

Married 2 Marketing Hiring For Marketing | Episode 5 Transcript

Laura Laire: [00:00:00] Welcome to the Married 2 Marketing podcast, where our lifelong love affair with marketing is second only to our commitment to each other.

Todd Laire: [00:00:06] I'm Todd Laire, CEO and co-founder of LAIRE Digital.

Laura Laire: [00:00:10] And I'm Laura Laire, VP of Creative Strategy, co-founder of LAIRE Digital and Todd's Better Half.

Todd Laire: [00:00:15] Together, we found success in business and in life by combining our talents, entrepreneurial spirit, and creativity.

Laura Laire: [00:00:21] Whether you're a marketing newbie or a seasoned pro married to marketing is a podcast that will have you flexing your creative muscles, pushing boundaries, and thinking outside the box.

Todd Laire: [00:00:30] Our mission is to equip you with knowledge, tools, and strategies that will skyrocket your brand success. Let's dive in.

Laura Laire: [00:00:40] Hi. Welcome to the Married 2 Marketing Podcast. Today we're going to be talking about hiring for marketing.

Todd Laire: [00:00:46] Yes, hiring for marketing and hiring for any role can be a daunting task. And, you know, with companies that are looking to grow, and this, of course, could be a multi-part series. You know how to hire a consultant or a contractor, even part-time, or how to hire an intern or how to hire outside help, like a marketing agency or a partner or something along those lines. Questions to ask and kind of the process and expectations you should have. But today's going to be focused purely on growing your internal staff and hiring a marketing employee. Since we've been in business for over a decade, I myself, I've probably interviewed a thousand people and I've hired probably close to 100 over the last 12, 13 years or so. And Laura and I both combined. So we've learned a lot. We've certainly not perfected a process, but we have a really great process that we perfected and improve on over time.

Laura Laire: [00:01:56] Okay. Step one is to determine the need at your company. We're not just looking for good people or people we like or people who have skills or people who have the culture fit that we're looking for. But we actually are wanting to determine what the seat is first that is open. We do have people apply regularly at LAIRE that stand out, that either they have a lot of experience, they have a fantastic personality, they look great on paper, on LinkedIn, but we don't have a seat for them. And so we don't want to hire just based on the fact that we like somebody we want to hire for the seat. So what is this role and determining exactly what are they doing on a day-to-day basis? Getting a job description written. While I know it can be cumbersome, it can be a lot of work, there's a lot of detail that needs to go into it and a lot of thought, but it really is going to save you in the end. Not only is it going to help you determine

who you really, truly need for this job, but also is going to help the employee know what they're going to be doing. And I'd like to share an example for one of the hires that we had recently. I was working with one of our department heads on hiring this individual, and we were looking through and some of them were more stand out for something specific, let's say, but not the real things that we actually needed. So we set up a grading system and in the end, that made it very, very easy to grade each of the applicants based on here's what we need, kind of like, you know, how you put together a pros and cons list? Well, if we have these seven major tasks that we need to make sure that they can do, and I want to be able to send this task to this person and then to crush it when they send it back to me and I review it, it's amazing. Well, if I have seven applicants, I can grade them, let's say a small scale like one through five and maybe give this one gets a three, this one gets a four, this one gets a five on those seven major task really based on the job description. And that made it very easy when initially you we we were looking and initially the department head said I think this one they went above and beyond and I'm like okay but is above and beyond the job description. Is that the task that we need them to do? Because what we they went above and beyond and did something that's actually not part of the job. So if we're going to send this work to this new employee, who's the one that you actually want to send this to and get back that work from that person. So it actually changed the department heads mind on who she wanted to hire in this particular instance. So writing the job description and then being able to take those pieces like what are the major things out of that job description that I need for them to really excel at? And coming up, the grading system is something that we've done this year that has helped because we're finding we're getting actually a lot of good applicants. And Todd's going to talk to you later about projects. But that is something that we've noticed when you have a lot of good people, how do you really make that final decision? It really has to be based on the things that are most important to us, which are those major task and activities personality again, because you cannot learn personality and then culture fit.

Todd Laire: [00:05:13] Yeah, yeah. So here's, here's just from a topic or subject standpoint like what we're going to cover. Obviously, you know, understanding the true need of why and what and who you need to hire and what you need to hire for. And then once you've got that decided, then getting very specific about the job and mainly like through job description. And we see that's where a lot of companies fail. Some of past clients we've had have, you know, not spent as much time really getting specific there and and ultimately not ending up with a good fit. We're going to cover how you can use your current marketing efforts now to be not only an inbound marketing machine, but an inbound recruiting and hiring machine and and cover some some things that we've learned and things that we do that, you know, keeps your list of candidates constantly full. Also, we're going to talk a little bit about salary, but mostly from the angle of being transparent about that. A lot of time can be wasted. A lot of expectations can be wrongly set. When you're not clear and transparent about compensation. We're going to talk about different ways to amplify your job. We've had a lot of success with LinkedIn. You know how you can not only use your network, but leverage your coworkers networks and sharing the opportunity and landing a good fit. That's got some familiarity. We'll talk about recruiters when and how to use them and when to avoid them. And then onboarding. You know what that needs to be, how that needs to be communicated and represented in the hiring process. And then we'll

actually take some time today to actually cover what our interview process is and a successful interview process for a marketing hire in an organization. And then, of course, the hire itself just from like, you know, making an offer and negotiating and then and then having it be final. So obviously the real work begins after somebody starts. But we wanted to spend today's podcast on just breaking it down and sharing from experience what we've seen work and then also what. We found either ourselves or seen others fail at so that you don't repeat those mistakes.

Laura Laire: [00:07:35] Know that I think it's probably the most important. Most people want to hire the person they liked. And when we get our team on, we'll have sometimes four or five people on that final interview where we've narrowed it down to maybe two people or even three sometimes, but maybe two. And we bring a couple of people on and oftentimes they're like, I really like this person. They have great energy. They seem like they'll be a great culture fit. But when it comes down to it, who do you actually want to see or who do you want to put in front of our clients? Or who do you want to write that copy? Or which one has the design skills that we're looking for? Like it's really looking at that, that detailed list of these are the task and activities, although all the rest of it, personality and everything is very important, then it really is the, the skill set at the end of the day. And that's why the grading system is really worked well for us when you have quite a few people who have great skills.

