A decorative graphic on the left side of the page consists of several overlapping, semi-transparent grey shapes. These shapes are elongated and pointed, resembling stylized leaves or petals, and they overlap each other to create a sense of depth and movement. The largest shape is a large, light grey oval that tapers to a point on the left. Other smaller, darker grey shapes are layered on top and bottom of it, creating a complex, layered effect.

Software Engineer Recruiters Share Their Best Advice for Employers

Employers face increasing difficulty recruiting and retaining software engineers as the growing number of jobs outpaces the candidate pool. Higher salaries and a five-day window for hiring ratchet up the pressure. Software engineer recruiters share their advice to keep employers competitive.

Your company can expect to face increasing challenges in recruiting and retaining software engineers as a result of an extremely competitive landscape, rapid technological advancement, and a changing employment culture. These professionals are in high demand because there are more specialized jobs available than individuals with the expertise to fill them. With these realities, prospective employees have advantages over companies looking to hire top talent.

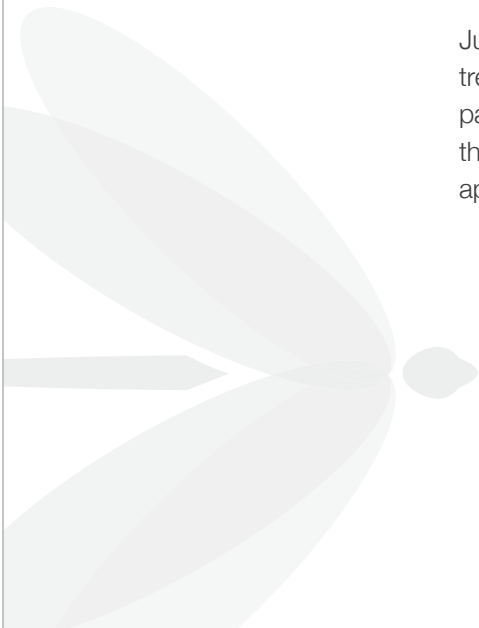
Software engineer recruiters help companies find appropriate candidates for these roles every day. Agile, [an Atlanta IT staffing](#) company, shares its advice for employers to help in not only searching for qualified people but also in creating a culture that will lead to long-term employee satisfaction.

1. Jobs Are Expanding. Talent Is Contracting. Plan Accordingly.

Software engineers have the one of the lowest unemployment rates of any profession in the United States, making it the one of the most competitive job markets right now. The saturation of jobs and limited number of qualified candidates makes it difficult for employers to find the ideal person, and this may only become more challenging.

According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, these jobs are expected to [grow an average of 15 to 25 percent per year](#) through 2026 while the U.S. population will only increase at a rate of 0.8%. According to Agile's software engineer recruiters, this uneven growth means that the job market may get more competitive in the coming years.

Justin Ellis, an IT recruiter with the staffing firm, says, "Companies need to follow trends in the marketplace if they want to be successful filling their positions." In particular, he advises employers to stay current in the compensation packages that they are being offered. To the extent possible, they should update their own approach to recruitment to compete with other job opportunities.



2. Broaden the Search Criteria by Focusing on Fundamental Skills

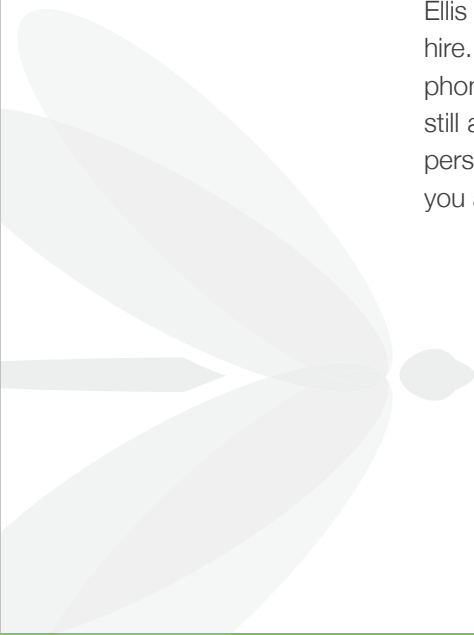
Employers often define applicant criteria as narrowly as possible. While this approach will limit the candidate pool to those who are an exact fit for a position, it can have unintended consequences. “The more specific you are in a search,” says Ellis, “the harder your search will be, and the price tag for the job you are trying to fill will be higher.” Ideal candidates can frequently command a bigger salary, and that compensation may be more than a small or mid-sized company can afford.

Instead, Agile’s software engineer recruiters recommend that employers widen their scope when reviewing résumés. Companies are more likely to find a quality hire if they are willing to speak with candidates who have broader experience. There are many developers with deep software engineering knowledge who can apply this expertise to learning a new industry or coding language. [IT staffing companies](#) frequently use this strategy to identify overlooked candidates.

