

WHITE PAPER

CTO Guide: How to Hire and Retain Developers

5 Strategies to Stand Out From Other Employers



Spryker



CONTENT

A pivotal challenge for CTOs	4
5 Proven strategies to hire better developers, faster	5
Strategy #1: Give kudos and offer real flexibility	5
Strategy #2: Keep routine to a minimum	6
Strategy #3: Look in the right places, in the right way	7
Strategy #4: Cultivate trust, freedom, and creativity	7
Strategy #5: Create a stable technical environment full of resources	8
Conclusion	9



Developers are currently the royalty of the job market. While coding has been a valuable skill for a long time, demand for tech talent is at an all-time high. This means that locking down skilled devs has never been more of a challenge and that traditional hiring approaches no longer make the cut. This guide provides proven strategies that will help CTOs solve this issue, and hire the top developers without breaking the bank.

A pivotal challenge for CTOs

A Chief Technology Officer (CTO) has one of the most critical jobs in any organization. The departments they oversee are responsible for the swift, reliable, and uninterrupted functioning of the product or service being delivered.

On top of that, they are usually in charge of ensuring a high-quality user experience, a smooth flow of tech-related data, and up-to-date tools. When you consider that they are often also responsible for the hiring of programmers, it becomes clear that CTOs are customarily spread far too thin. In fact, many CTOs find themselves evolving into a jack-of-all-trades that is required to be a master of everything. But when it comes to finding the right developers, that approach can quickly fall short.

Demand for developer talent is at an all-time high, and it can be difficult to stand out from the endless crowd of tech companies that are actively recruiting day in and day out. Top techies are being offered huge welcome bonuses and staggering salaries - forcing recruiters to pitch open positions over and over again in a similar fashion to salespeople hunting leads. Studies show that the proportion of



recruiters hiring between 201 and 500 developers has more than doubled since 2021,¹ while those looking to hire more than 500 have increased by 50%.

All in all, hiring a developer has become a very complex, lengthy, and expensive process, and CTOs often find themselves struggling to recruit the tech talent they so urgently need. That's why the tactics for finding and hiring developers need to be revamped.

¹Developer recruitment to bounce back in 2022, squeezing supply, techmonitor.ai

“Studies show that the proportion of recruiters hiring between 201 and 500 developers has more than doubled since 2021, while those looking to hire more than 500 have increased by 50%”



5 Proven strategies to hire better developers, faster

Here are five tactics that are guaranteed to help speed up your hiring process, save HR costs, and track down top-tier developers.

Strategy #1: Give kudos and offer real flexibility

One of the things senior devs truly crave is respect for their expertise and experience. Too many companies have made the same mistakes of hiring top-tier developers without ever making an effort to acknowledge their knowledge and insights. Instead, they push them to blindly follow pre-established procedures - thus crushing their creativity in the bud.

How to fix this? Show them that their opinion matters and that you are ready to offer them the recognition and free-thinking space they deserve. A lot of techies will value a position when they are empowered to propose projects and manage their own work over the predictability of the corporate environment.

This has never been truer than now, as the remote work culture continues to take hold across the globe. Employees are no longer just looking for the ability to work-from-home, but real flexibility in how, when, and where they choose to work. Following the pandemic, 56% of US workers² requested flexibility above all other factors.

Contrary to popular belief, fancy perks like free yoga classes are no longer enough to make your company attractive to top talent. What devs appreciate the most is true autonomy, and the ability to unleash their inventive potential. Developers know that they are critical for keeping the business running and that they are more than just a human resource, so they want to be treated as such.

²Survey: 55% of Americans expect to search for a new job over the next 12 months, [bankrate.com](https://www.bankrate.com)

Strategy #2: Keep routine to a minimum

Despite what some people think, coding is a fusion of both art and science. It's not so much about mind-numbing mathematical calculations, as it is about choice and creativity. When an IT engineer writes code, they are creating something new, and simultaneously choosing between a variety of different approaches.

However, there are a lot of routine tasks that are a crucial part of development. As these job functions are often disliked by developers, reducing the time they will have to spend on these functions can help make your company much more attractive to prospective candidates. Programmers will be greatly attracted by the idea and can devote more time to the part of the work they actually enjoy.

Volodymyr Lvov, one of Spryker's senior developers, echoed this sentiment.³ "Another way for companies to attract developers is to reduce the amount of routine to an absolute minimum, as well as utilizing modern technologies and services. By getting rid of as much mundane routine as possible, developers can devote more time to the art part of the work".

Most top developers are apt learners. Even devs who aren't passionate about your project's mission will be attracted by the possibility to learn a new technology or try a novel approach. This means that it's entirely feasible to step aside from fixed-job requirements and hire programmers who have knowledge in adjacent fields and are interested in expanding their expertise. For some developers, a complex and challenging task will be enough of an attraction factor, as will be the possibility to utilize modern technologies. In addition, by implementing smarter work tools and processes you can further minimize non-value-adding routine tasks.