Todd Laire: [00:08:30] Yeah. And so it's a couple of things I wanted to go back to first, like when you've got a need it's important to be intentional about is that need something that we really do need to hire for or is that something that somebody else can do? Or we can break out, you know, the need into multiple responsibilities that can be shuffled or shared, you know, amongst the existing organization. But if it's a true need, then those needs should exist in your organization chart, your org chart, and it should be part of the hierarchy. So who's that need going to report to? What department are they in? You know, we'll talk about core responsibilities and key performance indicators, but it's a true need that really warrants running, you know, looking for and interviewing and hiring a candidate to fill that need. And so you mentioned hire for the seat, not the person. We hear it all the time. We see it all the time. You know, like, oh, somebody just left their company and they're a marketing director and they're looking for their next role. You know, hey, you should you should, you know, interview them, you should get to know them. And then companies are like, Oh, well, we don't have a job opening, but we don't want to miss out on this person. And that is the ultimate root for failure and and clouding of roles and expectations being soft. So you should have a need, a solidified need and then build the search around that. And then if somebody is like, oh, this person just left their role, then they're they're applying and they're looking at and being looked at for the need that's open in that in that seat that we talk about. Laura, you mentioned job description. This is where good intentions to hire the right person go to die. Just not being specific. You know, we like to start out our job descriptions with, you know, if you're this, that and the other, then this job is for you, you know, and ideally someone reading that goes, yep, that is me and that's why I want it to apply. But then from there, like key core responsibilities, you know, bulleted list as specific as possible. And then also what they're going to be expected to do. You know, speaking of like content, we do a lot of content. Obviously, we're a content marketing agency and hiring for a content manager, like definitely hard skills and soft skills. And we'll talk about, you know, what those

mean. But in addition to that, like you're expected to help us produce X amount of pieces of content a month and what that content is and that's what they hold themselves to, in addition to obviously you holding yourself to it. Anything you wanted to add to that, Laura, like as you mentioned, you know, listing out key factors and why to hire someone over another.

Laura Laire: [00:11:47] Well, and this is why we get ten applications sometimes in 24 hours because and oftentimes in the application, in the notes or in the message that they write to us, they're saying, you know, I've been a director or a marketing coordinator or marketing manager at this XYZ company and they want me to do everything and I'm burnt out and it's impossible. You know, we we have people who are out there that are experts with ads and paid media, and we have people who write short-form content. We have people who write long-form content. It's a very different person that's going to write social media and a person who's going to be able to do research for blogs. SEO is a specialized type. That oftentimes is another person reporting and project management and data is a very specific skill set. You know, a lot of people that are creative don't have that organized, detailed mindset. Designers, man, amazing designers are actually hard to come by. So, you know, we absolutely value the designers that we work with, but it's nearly impossible. A lot of designers have trouble with details and misspellings. And this is something that we're always catching. Hey, you forgot this or you missed this or you missed that. So if I have somebody who's designing, they're looking at the overall creativity of it, but they miss the fact that they left out a word because it's hard to sometimes see your own work and to see what's missing. A period's missing that wasn't capitalized because they're looking at the aesthetic of it. So we have somebody that reviews, you know, our creative director is reviewing the graphic design to make sure we're catching all of those things because designers oftentimes don't. And a lot of these behind the scenes people aren't really good with clients or with C-suite or with the VPs and the directors that you need somebody who's really going to be facing upper management and delivering that reporting and things to you. So I absolutely agree. Oftentimes it's five people, but it can be 10 or 15 people who are doing all of these tasks. Let's not forget HubSpot, the very technical aspects of running Salesforce, HubSpot, any type of CRM where you're needing to do complicated workflows and being able to build these things out, list management and cleaning up list is a highly technical skill that someone who's creative is not going to be able to do. And then what about strategy is a is a strategic person, also creative organizer, like all of these different tasks that we expect one person to be able to do and one person can try, but they're not going to be good ever at all of these things. And so, you know, we are also an advocate of making sure that our clients understand there's never one person working on your account. There's generally ten or more that are working on your account. But if you're hiring a marketing employee for your company, this is something that you want to keep in mind that you may want to outsource, find contractors, work with an agency like grab a couple little pieces here and there so that you're filling the holes that are missing for the person that you've hired. If you find that they're not great at writing, then find somebody who can write like focus and hone in on the specialties that they actually do have that work for you and then fill in the blanks with extended team members or an agency to support you.

Todd Laire: [00:15:09] Yes. Yeah. And so something else that we see along those lines that can help. But first, we must address the elephant in the room and the problem that we see with most

hiring and most specifically with marketing hiring is a company is looking for a unicorn. You know, and that is they're basically looking for an entire marketing department in one person. So, you know, we've all seen it, hey, we're hiring and we're looking for, you know, a marketing director to head up our entire marketing strategy and our strategic plan and help with formulation and strategic, you know, ideas and concepts, but then also execute on that plan. And so we need them to right social media. We need them to write blog copy. We need them to also manage our website and our SEO. And don't forget, we also need an email expert in this job role, this marketing role. And but they also need to be experienced in running, you know, Google ads and LinkedIn ads, too. And oh, don't forget, we also want heavy duty reporting and they need to be a data analyst. And on and on and on it goes. And we see this like marketing millennials or some of these other great marketing communities posting, you know, either just flat out jokes or real life examples of hiring managers posting that, and then people saying, that's five people. You know, you're not looking for a marketing person, you're looking for a marketing department. I'm sure you've seen that too, Laura.

Laura Laire: [00:16:46] I wanted to add to that as well, that when we're building the job description, we're also building out a performance plan with those KPIs. So if I've said, All right, your job, if I'm hiring a content manager, your job is to make sure that our content is growing our leads, or I have specific things that I want to be done. Then on the job description, I'm going to take that and I'm going to build out their review system. And at LAIRE we have a pretty organized system, or at least our employees tell you is the best one. Or our employees tell us that it's the best one that they've ever experienced where we check in with them in the first 90 days to see, okay, here's your job description. And now here is the check-in doc, and we're actually going to grade them based on their job description. And so we're reviewing KPIs. Did they meet those goals the first 90 days? Are they doing each one of these things that first 90 days? We check in again at six months because if you're not going back and looking to see if they're meeting the KPIs and you wait until a year goes by, it could really hurt your company. If you decide if this person needs to move the needle or needs to have X amount of leads or sales have to go up by this much and you're not helping them to see the holes like in the first 90 days at the six-month mark when we get to that one year, they already know what's been expected of them all along. They have access to the doc throughout the year so they can see where they need work. And we use a grading scale of one through five. And if they get a three, they're doing their job. So this is great. Like middle of the road, you're doing your job. If you if you got a two, then you need work one, you need a lot of work, but a four, you're going above and beyond and then a five, you're really killing it. So if I had set the KPIs based on their job description at a growth of 10% and they got to 15%, that I'm going to give them a higher score than a three because they're doing more than their job actually required. So not only are we looking at the job description, but we actually want to measure their job role in how they do in their job with some type of review system that you've got all those KPIs listed. It's so good for the employee to have those goals and to have a performance plan where they know like, here's where I'm going, here's where I want to be and they know where they need to work on it instead of getting to the end of the year and saying, okay, this is not working out because it's the first time you're actually talking about it.