3. From Interview to Offer, Expect a Five-Day Window

The competitive nature of the job market means that developers often have their pick of positions. Agile’s software engineer recruiters have found that quality developers come on and off the market within an average of five days, and many interview for several opportunities simultaneously.

Ellis recommends that employers act quickly on the candidates that they want to hire. Instead of having a lengthy interview process, condense vetting to a single phone interview and in-person interview. While this compresses your timeline, it still allows you to get to know a potential employee’s strengths, weaknesses, and personality. You can also use this timeframe to ask for work samples that will give you a clearer illustration of an individual’s skill level.



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- Justin Ellis, IT recruiter

4. Develop a Recruiting Mentality

Typically, employers use a thought process of “What can the candidate do for me?” Software engineer recruiters suggest that companies shift away from this approach and instead use a two-way hiring process. This means evaluating candidates while at the same time selling the opportunity and recognizing the value that a candidate could bring to the position.

Ellis says, “I tell my clients to view the interviews they conduct as a chance to reflect their company culture.” For example, employers can explain to candidates what makes their organization stand out, including these details in the job posting as well. Sharing what makes an opportunity special can help an employer win over a candidate even if another job offers more in the way of traditional compensation.

5. Invest in Technology and Training

According to Agile’s [IT recruiters](#), developers highly value the chance to learn and work on new projects and technologies. Focusing on these areas can help a company recruit and retain top talent even amid competition from other businesses.

Some businesses code in older languages that are not essential to modern development projects. As a result, that company’s software engineers may grow concerned that their skills are becoming obsolete in the open market. Other companies divide staff into those that maintain older technology and those that work on new products. Working solely on legacy systems can limit a developer’s ability to explore new areas of coding.

Neither of these outcomes is attractive to top-tier developers. Both are reasons that Agile’s software engineer recruiters see developers leaving their positions after only a couple of years on.

Fortunately, they suggest, employers can address both of these concerns even if they do not have the resources of a large business. Companies can offer legacy system developers opportunities to work on new products, at least in a limited capacity. Businesses can also adopt new, open, and free systems to replace older technical stacks. There may be a time investment to implement new coding languages, but the decision can go a long way towards retaining talent.

Access to new projects and technology is only part of the equation. Software engineers also may require ongoing training to keep their skills fresh. Consider paying for developers to attend professional conferences in the area. If your company cannot afford this option, consider sponsoring in-office training with a local expert.

6. Compensation and Flexibility Both Matter to Quality Developers

In Agile's local market, the Atlanta region, it is highly unlikely that a junior developer will accept the same starting salary offered to candidates 10 years ago. Entry-level candidates with a computer science (or related) degree typically earn \$65,000-\$90,000 right out of school.

Agile's software engineer recruiters suggest offering a salary and total compensation package that is at or above 90 percent of the market average. Just as importantly, employers should consider flexible work days and times.

In the software development world, some jobs have become 100 percent remote, and two days per week out of office is quickly becoming the norm. On the days that employees come to the office, consider having flexible hours to eliminate traffic concerns. Companies frequently opt for core in-office hours of 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. so that colleagues can collaborate in person. During the rest of the time, developers are trusted to accomplish their assigned tasks following a daily schedule that meets their needs.

Agile's Ellis advises hiring managers to discuss salary ranges and scheduling options early in the process. "Being clear that you are open to meeting a candidate's needs can make all of the difference," he says. By taking these steps, employers will be better positioned to retain and grow talent.



If your company is looking for top candidates in the competitive market for developers, [contact Agile's team of software engineer recruiters](#) to discuss hiring solutions.

About Agile

Agile, a GEE Group Company (NYSE: JOB), is an innovative IT staffing and consulting firm that speeds time to talent by matching great people to great opportunities, enabling our clients to drive business results and create competitive advantage. Agile has consistently been recognized as one of the fastest growing companies in the U.S. by *Inc. Magazine*, Staffing Industry Analysts and the *Atlanta Business Chronicle*. Most recently, Agile has been recognized as a 2017 Best Staffing Firm To Work For by Staffing Industry Analysts and an Atlanta 2017 Best and Brightest Companies to Work For by the National Association for Business Resources. Agile also received Inavero's 2017 Best of Staffing Client and Talent Satisfaction Awards.

Founded by **Tricia Dempsey** in 2003, Agile is a values-driven organization committed to community involvement and charitable causes. Through **Agile on the Green**, the firm's in-house nonprofit, Agile has raised more than \$330,000 for **Komen for the Cure – Greater Atlanta Affiliate**.

For more information, visit www.gotoagile.com or call 678.722.8200

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