³How to Hire Developers (Like Me) For E-Commerce Projects, spryker.com

Strategy #3: Look in the right places, in the right way

One of the most effective methods to source the right talent is by exploring popular coding communities. While this strategy can be time-consuming, it can lead to worthwhile results. These communities are spread throughout the web, and they're an excellent place to connect with devs on their own territory. As an example, you can explore websites like Github, where technical wizzes save each other time (and stress) by contributing helpful code snippets.



Why should they choose you over another reputable tech company?



Other well-known natural habitats for coders and software engineers include Reddit and DZone, and many independent developer teams are also on Slack. There are also closed and invite-only developer communities that can be accessed by partnering with a local outsourcing company or staff augmentation provider.

You similarly discover a whole lot of tech talent on online marketplaces such as Gigster, AngelList, Upwork, and X-Team. These platforms are an open door to both development teams and standalone developers, and they make it easy to hire and even manage developers.

Finally, don't hesitate to visit developer conferences to spread the word about your project. Have you ever heard of an elevator pitch? Prepare the same to market your project to developers. Why should they choose you over another reputable tech company? Are you enabling them to chase a more meaningful purpose or make a real difference? Whatever the case may be, make sure you communicate this explicitly and often.

Strategy #4: Cultivate trust, freedom, and creativity

Everyone wants to be trusted, and the same goes for developers. Giving your employees free range to explore new projects⁴ is a surefire way to keep your devs happy, and attract more high-level talent – it's a win-win for all. A great example of this is at Google, where every dev is encouraged to spend 20% of their time on side projects. This keeps workers excited and motivated about their daily tasks while helping their skill set stay up to date.

If your developers are more familiar with your product, trust their knowledge and expertise to lead product decisions. Empowering your employees to take ownership will help them recognize the value they contribute to the growth and success of your company. Not only that, but word can travel fast between developers, so creating an environment where people are truly trusted can lead to more frequent and successful referrals.

Software development is a technical process, but it's about far more than just building products. Many developers want the opportunity to express their creativity too. In order to effectively attract and retain the best talent available, make

candidates aware that they will be able to stretch their creative muscles by trying new things, such as tools, types of products, and methods of development. Along with creativity comes the need for challenges. Even the best developers in the world should have responsibilities that push them out of their comfort zone.



⁴ [What Developers Want: 12 Things Tech Professionals Look For In A Job, forbes.com](https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesrecommends/2017/05/11/what-developers-want-12-things-tech-professionals-look-for-in-a-job/)

Strategy #5: Create a stable technical environment full of resources

While developers love to find creative solutions to problems, they like to do this with the right tools and resources at their disposal. They want to pour their mental energy into coding, not into troubleshooting inadequate software. Frustrations from these types of tools can lower productivity, and if a prospective dev hears your company is using outdated solutions, they may make a run for the hills.

In addition, many companies nowadays go above and beyond to provide their workforce with the best possible learning and development resources. Whether this entails a hefty personal learning budget or frequent development opportunities, providing coupons to an online course no longer cuts it.

Companies that implement a stable environment outfitted with high-quality resources will be the belle of the ball on the job market, while others will fall by the wayside. Furthermore, this will lead to higher rates of employee retention⁵ down the line, and help to avoid burnout from your current technical team. In addition, with the right tool structure set up, you can take the time to find out which of your existing staff aspires to a career in tech and provide them with the resources to re-skill. By re-qualifying your existing staff you can save on recruitment and get loyal employees to benefit from in the mid-to-long run.

⁵ [How to Counter the Great Resignation Wave, spryker.com](https://www.spryker.com/en/blog/how-to-counter-the-great-resignation-wave)





On the flip side, by using composability tools, CTOs can hire less by being more efficient with their resources. These platforms allow quick, no-code integrations of third-party services to your online business. These can cover an almost endless range of uses, such as new payment platform integrations and AI-powered site optimizations. Implementation of these apps is quick and easy, which can reduce the workload of several teams and the necessity for hiring new employees.



About Spryker

Spryker Systems GmbH is a privately held technology company headquartered in Berlin, Germany and New York, USA. Founded in 2014, Spryker enables companies to build sophisticated transactional business models in unified commerce including B2B, B2C, and Enterprise Marketplaces. Spryker is the most modern, fully composable platform-as-a-service (PaaS) solution with headless & API-based architecture that is cloud and enterprise-ready and loved by developers and business users worldwide. Spryker customers extend their sales reach and grow revenue with a system that allows them to increase operational efficiency, lower the total cost of ownership, expand to new markets and business models faster than ever before: Spryker solutions have empowered 150+ companies to manage transactions in more than 200 countries worldwide and is trusted by brands such as Aldi, Siemens, Hilti, and Ricoh. Gartner® recognized Spryker as a Visionary in the 2021 Magic Quadrant™ for Digital Commerce, just one year after it first appeared (2020), and has also been named as a major player in B2B e-Commerce by IDC. Finally, it is the only commerce platform to provide full B2B, B2C, D2C, and Marketplace capabilities out of one stack. Find out more at spryker.com



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