



## Episode 1: Three tips for attracting talent as a startup

This is the transcript for Episode 1 of the Smart Startup English Podcast.

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Welcome to the Smart Startup English Podcast, episode one.

I'm Mickey, I'm your host, and in this episode, we're talking about a topic that's often a challenge in the startup world. How do you get smart people to work for your company?

**But first, let me ask you a question.**

What's the most important thing that makes you decide to apply for a job? Is it the salary? The location? How well-known the company is? What would make you say **yes** to one job and **no** to another?

We know that if you want to attract great customers, you need exceptional products. And if you want to build exceptional products, you need great people on your team. But how do you convince these great people to join your team?

Hiring the right person for the job is one of the main challenges that most startups face - at all stages of growth.

That's why startups need a strategy for talent acquisition. In this case, we use the word *talent* to refer to people who are very good at their jobs and who would be very good team members.

Talent acquisition refers to a strategy to find specialists for your company, people with a very specific skill set. Is it the same thing as recruitment? Well, it could be. But talent acquisition is more about long-term planning, while recruitment focuses more on short-term goals.

There are two main reasons why talent acquisition is hard for a startup.

The number one reason is this: Startups don't have an established brand.

Generally, highly skilled professionals are looking for a large company that can offer them resources such as in-house expertise and a fast way of climbing the career ladder. They're looking for an established path to promotion.

But as a startup, especially if you're in a high-growth period, you should play up your advantages. To play up your advantages means to emphasize them, to focus on them, and to make others notice them. Being fast-paced and dynamic are two factors that large companies can't really boast about. To boast about yourself means to speak about yourself in a way that's not humble. We can also say to brag about something.

From the point of view of a specialist, choosing a smaller startup over a large company means taking a risk, and a lot of people are risk-averse. To be risk-averse means to not want to take risks. And remember, we say to TAKE a risk, not to MAKE a risk.

The second reason why it's hard for startups to get good employees is the fact that startups can't offer competitive salaries. If something is competitive, it means that it's as good as, and sometimes even better, than their competition. We can talk about competitive salaries, or prices or even services.

Large companies offer compensation packages and benefits that attract more people.

Often startups can't afford to offer high salaries, but they could offer other perks. A perk is another benefit that you get from your job, in addition to money. So we would never refer to a salary as being a perk. But we could consider perks things such as a company car, a gym membership, catered meals delivered to your office or even free tuition for certain courses.

A lot of professionals at the top of their career are looking for more flexibility, so offering perks such as flexible working arrangements should not be overlooked. In this case, overlooked means neglected or excluded.

Here are three tips to help your startup be more successful at attracting talent.

## **Tip number one: Don't let employer branding be an afterthought.**

An afterthought is something we think about when it's too late, when it's no longer useful.

If you make it a habit to focus on employer branding, by showing how great it is to work for your company, it will be easier to attract candidates when you have open positions. People already know about your startup and will want to work with you.

## **Tip number two: Build a talent pool.**

Accept resumes on a rolling basis, not just when a position opens up. That means that you're allowing people to send their resumes whenever they are interested in a job at your startup, not just when you have a vacancy.

That way, you'll be able to build a database of good candidates (a talent pool) that you can contact later when a position opens up.

## **Tip number three: Pay attention to candidate engagement.**

This refers to the interaction you have with a candidate during the interview process.

We're often too busy to offer feedback to candidates that we don't want to hire. Sometimes, they don't even get an email to let them know the position has already been filled.

This kind of behavior reflects poorly on the company and discourages people from applying again in the future. Even worse, candidates who have been treated poorly are more likely to tell others about their experience. So make sure you treat everyone fairly, whether you end up hiring them or not.

These are the three tips to help your startup be more successful at attracting talent

**Before we move on to your speaking assignment, let's review the vocabulary we've learned in this episode.**

First, we talked about **talent acquisition** - a company's strategy for attracting highly skilled professionals. We use the word **talent** to refer to people who are very good at their jobs and who would be very good team members. We use it as a collective noun here.

We also used the expression **to play up your advantages**. To play up something means to emphasize it, to focus on it.

When you *boast* about yourself or your achievements, it means you're speaking about yourself in a way that's not humble. Another word with a similar meaning is **to brag**.

If someone is **risk-averse**, that means they don't want to take risks.

If salaries are **competitive**, that means they are as good as, or sometimes better than the ones offered by the competition.

A **perk** is another benefit that you get from your job, in addition to money. It could be a company car, a gym membership, or being able to set your own hours.

If we **overlook** something, we're neglecting that thing or we're excluding it. We don't pay enough attention to it.

An **afterthought** is something we think about when it's too late, when that idea is no longer useful.

A **talent pool** refers to a database of good candidates for your company.

**Finally, here's your speaking practice question for this episode:**

Imagine you have to recruit people to join your small startup. How would you convince really good candidates to join your team?

That's it for this episode of Smart Startup English. Don't forget to subscribe to our podcast. And if you want to keep in touch, go to [SmartStartupEnglish.com](https://www.smartstartupenglish.com) and sign up for our newsletter. When you sign up, you'll get free access to transcripts and worksheets based on every episode. And you'll be the first to know when we release new episodes.

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