

Your Recruiting Metrics Are Lying to You

What drift looks like in your reporting.

THE PROBLEM

The metrics that report activity are not the metrics that predict performance.

Most recruiting dashboards measure speed and volume: time-to-fill, resumes reviewed, interviews scheduled. None of those numbers tell you whether the search was run against a written standard, whether the interview produced evidence, or whether the offer decision was documented.

When the intake produces no written definition of winning, "time to fill" measures how fast you ran the wrong search. When interviews are unstructured, "candidate satisfaction" measures comfort, not calibration. When the offer decision happens in a hallway, "quality of hire" is an opinion.

DRIFT SIGNAL 01

Resumes measure history, not winning.

Years of experience and job titles tell you where someone has been. They do not tell you what they produced, under which constraints, or whether the results held. A candidate with ten years of experience in the role may have repeated the same first year ten times.

Shift: Look for evidence of measurable outcomes. "Increased pipeline conversion by 18% in Q3" is a data point. "Experienced sales leader" is not.

DRIFT SIGNAL 02

Unstructured interviews produce impressions, not evidence.

Without standardized questions and a calibration framework, evaluators judge based on rapport. The candidate who interviews confidently is not the same as the candidate whose evidence clears the written standard. These are different measurements of different things.

Shift: Score candidates using pre-defined criteria tied to the performance outcomes in the definition of winning. Two evaluators should be able to compare notes and reconcile their reads.

DRIFT SIGNAL 03

Cultural fit as a filter perpetuates the same hire.

"Cultural fit" used as a primary criterion typically means the candidate resembles the people already there. Homogeneous evaluations produce homogeneous teams. The standard for the screen should be role alignment, not comfort.

Shift: Define what the role requires - behaviors, competencies, performance history - and screen against that. Fit is a post-offer conversation about integration, not a pre-screen for familiarity.

METRICS THAT PREDICT PERFORMANCE

What to track instead.

The metrics below are harder to collect and easier to ignore. They also have predictive value that time-to-fill does not.

Definition-of-winning completion rate.

What percentage of searches opened with a written, signed definition of winning? If the number is below 100%, you are measuring the output of searches that did not start from a standard.

Structured interview adherence.

What percentage of final-round candidates were evaluated using a calibrated question set with documented scores? Structured interviews predict performance at nearly twice the rate of unstructured ones.

Offer-to-definition alignment.

Was the finalist's evidence reviewed against the written winning definition before the offer was extended? Document this as a yes/no at the close of each search.

90-day milestone attainment.

Did the hire achieve the 90-day outcomes documented at intake? If the 90-day milestones were not documented at intake, this metric cannot exist.

24-month retention by search type.

Track retention by whether the search used a structured process. This is the number that separates searches that produced from searches that filled.

The numbers behind the method.

60%+

Fortune 500 companies trust us with executive selection

85%

First-year retention on placed executives

1999

The year Steve Lowisz founded Qualigence