Todd Laire: [00:19:09] Mm Yeah, yeah. And another thing too, are you were talking I thought of something else that's important, but that doesn't apply to every company. But it should is every company should have established core values and the core values go in the job description as well, just merely from them knowing what the company's about and what brings everyone together. And what is an example of doing good or, you know, living the core values in the company because ultimately using core values correctly and a lot of companies don't. There's 10 or 20 of them and they're really vague, high level, hard to add a story or an example to it. But ultimately good core values that have been agreed to by the team. It's what you look for when you're hiring someone and it's what you look for when you're promoting someone or justifying a raise. It's also used for corrective measure. You know, if they're not living the core values, they may not be a fit for. Or your company or they're just not aligned and they need to realign. So you discipline for core values not being and you work on performance improvement over core values not being that. And ultimately, you know, kind of a side benefit to having core values is people end up letting themselves go because they realize they're not a fit and they duck out and that's okay. That's good. But at the very least, you know, you can make corrective action and even remove an employee from your organization because of repeated violations of core values. And so but ideally, they leave on their own. And we've seen that to be true. But the reverse is also true. We see people applying for us either because we've got a seat or they come to our website, which we'll talk in a minute, and they see our core values and they're like, This is how I align with your core value. I love that you have this and here's how I demonstrate it. I mean, that somebody that does that has got a, you know, a leg up in the in the application process. So having a careers page can go a long way when it comes to attracting the right people. But in-between what I what I like to do for us is in between having a seat open and having a position open. It's just always fielding applications and letting them know up front on the page as well as you know, in your communications with them, like you may not have in a role open. But things change quickly and you want to go back to people that, you know, indicated an interest or shown that they fit a particular role. So a successful careers page has testimonials. Laura, I know you're big on having testimonials of what other employees have said or team members have said about the company, what they like, where your company excels, but open roles that you do have available should be posted. We also go one step further and post typical roles. So if somebody comes and they don't see an open role, but they see that we typically hire for a role, we'll take their application. And what I like to do is build a talent board or a job board that, you know, I can go back to. When we do have an open seat, I can go back to people who have already I've applied and shown an interest. So another characteristic as well is obviously having a form on the careers page so that people can apply. I see some companies like have them go directly to an applicant tracking system, which is fine, but few things on the form besides like what they're interested in, who they are, their contact information. I do like to ask for a LinkedIn profile so I can go and scan them their website address for a portfolio. And you would be surprised, like marketers of all shades and types and backgrounds and experiences and roles have a portfolio. This could extend to a writer, to a graphic designer or web developer, you know, SEO person. So I always ask for a website address and it's not required if they don't have one. But also having a way for them to upload their current resume to you. And so applicant tracking systems typically have this, but if you're using a form on your website, that's a big one too. And then side note like some nice touch. And Laura was behind this from a creativity

standpoint was they fill out a form on our site and they immediately get a response. And it's an auto response. And it comes from me and it looks like it's an email that comes from me, but it's an automated email that comes to them and says, "Thank you for applying on our site. Here's what you can expect. Please know we may not be hiring right now, but your application matters to us and we may have a role open soon." But regardless, you know, we'll reach out if we see a fit and if there's an opening. So please be patient with us. We want them to have a good experience, just like if they were a client. But Laura, I know you worked really hard with our creative team and our content team on an actual PDF download that explains more about us. And you want to share like some tips there, because I think that would translate to a lot of different companies.

Laura Laire: [00:24:32] Yeah, it's essentially a recruiting PCO or a premium content offer. It's about three pages. I think right now it's pretty much a get to know us document or get to know LAIRE document, and it answers those common questions that you always get. And we're going to give them this document in the auto response email. But also we give this document when we run ads on LinkedIn so they immediately get their questions answered. What are the details on our benefits? What are the core values for the company? And then they can find a lot of the stuff on the website. It's really nicely packaged. It's got all of our branding, our colors, our fonts, like everything, you know, it's essentially got the LAIRE brand story also on there so they can kind of get to know the brand itself. But as Todd was mentioning, I thought it was a really great idea to feature testimonials from employees and especially from current employees. And one way that we do that is by surveys. So we use software called Office Vibe, and it's an anonymous survey and we get feedback. Not only do we get a pulse survey so that we get just kind of a score like, you know, NPS score, like how are we doing? Is it 8.9, 9.1? And if it drops down to, you know, from 8.9 to 8.8, 8.7, 8.6, that trajectory over time, I can see, okay, something's not something's not right right now. But not only with that NPS score, which ours has consistently gone up right now, which is amazing over the past couple of years going remote, we really had to gauge what's happening with our team and the sentiment overall. But we got so much amazing feedback by these pulse surveys. So we're sending out custom surveys, surveys that office vibe is also putting up that ask these questions and then we get responses. So they're actually typing in their response, you know, how is it with your manager right now? Are you happy with your managers or anything that you would like for your manager to be doing for you? How is your help? How are you feeling? There's so many questions. They're very short. We might send out a multiple choice with one fill in the blank. And I've captured so many amazing testimonials about why they love working at LAIRE. They love the culture. They love the way the reviews system, they love the way management handles and involves them. There's a lot of amazing questions and really I did not have to think of most of these questions. I do put some custom ones in there, but it's given us a lot of feedback and we share that feedback on this recruiting doc or this get to know LAIRE document, whatever you would want to call this. We share those testimonials, but it's been good internally for us, but it's also good for hiring. So that document we're going to use on LinkedIn, we use it on the email and I've also emailed it because oftentimes I'll get a referral from a current employee, from someone they know and they email me. I've gotten Facebook messages, group messages like there's all kinds of ways that I've been able to use that document. So taking the time to really put some time, effort and energy make it beautiful. It's

