks, which consisted of 14 different custom challenges. At the end of the event, the HackerRank platform automatically ranked each of the participants by their score (or skill level) and sent Zenefits a full list of candidates.

Zenefits set a target range of scores and over 150 competitors scored in or above that range. "We sourced an entire year's worth of candidates with one CodeSprint," Delcambre says. "It's great that CodeSprints source and screen simultaneously in one event!"

Impact of CodePair on Screening

300
Average Screenings Per Month

150
Average Interviews Per Month

35
Number of engineers using HackerRank CodePair

The recruiting and tech hiring teams say HackerRank has significantly improved its tech hiring process. They've ultimately saved an immense amount of time and helped Zenefits achieve its goal of scaling like a big company with limited resources.

CodePair: Zenefits is Now Screening an Average of 300 Candidates Per Month

By eliminating the in-person whiteboard method of screening top candidates, Zenefits is now able to screen an average of 300 candidates per month and interview an average of 150 candidates per month. About 35 Zenefits engineers regularly leverage CodePair to make quicker decisions about viable candidates through real-time code challenges before the in-person interview.

"Everyone who interviews technical talent needs CodePair," Sankar says. "CodePair's variety of problems in the interview library makes interviewing much more effective."

What's Next?

Zenefits will continue to leverage HackerRank as a full-throttle machine for sourcing and interviewing highly-skilled tech candidates. In addition to CodePair and CodeSprints, Zenefits plans on testing its current engineers to set a precise, data-driven benchmark for hiring new tech talent. Hiring technical talent that's above the existing benchmark will raise the bar for Zenefits' engineering team. Both HackerRank and Zenefits are looking forward to innovatively perfecting Zenefits' hiring process.

About HackerRank

HackerRank is a technical talent community for developers to hone their skills and for companies to hire best tech talent. With 1M+ developers, 35+ languages and 8+ programming domains, Hackerrank is giving companies recruiting tools such as codesprints and code challenges that make sourcing, screening and interviewing effective. 1000+ companies are revolutionizing tech recruiting with HackerRank.