

Top tips for widening your talent pool:

- ✓ Be open to candidates that come from a range of degree subject backgrounds, or even better any degree – there are some brilliant English, Art Historians and Criminologists out there who love their subject but want a professional graduate career at the end of their degree. Many graduates will apply for jobs in fields that are different to areas they have studied – this is very common!
- ✓ Consider candidates with 2:2 degrees. There could many of good reasons why great students and graduates end up with a 2:2 and many corporates would typically turn them down flat.
- ✓ Be open to graduates from a wide range of universities. Traditional Russell Group universities are heavily targeted by corporates, and you can have your pick of the great candidates elsewhere. Even if graduates come from lower-ranking universities, it doesn't mean they won't be a fantastic employee!
- ✓ When looking at CVs, try not to dismiss candidates based on their GCSE & A-Level results. There are plenty of candidates who weren't great students in their teens who really turned it around at university.
- ✓ All the above things will restrict your potential candidate pool significantly, and you may miss out on some real stars that the corporates most certainly will miss.
- ✓ Remember to be realistic about previous work experience, specific technical knowledge required for your graduate roles. Graduates will come to you bright and keen to learn quickly but will be unlikely to have experience of specific systems or markets.
- ✓ Don't ask for a driving licence unless you really need one. If you do, this will cut your pool of candidates by approx. 50%. Many graduates will not have needed a car at university, particularly living in cities with good public transport provision.
- ✓ Make it easy and quick for candidates to apply to your roles and beat corporates to the finish line! If candidates can apply by CV and have had an offer in 3-4 weeks, you will be c10 weeks faster than any corporate experiences they may have had.
- ✓ You can sell the experience of working for an SME as a destination of choice for the right people. If the graduate is looking to make a real difference, take accountability, to create significant contributions and to progress quickly then they will enjoy working for an SME much more than a fixed, 2-year corporate scheme along with hundreds of others. Explain the learning benefits of working within your business on your job advert!
- ✓ Bear in mind that in Spring / Summer there will be strong graduates who have progressed in corporate graduate scheme applications but will drop out! If you're hiring at this time, consider targeting these graduates.
- ✓ On your job advert, have a named contact person, email and number. Corporates won't typically offer this, and it gives a personal touch which makes such a difference.
- ✓ Try not to put up barriers to hiring great candidates who might need more support in the graduate workplace (e.g., disabled graduates, those with mental health conditions). There are lots of training resources online and business support you can access for free! Charities such as [Mind](#) have [great resources and support available](#) to help you support staff who have mental health problems. Similarly, you could join the government's [Disability Confident](#) scheme and also access [free advice on attracting, recruiting and retaining disabled people](#).