the, I think, of our employees, our team is also our customers. So not only am I doing this within a document like this, but any type of internal documents we're branding everything with LAIRE, with our colors, our fonts, our logo, because they're our customers too. And I think oftentimes we don't think that way. We think that they need us, but we need them too. So it's important to carry that culture throughout all the documents and everything that you do from your brand story, which is important. But I do recommend getting some survey type system. You can use whatever works for you, but that it will help you to build this product that you can use to help with recruiting. And we've noticed that. I don't know if you it would be really interesting to kind of figure out, but our I would say is probably doubled or tripled the amount of applications this year over the past several years online. And I think because we've automated so much, it's very easy to capture that information. But there's been a massive influx. I do believe that our inbound marketing efforts have not only grown our agency as far as customers, but it's also because on social media and in everything that we do, our employees are also our customers. So we are also always trying to attract better talent. And we definitely are seeing the fruits of our labor, of putting time, effort and energy into our brand, our brand story and making everything better.

Todd Laire: [00:28:54] Yeah, absolutely. I love to, you know, may I might post a job ad and wait for people to come. But, you know, there's a lot of people that are looking for jobs. And, you know, specifically on LinkedIn, if they've got the little green, you know, circle around their profile, open to work, hashtag open to work, then, you know, they're actively fielding, you know, possibilities and opportunities and whatnot. And so I might message them and I always, you know, send a website link and whatnot, but I do attach the about us, you know, PDF so that they have that's just kind of a nice extra touch there as well. One thing to going back to job description and where your job is going to live, I'm huge fan of posting the salary range. There's just too much vagueness in jobs that are out there and what they pay and you waste a lot of time and give the wrong expectation to people that apply to apply. So like if you have, you know, a role that you know you're going to max out at 75,000 a year an annual salary, post it because you're going to get people applying that their minimum take home is 140. And so you might spend a lot of time with someone and then get down to what is the role pay and, you know, what are you looking for? And you know, there's not a fit immediately from compensation. So you get the right applicants with the right expectations applying that are within the salary range. I'm okay with a range as well, but if you have a hard budget, then leave it as a hard number, a singular number. So if it's 75 K, then that's it. That's your max, That's it. And then expect somebody that you know is looking for that number, you know, they can justify it through the experience and whatnot that they have. So if you've got your job description, you've got your careers page, you've got a seat open on your roster and you're actively ready to start fielding applications outside having a careers page, then you might turn to like Indeed, or Monster.com or, you know, some of these other job sites. LinkedIn has consistently delivered great candidates as well as we've got people on our team and I'd say 95% of them have come from LinkedIn and it's relatively inexpensive. To give you an example. We were hiring for a really kind of popular job role with us, like a marketing account manager, which is a marketing generalist to a degree, but they've got, you know, depending on the individual, they've got specialties in a few areas, but you can get a lot of applicants, you know, former VP's to marketing interns trying to, you know, get their first career, start applying for that particular role. And so again, having a job description

that is ultra, ultra specific and dialed into what exactly it is that they need to have experience and so you get them to apply. The other thing I like about LinkedIn, Laura, is you can have disqualifiers automatically sift out those that don't meet the criteria. So like job experience, you're looking for somebody who has at least five years experience that they have four their kicked out of the process. If they don't have a certain skill like they don't know Google Analytics at all, then when they go to check that box or not check that box, then you're also not delivering that candidate. So it can help you save a lot of time. To give you an example, we ran an ad for about, I want to say two weeks. We spent \$102, a little over \$100. We got 100 applicants. We narrowed it down to ten who were a good fit out of the hundreds. So to give you an idea, even with qualifiers and disqualifiers, you're still going to get an enormous number. And it can be daunting at times like, you know, 100 applications can come in like literally within a couple of days, sometimes 24 hours. But ten were a fit. Five went through our process. So they went past what I'll get into later, like the first step or two, and we ended up hiring one and we could have easily hired two if not three of them. And because they were that good and the one that we did hire was available, they were in between and didn't need to give notice because they weren't anywhere currently and they started like that very next Monday. So that's an example of how we've used LinkedIn and have had success with it. The other thing, and I know that we do this too, or you could speak to it, is making sure that we share when we do have the job launched on LinkedIn, we're sharing it on our own profile or asking our coworkers to do the same. We're asking, you know, ask your manager if you have an open role to share it, because getting someone that has the experience but also the familiarity with you or the company or the manager, like you hire somebody that's friends with somebody else like that could be really great for culture. In addition to granted that they have the skills you're actually hiring for, you aren't just hiring them because you.

Laura Laire: [00:34:22] Are you wasting ad spend are your lead straight up website not converting. Listen, you're busy and we know it. In just 20 minutes will grade your website, identify lead generation opportunities and discuss how to grow your revenue. Ready to learn more? Get expert advice at lairedigital.com/talk-to-todd and we'll put the link in the description.

Todd Laire: [00:34:44] I think it might work out but we've always got we've hired friends of others that fit the bill of what we were looking for and it immediately added to our culture.

Laura Laire: [00:34:54] And there's a couple of different ways where you can get more compliance with sharing. I know it's difficult. It happens in every company where you say. Please, everybody, can you share this post, please? Everyone, please can you share this post? Can you share this post? And you're getting like that one person who regularly shares and everybody else is just not doing it. There's a couple of ways to solve that. One is if you use a project management software like Jira or Celo or Trello or any type of project management you can put a task in that actually requires them and they have to move that task to done. And so we actually alot time in our sprints, our two-week workload sprints. We allow time for them to actually go and share a post and a job that is open is a great post to share, but if we don't have a job open then they get to go pick something else they want to share. Another thing that you can do is something like post beyond or a system where you can actually share on behalf of

