



# codility

## Tech Recruitment 101: Screening for Success

Strategies for Tech Recruiters  
and HR Professionals

# Overview

**Objective:** Every company wants the best possible engineers, and they want to hire them as quickly as possible.

**Method:** Hiring teams can benefit dramatically when they implement reliable and scalable screening processes in their tech hiring.

When you're hiring, you need your screening process to provide reliable insights—and spotlight the best candidates in your pipeline—so you can make informed recruiting decisions. Ideally, you're able to gather this crucial information quickly and efficiently, at scale, while simultaneously creating a great candidate experience.

Using data collected from working with 1,000+ businesses on their tech hiring, and sending over 4.5 million programming assessments on behalf of our clients, this ebook will guide you through common screening practices seen in the market today.

## We'll cover:

1. Why effective screening matters
2. How you can implement solid screening workflows
3. What you can do to align teams around your plan to elevate your tech hiring process

## Using insights gathered from:



Over  
**1,000 clients**  
ranging from startups  
to global enterprises



Facilitating over  
**4.5 million**  
candidate  
assessments



# Why Screening Matters

Non-existent or Inefficient Screening Costs You.

In a sound recruiting process, your talent pool narrows as you progress through each step in the funnel, eventually resulting in a few strong candidates in the offer stage. You have the highest volume of candidates in the beginning, so screening, the first assessment step in your recruiting process, needs to be done right. Set your interviewers and hiring managers up for success by only committing them to connect with qualified candidates.



## The wrong screening strategy can spell disaster for hiring teams.

Without a proper filter to help you decide who to advance and who to reject, technical hiring team members waste time interviewing unqualified candidates. Not having suitable screening measures in place could dry up your resources and take away from other initiatives and priorities.



## The right screening approach makes all the difference.

A sloppy, ineffective screening process could contribute to false positives causing you to advance candidates that are unqualified, or perhaps worse: false negatives, leading you to reject candidates that have the skills you're looking for.



## And remember, first impressions count.

Every step of your recruiting process should be candidate focused, especially screening. Providing a great candidate experience and having positive interactions with the people seeking your employment will only result in good things, and it all starts with screening.

*"We have limited recruiting hours, so we have to determine where our investments will have the greatest impact. Codility is a really efficient way to quickly identify and find people who can code well."*



**Josh Feintuch**, Lead Tech Recruiter  
[Read their story](#)



# Common Screening Methods

There are many types of screening filters, and they all have different advantages and disadvantages.



## Resume screening

A good low-effort first filter that determines resource and time investment for the rest of the process.

*Limitations:* Susceptible to bias, and recruiters can only afford to spend a matter of seconds on each CV.



## Video recordings

A great way for hiring teams to efficiently collect and share candidates' prepared responses to predetermined questions.

*Limitations:* Not a quality candidate experience and not representative of how a candidate would interact with others in a workplace.



## Phone screens

A staple mechanism for hiring team members and candidates to connect and learn about what each other is looking for.

*Limitations:* Can be time-consuming, subjective, and not include skills-based measurements.



## Take-home tests

Objectively advance or disqualify candidates based on a job-related work sample. i.e., write a blog, create a project plan or presentation, ask them to write code.

*Limitation:* Candidates might view these assignments as a time-suck, so it's important to make them relevant to the open role.



## Collaborative coding

Hiring teams can screenshare with audio to see how programmers approach problem-solving and collaborate with others in real-time.

*Limitation:* Requires more time investment from technical hiring team members.



## Video interviews

Very similar to phone screens but with the addition of facial cues for more natural-feeling conversations.

*Limitations:* Potentially introduces more technical difficulties and appearance-based bias.

