

The Drift Field Guide

12 signs your hiring process is drifting - and what each one costs.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Drift is not failure. It is failure in progress.

Every one of these signs has a dollar cost and a person cost. Most of them are invisible until the hire is already in the seat. Use this guide to audit where your process is holding and where it has already begun to slide.

Each sign maps to a dimension of the Hiring Discipline Diagnostic. If you want a scored read across all twelve - and all six dimensions - the diagnostic is at qualigence.com/diagnostic.

SIGN 01 · WINNING

The intake is a requirements dump, not a definition of winning.

Without a written definition of winning, every evaluator runs a different search. You may fill the role. You will not fill it with the same candidate twice.

SIGN 02 · IDENTITY

The job description gets reposted verbatim every time the role reopens.

The role reopens because the last hire failed. A reposted description repeats the same criteria that produced that failure.

SIGN 03 · BEHAVIOR

Interviews are conversations, not designed tests.

Unstructured interviews produce inconsistent data. Three interviewers leave with three different reads of the same candidate. The debrief debates instead of deciding.

SIGN 04 · STANDARDS

Feedback arrives as "I liked them."

When feedback is a feeling, it cannot be calibrated against a definition. The debrief becomes a vote. The vote follows whoever speaks first.

SIGN 05 · TOLERANCE

The bar moves after candidates show up.

A bar that moves after the search opens was never real. Each exception trains the panel to expect the next one. The standard dissolves by the third candidate.

SIGN 06 · TOLERANCE

"One more candidate" loops replace decisions.

Each additional look extends time-to-fill by a week. The role stays open. The team absorbs the work. The candidate you passed on accepts another offer.

SIGNS 07-12

SIGN 07 · TOLERANCE

Urgency overrides written red flags.

A red flag that gets overridden once is no longer a red flag - it is a preference. The hire lands. The flag surfaces at 60 days. The search reopens.

SIGN 08 · STANDARDS

The offer gets decided in the hallway, not against the definition.

Hallway decisions are not documented. When the hire fails, there is no written rationale to audit. The same mistake is available at the next search.

SIGN 09 · WINNING

Nothing about winning is written anywhere.

What is not written is not shared. Every intake conversation starts from the same blank page. The definition exists only in the hiring manager's head - and changes between calls.

SIGN 10 · PERFORMANCE

Feedback takes longer than 48 hours.

Slow feedback accelerates candidate decisions. The people you want are already moving. By the time the panel reconvenes, the finalist has accepted another offer.

SIGN 11 · PERFORMANCE

Quota pressure bends the screens.

When a quarterly number overrides the screen, the metric fills. The hire does not hold. The metric resets. The screen gets bent again next quarter.

SIGN 12 · PERFORMANCE

The 90-day review is a surprise.

If the 30/60/90-day milestones were not defined at intake and shared at offer, the review has no baseline. The hire either survives or it does not - and no one can say why.

NEXT STEP

Score all twelve in ten minutes.

The Hiring Discipline Diagnostic scores all six dimensions that these signs map to - Winning, Identity, Behavior, Tolerance, Standards, and Performance - and produces a 0-100 score with a banded diagnosis.

Twenty-three questions. Approximately ten minutes. The output includes a visual score profile, a dimension-by-dimension read, and a PDF report from a Practice Leader.

qualigence.com/diagnostic

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