your employees. It's something you're going to have to pay for, and it's not necessarily cheap, but it does work. So if you see a company whose employees are posting all the time, oftentimes it's because they're posting on behalf of their employee. So it is a requirement. We learned after several years of really asking, asking, asking, please, please, please to where now it's just part of our culture. Everybody shares. It is one of the things that is on our grading system. It is on our review doc. So at the 90 day, six months in one year, they get a score one, two, three, 4 or 5 on whether or not they are liking and sharing and commenting on their post. It's part of the jobs, part of the job description, it's part of the review system. So if you want to get a big fat raise, if you want to raise at all, it's really based on the score that you get when you're doing the task and activities that are required of you. And that's one of those things that we're actually going to score on. But it starts with you. It starts with the managers, the owners. I mean, it's not from the bottom up, it's from the top down. So we do exactly what we expect our employees to do. And oftentimes it's something that we need to do right away. So we'll use our Slack channels. I know a lot of companies use Slack to communicate within, and so we'll just post that job description or our social media coordinator will post that job description. Hey, go share this comment on it. Tag friends that you know that might want to apply for it. Help us find somebody great for this position because it's in their benefit to do so. So we'll post in the the team Slack channel that this is live and we need to go and share this. Don't underestimate the reach that your employees have when you're running an ad, same thing we're going to post in the team channel. Hey, this ad is live. Please go share. We'll send them a link. We want to make it as easy as possible for our team to do what we need them to do. So I'm going to give them the link. I don't need them to go to the larger channel on LinkedIn and try to find it. We got to populate the link. Everybody, please share that by the end of day Friday because we want to generally we'll close the job out within 24 to 48 hours. Last time we posted a job, we got 400 applicants in about 45 minutes. We had to shut down immediately. So keeping that in mind, we just it's really good to get it out to the network. And your employees have a lot greater reach than you do as a company.

Todd Laire: [00:38:06] Absolutely. Yeah. I couldn't agree more. I think that was the copywriter role and we got very specific with that role and we still had 400 people apply in 45 minutes. Kind of getting into the next part like the actual interview process, but I wanted to kind of call it out separately, and you alluded to it a bit, Laura is being as clear as possible and also continuing to work on your onboarding process. And why it matters in the hiring process is you want to be as clear with candidates as possible what what they can expect, what the onboarding process looks like. A smart candidate will ask that question: What does it look like? Because maybe they'd been through some that were not so good and, you know, maybe they were held accountable to things that they didn't know, that it was an accountability because the onboarding process was lacking. So be very clear with them during the interview process before the hire. And certainly once they start, you know what the first day looks like, we have a getting started guide things that we actually expect them to do before they start. And so we'll have that sent to them before they actually start. So there's some things they could be working on or at least become familiar with or, you know, evening reading like, what's my new job going to look like next week or whenever I start?

Laura Laire: [00:39:24] So and there's there's there's also a few things that we actually need for them to do, like set up their email before they start because I can't actually invite them to a Zoom meeting first thing on their start date without their email being set up in their Zoom accounting setup. So there's a few things and most people will get those few things done and we'll start working through the getting started guide. A lot of people are really eager to get moving so that they're ready to go on their first day. And instead of just, you know, deer in headlights on the first day. But we do give them the breakdown. Here's the meetings for your first day. Here's the Getting Started guide. You'll be working through this throughout your first week. You can complete as much as you would like on your own before your start date. If you want to get a little bit ahead, most people do. So we try not to wait until the day of because people are a lot less overwhelmed and they can take, you know, being in a remote environment, they can take a little time to digest that information and take their time with it versus having to cram as much as possible on that very first day. So I think a lot of and we have both we have some who work on it before they start, some who are very, very busy and can't get anything done other than, look, you got to set up your email so we can invite you to the meeting on the first day, but we'd like to give you the opportunity if you want to. You can not required, but go ahead. So the more organized you are and the more information you give, the more relaxed your your new employees going to be getting started with you.

Todd Laire: [00:40:50] Yeah. Yeah. So be very clear about first day. What's that look like? You know, we'll lay out, you know, at 8:45 we have our daily huddle. You join through Zoom. You know, here's just it's 15, 20 minutes most of the time this is what we cover. We don't expect you really to contribute much other than, you know, there will be a time for you to introduce yourself to the team you haven't met yet, you know, because others you might have met during the interview process. And so just kind of like what their day looks like. And also that comes up in the, you know, interview process, too. What's a typical day look like that I could expect to have, you know, in this role? But then actually getting specific in laying out what their day will look like. And you'll have maybe meetings with other people depending on, you know, department interactivity and all of that. What is the first week look like? And maybe that's not so granular or not so detailed, but just things to expect. On Wednesday we have a biweekly retrospective and it's a planning meeting and we do this every, you know, twice a month. And so, you know, that meeting is 90 minutes the longer than usual, but that takes place instead of the daily huddle. And then after, you know, on Friday, we're doing this with a client or whatever. So they kind of just have an idea of what the week looks like. But more so, you know, again, higher level month, you know, what they should be doing. So I always get this question with marketing account managers. You know, we don't expect you to hit the ground running, at least not every time, meeting and taking over for clients your first week and ideally not even the first month you're working with others and you're shadowing them and you're slowly being introduced to our clients. So it's an easy transition for you, but it's also an easy transition for them. They're not immediately being thrown a new person. You don't know each other, you know, the candidate doesn't know the account, what they're working on. So first month, you know, ideally they're shadowing and learning, but 90 days and this is part of the onboarding process, like we're already, you know, going over your performance checklist items that you mentioned earlier, Laura, and not so much grading them, but just saying, hey, in six months and in a year like

you're going to be working towards these things and improving and a lot of it's not going to apply your first month in your first 90 days, like get a review from a client or help them with a renewal. Like you haven't been there long enough, but we want you to know these are important items that this job has as a core responsibility. But have it written out, have steps or a checklist, you know, that is completed. You know, the getting started guide in the form of a checklist, but then also things that should be in place that they should be doing the first day, first week, first month, first 90 days last.

Laura Laire: [00:43:42] Lastly, we want to kind of walk you through our interview process and how we go about doing this, because it does take time. We are fast to fire, slow to hire, and that has been served us well because if somebody is not a good fit and it's pretty known throughout the team and throughout management team that it's just not working out, then it's really hard to change that, to change that process. So we do take our time with hiring because we tend, you know, we're a remote company. We don't want to have a gigantic, huge 300-person team. It's a smaller team. And so we do take the time to interview. And when we get the application, it's, you know, we breeze over it and we might just email them first. I'll let Todd get into more detail. But my first thing is I just want to know a little bit like what kind of salary are they looking for because if I have an open seat and somebody just applied on our website, again with the applications on LinkedIn because this happens, you know, at the same time, I might get those 445 minutes, but I've also got people applying on the website. So I may respond. And I just want to get that quick email, you know, down and dirty. Really. Sure. You know, hey, I got it. I'm interested in talking to you a little bit. Can you give me a little bit of information like your availability, and what your salary requirements are just to get some information even before I do a 15-minute phone screen? Because like I said earlier, if the job is \$75,000 and they want \$125,000, I don't want to get on the phone with them because it's not a good fit.