*"Before Codility, we were relying on resumes to gauge qualifications, but now we have proven concept of what their skills are through take home coding tests. Codility helps us quickly find the best of the best."*

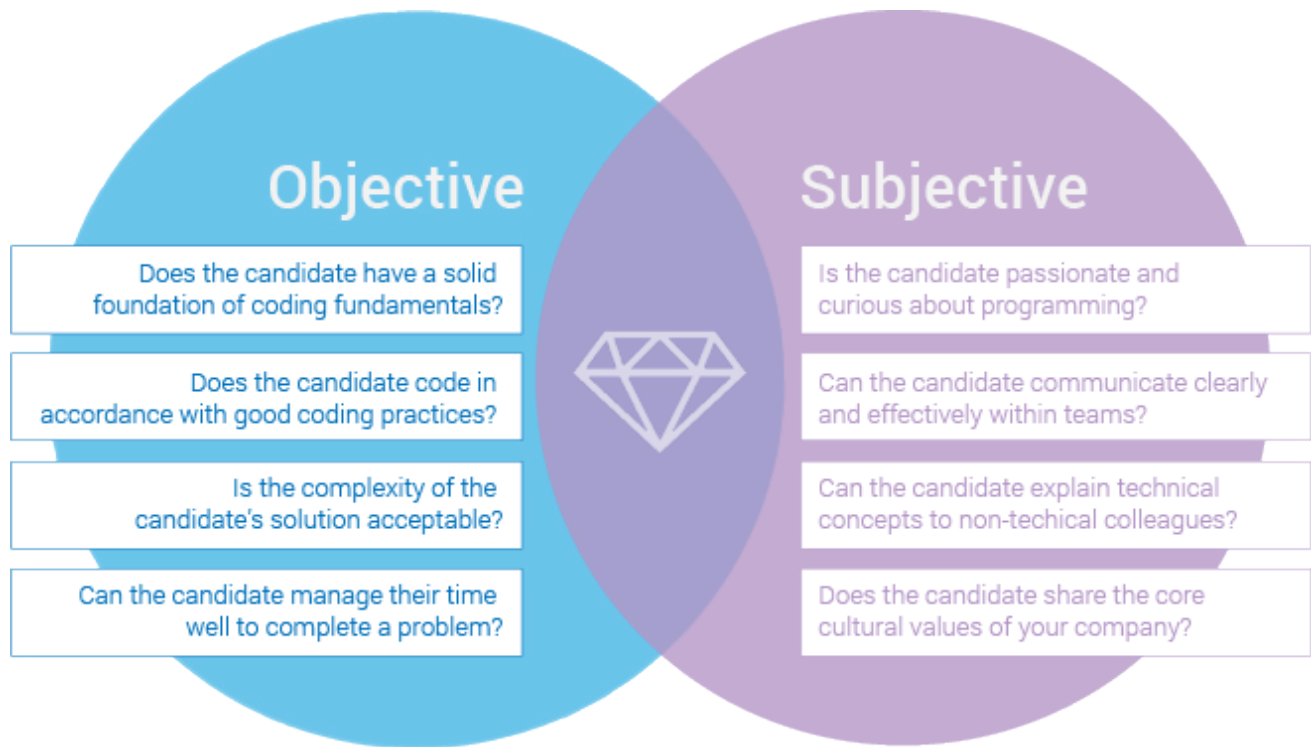


**Emily Meals, HR Manager**

[Read their story](#)

# Screening for Success

Recruiting is a combination of objective and subjective measures, but it boils down to one question: What do you want to find out and what's the best way to do so?



## Strongest Objective Methods

**Take-home tests** are a great way to see how your candidates perform on-the-job tasks. Not only do you get a work sample to qualify your candidates objectively, but it's easy for candidates to see the relevance of the projects to the role they're applying for, and they often get excited to showcase their skills and abilities before coming onsite.

**Collaborative coding** is a highly effective evolution of take-home coding exercises. Hiring managers or interviewers can easily jump on a live coding session with candidates to see how they apply their technical skills to find a solution for a prompt.

## Strongest Subjective Methods

**Resume screening** is a must in your process as it requires the least time out of all the screening methods and is the most efficient filter to implement as the very first step.

**Phone and video interviews** are a good follow up to resume screening. There's a big opportunity for bias here because you might be exposed to language challenges or physical appearance, but if you can mitigate these tendencies, these methods can be a great way to collect initial information about a candidate's professional background, aspirations, and team fit.

# Candidate-Centric Objective Screening

Screening differs depending on the type of candidate - their desired position, level of experience, and how they entered your pipeline. The way you screen senior developers will differ drastically from the way you screen interns, and you may want to roll out the red carpet for referrals.

