

**THE NEW
TALENT
PLAYBOOK**
Podcast

Action Kit

**The talent problem AI
won't solve**

PART II

Featuring Jeff Hyman

Episode 4 - Season 7

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This episode is a masterclass on hiring with discipline: great talent is a competitive advantage, a bad hire is expensive, and process beats panic every time. Jeff Hyman argues that the best recruiting systems treat candidates like customers, stay authentic to the real culture of the business, and use structured steps to reduce mishires. The practical message is simple: decide what great looks like, build a candidate experience that reflects your reality, and refuse to settle for a “good enough” B player when the business needs A talent.

1. Design the Candidate Experience Like a Customer Journey

Jeff’s first principle is that candidates are your first customers. Every touchpoint matters: the job description, the About Us page, the responsiveness of interviewers, and whether the process feels respectful and real.

Candidate Experience Audit

Where do candidates first experience your brand?

Do your job posts sound generic or specific to your culture?

How quickly do you respond to applicants?

What one step could make your process feel more respectful and human?

2. Keep It Authentic to the Real Culture

A polished process is only helpful if it reflects the actual experience of working in your organization. If your business is scrappy, fast-moving, or loosely structured, the hiring process should not pretend otherwise.

Authenticity Check

Score the following statements 1 to 5:

Statement	Rating
How accurately does your interview process reflect the day-to-day reality of the job?	
How accurately does your employer brand reflect your actual culture?	
What do you never want a new hire to be surprised by after they start?	
What should you stop polishing because it creates the wrong impression?	

3. Use a Project to Test Fit Before the Offer

Jeff strongly favors a real project near the end of the process, when the finalist is genuinely invested. He avoids calling it a “test drive” and instead positions it as a chance for both sides to see how they work together before making a commitment.

Project Trial Planner

Role being hired:

Project length:

☐ 2 hours ☐ 4 hours ☐ 1 day ☐ 2 days ☐ Other: _____

What would the project reveal about the candidate that interviews cannot?

What would the candidate learn about your team or manager?

4. Hire for the Role You Need, Not the Budget Shortcut

One of the episode's strongest lessons is that a lower-cost B player can become a very expensive mistake. Jeff encourages leaders to think in ROI terms and to consider whether a slightly more junior, high-upside A player is the smarter investment.

ROI Decision Table

Option	Annual Cost	Upside	Risk
A player			
B player			
More junior A-potential hire			

Which option best serves the business over the next 12 months, and why?

Where are you currently tempted to settle because of budget pressure?

"Just having a process puts you way ahead of most companies who have no process whatsoever when it comes to hiring."

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