Todd Laire: [00:45:13] That's that's right. And the other thing to you know, like you said, we get applications all the time regardless for hiring or not for a role through our website and there's options on the form like are you looking for part-time, are you looking for a full-time contract, you know, W-2 or 1099 and they might select multiple like they're open and we might be hiring for a full-time role, but maybe we can hire a full-time role and somebody that is actually looking for part-time or contractor work. So we'll put that like, okay, you know, want to know. Know what your full-time salary requirements as well as your part-time hourly or do by project as for contracting project or whatever. So that kind of lets us know about alignment, high level, immediate alignment. But from there, you know, we've got their resumé, we've got their LinkedIn profile. We know the job that they're applying for. We assume they've read through the job description. If it looks good, then we'll schedule a 15-minute phone screen, as I like to call it. And that's just really all it is. They give up their phone number and I might pull up their LinkedIn profile as well as their resume in front of me and just have a quick 15-minute phone interview with them. And typically the format of that is, "Thanks for applying. You know, is now still a good time to chat with you? Great! Got you know limited amount of time. Don't want to take too much of your time. Thank you for replying to my email letting me know your salary requirements and how you want to work. But you know, can you just give me like the color behind your experience

and your background as it's outlined in your LinkedIn and in your resume?" So I just want to hear a lot of things really. You know, I don't need them to read the resume or the LinkedIn profile. To me, I want to hear what stands out to them, You know, and I typically ask them like, you know, what are your passions and what are your you feel your strengths are with this. And so they tell me their background. And I just get this high-level kind of elevator pitch of what they've done, what they've, you know, excelled at what, you know, what with some results with, you know, what they've done, campaigns they've run and so on. And then from there, I like to ask them, "Great, thank you. So if you got to create a role with all the things that you actually want to do, what would that look like?" And what I'm looking for is without then being obvious is I want to hear in their, you know, their response, the job that we're hiring for, you know, And so that's what you should look for, too is you know, if they're a people person and this is a people facing role, like I want to hear all about that and tricks and tips and what's unique about them and how they lead and whatnot. And then solidifying like, okay, we've got your salary requirements. Just want to confirm that's what you're looking for. Okay, great. And then explaining to them and typically a savvy candidate will ask, what are the next steps? Now that we've had this phone screen and if nothing else like be forthcoming and tell them the next steps. So you've done phone screens before, Laura, what would you define like a good phone screen from one that wasn't so good?

Laura Laire: [00:48:34] I'm not prepared for this question, so I don't know.

Todd Laire: [00:48:37] Okay, So delete that. All right.

Laura Laire: [00:48:41] One of the questions that I like to ask on a phone screen is why are they looking? Because that can give you a lot of information that, you know, whether they're like, I'm working to death, I work too many hours or there's a personality conflict, or my manager and I aren't getting along or I don't like the work. Okay, great. What is it that you don't like about that work? And what are you looking to do? So not only do I want to know why they're looking or why they want to leave the position that they're in, and because we're an agency, oftentimes we hear that they're expected to do everything and they really have a specific skill set. So once I've figured out that they have too many responsibilities, then I want to know what do they really excel and what are they not so good at? Because that gives you the information. If I'm hiring a designer or I'm hiring an account manager when they say, okay, I really like client-facing, but I'm not so good at strategy or I like being behind the scenes. I really don't like having to deal with the client. Like there's specific roles that require different things. So if you can find out what they don't like about their role and then what they're really looking for in the next role, that will give you a lot of information. Sometimes when somebody tells me that they're looking for \$95,000 and the job is for \$75,000, you know, you oftentimes just want to hang up the phone because, okay, well, that's not what we're hiring for this specific role. But tell me why you think you deserve that amount. Because maybe I'm missing something. Maybe they had three reports, maybe they have 20 years of experience. Maybe there's some specific reason why they feel that they have that value or maybe it's just the city that they live in because that is a real thing, that if they live in a large city that has a really high cost of living, then they're going to want a, you know, specific salary. Or they say, well, I was making that amount at this SAAS company and

they were probably just overpaid and it's not skill set. So asking good questions to get to the root of why they're looking or why they are wanting the salary that they're wanting is really good.

Todd Laire: [00:50:44] Absolutely. A couple of things came up for me when as you were talking. Be careful with those or just know, you know, those that spend too much time telling you why their last role was not a good fit for them. And mainly like they're negative about it, they're negative about the manager, they're negative about the company in the processes or the lack of processes. You know, it's one thing to give like we just didn't get along, it didn't work out and so I'm moving on like, okay, that I get that. But if they keep going on and on and revisiting that like that typically comes up in a phone screen. So, you know, you can detect that, though. Okay, great. I get it. Like, okay, this is a bit overboard because think of this like if they can talk that way about their past employer, they could certainly talk that way about you, your company, your you know what you're trying to do this role, what have you.

Laura Laire: [00:51:40] Or another employee or a task. I mean, if you that's that's why you know, whatever you focus on and grow. So if they are constantly focusing on what they didn't like and can't move past that, then it's a good window into how they're going to be in that job role as well.