## High Engagement



### Face-to-Face CodeLive Session

In-person collaborative coding sessions, using a tool like [CodeLive](#), are great for hiring teams to engage candidates when they come onsite. It's more effective to woo top talent when they can visibly see how excited you are to speak with them.



### Virtual CodeLive Session

Using CodeLive during a video interview is the most engaging form of online tech screening. You can create a virtual, but high-touch process, particularly useful for senior devs or referrals.

## Low Engagement



### Online Coding Test

Take-home coding tests are designed for high scale screening because you can send them out in bulk with a click of a button and then submitted solutions are automatically graded.



### Public Online Coding Screening

Posting an online coding test publicly allows candidates to show off their skills before engaging with a recruiter, effectively pre-qualifying themselves for you, i.e. career fairs, job expos, etc.

*"Our hiring teams use Codility throughout the entire process, so we're able to refer back to it to have deeper conversations. It gives us an opportunity to understand how candidates operate and how they approach problem solving."*



**Beth Sallomi**, Global Talent Operations Leader

[Read their story](#)



# Define Your Workflow

You'll need to build a screening workflow that suits your teams and the key priorities various departments collectively hold.



## Consideration 1: What capacity does your team have?

Smaller teams have very different priorities and needs than larger teams. This often comes down to capacity and adaptability.

Hiring teams at startups and small companies are often spread thin and don't have a huge amount of resources to work with.

Because everyone is wearing multiple hats, **individuals might become bottlenecks** in the tech recruiting process, so earlier **automated screening and clear qualification benchmarks** can alleviate pain points.

However, being small enables **faster adoption and adaptation** to new processes. **Consider different workflows** for specific roles and experience levels.

Hiring teams at medium-sized and enterprise companies are more prescribed and focus on hiring as swiftly as possible. But they also need to **keep in mind processes and workflows** going on in the background.

Because **economies of scale come into play**, proper **workflow adjustments can save hours** and thousands of dollars.

Prioritize creating a **robust process that fosters collaboration** and then **fine-tune** to reduce inefficiencies.



## Consideration 2: How much time can your hiring team invest in recruiting?

Involving technical hiring managers and leadership earlier in the process can help you reach a hiring decision faster and provide a better candidate experience. But depending on their availability and importance of the open role, you may need to adjust your workflow.

*What they might say:* "For senior or strategic roles, we want to be involved from the start."

*Translation:* Our primary objective is to bring highly talented and motivated programmers to our teams, and we want to build interest in our product, company, and mission as early as possible.

*Approach:* Involve hiring managers in creating the screening process, favoring high-engagement methods with fewer candidates.

*What they might say:* "For junior roles, we want to do the minimum number of interviews."

*Translation:* It's impossible to meet with every junior developer who looks good on paper and still deliver on our day-to-day. We need recruiters to bring only the top performers to our attention.

*Approach:* Use low-engagement, objective methods to quickly identify top performers earlier in the screening process and advance them.

# Aligning Your Team Around your Action Plan

Once you've determined which screening filters you want to implement, and in what order, you'll need to get others on board too. It's best to get buy-in from one team and then scale out from there.

Start with your technical organization because ultimately any new tech recruiting tools or processes affect them the most, so their buy-in is the most essential and may be the hardest to get.

1. **Decide** which screening method(s) you want to implement.
2. **Summarize** the advantages, timeline for implementation, and who will be affected.
3. **Reach out** to the leadership of the relevant teams or departments to explain the need for the change, and why it should be done now (and not next quarter).
4. **Pitch** the tangible results they can get from new screening processes, and empower them to represent this knowledge back to their teams.
5. **Coordinate** between people operations and other teams or departments to get things rolling, whether that means updating workflows in your applicant tracking system (ATS) or ensuring you have volunteers to be the first team implementing the change.
6. **Implement** and ensure each player has the correct access to the tools and reports you'll be using to monitor progress. We recommend setting implementation goals, so you know how the project is moving along.
7. **Train** hiring teams on how to screen using the new method(s), and check in to make sure they feel comfortable using any new platforms or processes.
8. **Review** the changes you've made and gauge whether you've achieved the desired results. It may take some time, so educate teams on what expectations they should have around future success.





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