

Employee Referral Lean Startup Experiment #1: “Refer for the Future!”

Theory of the Problem: “Failure to align”

Knowledge of a job opening and knowledge of person to refer are two very separate but vital events that can lead to a referral. Because they take place at different times and in different places, it’s no wonder that the two events often fail to connect, even when the fact of an opening and a candidate simultaneously exist.

Hypothesis

If we remove the necessity of an open job for an employee to make a referral, and we offer a guaranteed interview as currency, we believe that employees will refer people to specific job titles because they aren’t constrained by the limits of an open job window and see the guaranteed interview as a mitigating factor in the decision process around personal risk. Additionally, employees will take an opportunity to share additional relevant information regarding qualifications about the referral.

MVP (Minimum Viable Product)

“Easy Button” to capture good candidates without the constraint of open positions to fill. Employee can enjoy the satisfaction of referring, still be eligible for financial rewards, and receive perks not ordinarily offered with the current referral system. Perks will center around mitigation of personal and professional risk of referring.

Riskiest assumption

“Employees will refer a candidate without an actual open job.” If employees will not refer, then we will pivot on our MVP.

“Employee has knowledge of a candidate” is also an assumption in this experiment, but evidence from our empathy work suggests that it presents less risk--- as several subjects revealed that they had candidates “banked” for the next opening.

Test Subjects

5-10 employees identified in our empathy interviews.

Experiment

Email selected employees a link to an online referral form, where they can refer up to three people without an actual job currently open. Keeping fields simple, only require desired job, first and last name, current employer, and one method of contact (email, phone, or address). Explanatory email explains our “pilot” program and offers a guaranteed phone interview for the referred as soon as a job opens. Also assure that any referral bonuses that are offered at that future time will apply with no additional work on their part.

Experiment within the experiment

Within the referral form, give referrer a field to add relevant information about the referral, or to share a story demonstrative of the referral’s qualifications for the job.

Potential additional results

- Experiment employees share email with coworkers and additional referrals are received from those employees.
- May see referrals outside of the expected proximity factors of the referrer.
- Employee may fill out the form more than once to refer more than three people.

Delivering value to the customer

Hiring Specialist for each area will save referrals and email referrer a thank you. If there is some idea of how long until the next hire, Specialist should share that with the employee. Making a reference in the email to something interesting in the “relevant information” field would also help deliver value for the effort.

Employee Referral Lean Startup Experiment #2: “Refer for the Present!”

Theory of the Problem: “Failure to align”

Knowledge of a job opening and knowledge of person to refer are two very separate but vital events that can lead to a referral. Because they take place at different times and in different places, it’s no wonder that the two events often fail to connect, even when the fact of an opening and a candidate simultaneously exist.

Hypothesis

If we prompt a (specific job title) to refer for an open position, we believe that the employee will refer to a specific job because they already have candidates in mind from their daily work. Additionally, employees may take an opportunity to share additional relevant information regarding qualifications about the referral.

MVP (Minimum Viable Product)

“Easy Button” to capture good candidates without the constraint of knowledge of open positions. Employee can enjoy the satisfaction of referring, still be eligible for financial rewards, and receive perks not ordinarily offered with the current referral system. Perks will center on mitigation of personal and professional risk of referring.

Riskiest assumption

“Employees will refer a candidate when prompted to do so with a job opening.” If employees will not refer, then we will pivot on our MVP.

“Employee has knowledge of a candidate” is also an assumption in this experiment, but evidence from our empathy work suggests that it presents less risk--- as several subjects revealed that they had candidates “banked” for the next opening.

Test Subjects

5-10 employees identified in our empathy interviews.

Experiment

Email selected employees a link to an online referral form, where they can refer up to three people for a job currently open. Keeping fields simple, only require desired job, first and last name, current employer, and one method of contact (email, phone, or address). Explanatory email explains our “pilot” program and offers a guaranteed phone interview for the referred. Also assure that any referral bonuses that are offered will apply with no additional work on their part.

Experiment within the experiment

Within the referral form, give referrer a field to add relevant information about the referral, or to share a story demonstrative of the referral’s qualifications for the job.

Potential additional results

- Experiment employees share email with coworkers and additional referrals are received from those employees.
- May see referrals outside of the expected proximity factors of the referrer.
- Employee may fill out the form more than once to refer more than three people.

Delivering value to the customer

Hiring Specialist for each area will act on referrals and email referrer a thank you. Making a reference in the email to something interesting in the “relevant information” field would also help deliver value for the effort.