Todd Laire: [00:51:56] Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. So let's say, you know, all of those things go, well, you know, what's the next step in this process? Or they, you know, they ask you that or you make that clear to them. I think a big thing that a lot of hiring managers don't do that used to be, you know, baked into every process. But I think a lot of companies have gotten away with it or hiring managers have skipped it or just gotten lazy is they're not checking references. It's one thing to check references that are given to you. It's another to like reach out to former companies that are listed on their resume or their LinkedIn, and you can call the provided resume or that provided references. But I'd also take it a step further and contact previous companies. I get calls all the time from companies as well as recruiters that are helping past employees get a new job or get a new role, or just apply to different roles. And depending on how it went, I'm untruthful with them. Some like, Oh, I rehire immediately. Sometimes they may be under an agreement like a, you know, a release agreement that the employer can't share anything about them and they're not able to talk negatively about the employer. But what you can ask is, you know, did they work for you between this time and that time? And most importantly, any past employer can answer this and not get in legal trouble, and that is, are they available for rehire? Are they eligible for rehire? And if the answer is yes, then something amicable happened and things happen. But if no, then they, you know, there's some bad blood possibly, you know, who knows? But that's something that you can definitely ask and be clear about. But references, nobody calls references anymore. And you can learn so much about people. And I like to ask, too, like I'm thinking about hiring this person. I mean, you know, short of something drastic happening, I'd really like for you to tell me what I can not expect of them. Tell me about a time that you learned a lot about who they are and you know, what makes them what their makeup is and something that they were asked to do that just was not a good fit for them. And so I just want to know from all angles, you know, because I don't want to repeat that. And so that's something that I would ask, a reference that may not come very easily or come at

all from asking the candidate directly. The other thing that I think not enough employers do or hiring managers do is have some type of skill assessment in their interview process, especially in marketing. I can tell you past clients of ours, like we, they would hire a marketing manager or somebody to, you know, head up their internal marketing team that had very little experience in marketing. They just were a nice person and you know, they had a nice laid out resume, let's say. But they didn't put any skill assessment to the test. They didn't have some type of interview project. And that is something that we do for all roles that we are hiring for because it's one thing to have a portfolio, Laura, that they've had time to curate and select and put together and it's all their best work, right? Or work they got approved.

Laura Laire: [00:55:21] And maybe it's not their work. How do you actually know what is their work? It could be somebody else's work or they're referred by somebody. Like we've had people that, oh, it was referred, they said they could do X, Y, and Z, but come to find out they actually couldn't. And their friend was just trying to help them out. So you have to find out through a test and having them do the task and activities like if you need a writer. For marketing, or you need somebody who can create design and write a social post, well, then you're going to have them create design and write a social post or 3 or 4 for you for these big marketing roles where you want them to be able to do a lot of things. You really have to test that they can do a lot of these things and a majority of companies actually don't. We find that there because we do work with these marketing directors and marketing managers. We work with them and a lot really are relying on our agency to do a majority of the work for them because they don't have the background. They don't know how to create a workflow, they don't know how to edit the website or work inside HubSpot. They don't even understand the voice of the client or the product that they have. There's a lot of issues that are there, but just having a project with a few of these things written out, you know how to write a blog post, have them create a workflow, whatever it is that you need to do. Testing those skills is how we absolutely 100% determine the skill set because we give them the project, we give them a fictitious client, and then we're able to grade them. And let me tell you, there's a lot that you can see. We, you know, Todd will send me a project or I'll show Todd somebody's project because we both hire for different divisions in our company. And it's pretty clear oftentimes who the standout is. We don't know until we go from the project to that next interview where we get to see them present it. So not only do we want them to do the work, but we want them to present it to us so we can see their thought process, their strategy and everything that they were thinking behind that. So there's a few different steps involved, but this is how you get somebody who actually can do what their resumé says.

Todd Laire: [00:57:35] Yeah, 100%. And we've learned to the hard way with with that. I mean obviously like in a client facing in kind of a leadership position, if you will, or you're leading people to a decision or, you know, in an engagement, we want to see how they actually sell their ideas and present. And with that, we stopped, you know, getting a lot of our team in on those presentations. And we just have a singular person like myself. I'm the hiring manager. I'll record it and then I'll share that with the team. If it's good, if it's not good, then I'm not wasting the team's time. And that's that's been a huge benefit as well. So after the interview project, after the presentation, after some buy-in from some team that have reviewed the video of them presenting, then we may have kind of a meet and greet where they do meet some of the team.

And what I'm looking for here is how does the candidate interact with with other people, other roles in the company? Well, you know, how do they what questions do they ask them? Do they have any questions? You know, some calls run really long because there's quite a bit of a dialog. I love that. If it's not, then I'm like, Are they just looking for a job? You know, they're not really grasping the opportunity to talk to other people, like other than the owners, like talk to somebody else, appear that your potential peer in the company that you can, you know, really get behind the scenes with them. And so good candidates take advantage of that and have really good questions sometimes. A lot of times, too, they have them written down, which says a lot about them and their organization. Um, I also like to have a kind of a final interview sometimes that might be a meet with Laura or meet with Todd, like just kind of the final checkpoint. And in this we may ask them, like more culture-related questions, like our core value is can do attitude. Tell me about a time you felt like that you had a can do attitude in your job. Like kind of just an example to ask behavioral questions like, are you how do you stay organized? You know, what follow-up tools do you use to make sure that the desired outcome of your work was met? You know, how do you how do you take feedback, things like that, situational. You ever had an argument with your boss? How'd that go? What did you do? What did you learn? Do you have a disagreement with a coworker? How did you handle that? Like that could be really telling too, you know.

Laura Laire: [01:00:07] And your manager, if you've ever had a disagreement with your manager or been asked to do something, you didn't feel confident, you know, how did you relay that information? There's a lot of great questions. We usually have these written down like some standard questions that we'd like to ask just to make sure that you're really getting to know this person before you get engaged because that's really what's happening when you hire a full-time employee and you bring them into the fold of a really great culture, it can either add to that culture or it can take the culture out. It takes one negative person, one bad seed, one person that's not happy to change everything inside your culture for your company. If it's really good, you want it to stay good.

Todd Laire: [01:00:47] That's right. Yeah. Yeah. So. Ideally like that's that's a simple interview process. And again, being very clear in the initial, you know, discussion phase, like what that looks like, those different steps, like I put it in the job description that, you know, there will be an interview project assigned to them. So it's not something that catches them off guard because they used to get like an interview project really, like, you know, is it paid? You know, like, no, it's not paid. But you'll get paid if we hire you. And that's kind of dependent here. But I actually spell it out because if you're not interested in going through our process, then don't apply and others embrace it and get prepared for it. And they like to know. I would find that especially with marketers, they're, you know, the good ones are detail oriented and they want to prepare. So give them an opportunity to prepare to do really well, and perform really well in the interview process.

Laura Laire: [01:01:44] So I often wonder when somebody doesn't want to do an interview project if they don't have the skillset and they don't want to be busted for it. So it's you know, we

never worry about that if they don't want to do it. Definitely not going to hire somebody who doesn't want to show us how great they are. Most people do want to show how great they are.

Todd Laire: [01:02:01] And we want to see it. Yeah, absolutely. So let's say we've got our hire, we've got our person that we've found and they've gone through all of the steps and all the checkpoints with flying colors. They've passed with flying colors. Now what do they do? Well, we're going to hire them and we tell them that if we like, you know, everything that we see and do really well with the interview project, then we're not going to waste time. We're going to we're going to make an offer. And so just real quickly, like that is the next step is what I typically do. Again, that's why I like to ask the hard number, you know, or I like to post the hard numbers as far as the salary goes, because we've had people too, in the past, like we post a range and you know, like their salary requirement was \$80,000. And so we're like, okay. And but our budget might be between 70 and 90 and we know that they're looking for 80. And so we make the job offer for 80, and then they realize, Oh, they want me and they're making an offer. And now instead of wanting 80, they want 85 or they want 90. And that can be tricky a lot of times for us, depending on how that comes across, that can be a turnoff. You know, other times it's like, hey, I'm interviewing somewhere else and they're offering me 90. I really want to work here. That could be sincere. It could also be a tactic. And so we've gotten through this entire process and it all fell apart around the money. So we try to be clear as possible. This is our budget. This is our maximum budget. This is the number that we're willing to pay for the role. We've got other people that that we're interested in. And so we're offering it to you, hoping that we're aligned around what the compensation is. So I like to have just a written informal offer, so making sure there's alignment. And so at this point, too, if you haven't discussed it already, which you should have, is the time off policy, your PTO policy, how much they get, the benefits, what that looks like when they're going to be eligible for them. So a lot of that should be already understood. But then you kind of spell that out in the informal offer to make sure there's alignment when they can expect that and all that. Sometimes that's where some negotiation happens, you know, with different benefits and whatnot. Do they need equipment, things like that? Do you offer it? Maybe you don't. So that can all happen in the informal offer. And then once you agree, it's more or less. It could be a negotiation, but we want to minimize that as much as possible. And it's okay if they do ask for a little bit more. Know my last role, I had more PTO. Is that possible here? Maybe you can find a compromise, but you can kind of hash that out in the informal email dialog. And I do like to have it in writing back and forth. It's a business conversation that's best to happen in my experience in writing. And typically email is a great way to do that. But then once we agree, then we're making an offer formally through like an HR software. You know, we use Zenefits, Bamboos One, Gustos another, they're all kind of similar. But then that's where the background check happens and they upload their documents to make sure that they're eligible to work and all that good stuff. So. But everything in, you know, your HR platform mirrors what you discussed and agreed to in that informal process. I found that that's a huge timesaver as well. And you can make sure that expectations on both sides are met and you can move forward and you have a start date.

Laura Laire: [01:05:35] One final thought here is not to let anybody know that they're not making the cut yet until you have that written offer there inside your HR platform. Because we've

had I mean, this is not perfect. We've had somebody who accepted the offer, was supposed to start on Monday and took another job on Friday. And so, again, we had to go back to scrambling. We've had somebody say, you know, I want between 65 and 75 and then come back and say, after we made the offer, come back and say, well, I changed my mind. I want 80. And uh, no, you said you wanted 70 and now you want 80, and now I don't trust you anymore. So this relationship, you know, there's there's there's a little bait and switch going on here. And we've actually had somebody do that two times. We definitely did not end up hiring that person. Like, they'll be on us. We're on us. This is our cap for this. We have budgets that we have to meet. There's definitely based on experience, there's a range that someone would get. So it's not a perfect system. So I don't want to go and tell the other two if I've got three people in the running and I want to make an offer to this one, I'm not going to tell the other two. You know, I've already decided it's going to be somebody else because that does happen to where they've said, yes, I want to I want to accept that offer. And then they try to change their mind and go way up on the salary. And if you're not willing to go there because that's not what was discussed or things just change. And sometimes it does, things just change. It's like their personality completely changed once we got to the money part. So that's why we get it. We get that out of the way immediately in the beginning so that when we get to the offer, they already know what we're going to be offering them based on what they've asked or what their requirements were. So if this happens to you, it happens to everybody. It's not perfect. Just make sure you keep your funnel full with new hires. You keep the applications, keep the conversations going. So if that first one, the one that you thought you wanted, doesn't work out, then you've got a backup.

Todd Laire: [01:07:32] Yeah. Yeah. And just to put a cap on that too, there's a lot of bad advice career, on LinkedIn and on social media and from Uncle Joe, you know. Oh, they made you an offer. Great. Ask for more. They've got nobody else. And yeah, we've definitely experienced that. And, you know, you don't know if it's coming from an honest place, you know, and now's the time to ask, right? And other times, is it just that they're just shady, they pull some something shady that you just did not foresee or did not it did not come through in the interview process. But like you said, Laura, like, yeah, let's not tell the other candidates that were runners up that they are runners up because they might be your front runner after somebody else falls through. And I made the mistake one time and that happened to us where was all ready to go and move forward. And then, you know, they didn't move forward. They took another job or somebody else they used to work with said, Oh, you're going to leave. I'll come work for us instead. And then I went back to the runners up who I told were runners up. And they didn't even respond to me because because of the rejection they already got. So anyways, we hope this was helpful for you. We could we could go in on a whole separate podcast on the interview project, a whole podcast just devoted to the interview process, or you were getting into like employee management and review management. That's a whole other podcast just on, you know, check ins and performance reviews and what warrants a price increase and what doesn't and you know, and so on, and having, you know, incentives and bonuses and things like that. So, so much to dive into as well as like other types of marketing, you know, arrangements like marketing agencies and contractors and consultants as well. So looking forward to peeling that back someday and doing future episodes.

Laura Laire: [01:09:27] Awesome. We hope you learned a lot and we'll see you on the next episode of Married 2 Marketing.

Todd Laire: [01:09:32] Yeah.

Laura Laire: [01:09:33] Okay. That's a wrap on this week's episode of the Married 2 Marketing podcast, I'm your host, Laura, along with my husband and partner, Todd. Don't forget to subscribe, rate, and review our podcast. Your feedback fuels our passion and keeps the marketing fire burning bright.

Todd Laire: [01:09:47] And if you're hungry for more marketing magic, be sure to visit our website, married2marketing.com, where we've got a treasure trove of additional resources, episode transcripts, and mind-blowing bonus content.

Laura Laire: [01:10:00] We'll be back next week with another engaging episode. Until then, be creative, get strategic, and never go to bed angry.