

Recruiting 101: How to Find the Right Drivers for Your Team

The demand for drivers in the United States far outstrips the supply. Although Uber and Lyft claim record earnings for drivers in 2021, they can't find enough people to take the job. TPs face the same problem.

Job openings overall hit 9.2 million at the end of June 2021, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. But the number of persons who want a job was 6.4 million. That makes finding skilled and dedicated new drivers more challenging than ever.

Depending on the vehicles in your fleet and services you offer, you need a professional with unique capabilities. That includes providing exceptional customer service, which can make all the difference in member loyalty and business revenues.

But that also points to a major difference between a TP and other transportation network companies. With the shortage of Uber and Lyft drivers, there's more demand for NEMTs than ever. Drivers for TPs get prescheduled rides with dependable income instead of unpredictable assignments and variable sums from transportation networks. That's a strong benefit for the drivers you hire.

The three primary ways to find new drivers are through personal referrals, online media and job boards, and community resources. Let's take a closer look at each.

Potential Elements of a Job Board Description

General

- Job Title
- Your company
- Location
- Values: customer service-oriented, compassionate, calm under pressure

Job details

- Salary: hourly, daily, or monthly
- Job type: full-time, part-time, contractor
- Requirements: Healthcare or CNA experience, first aid, van driving or other driving experience
- Education: High school or equivalent

Must pass

- Background search
- Drug test
- Clean driving record for the duration you require

Provided

- Training, including passenger assistance, CPR, and First Aid
- Vehicle

Responsibilities

- Pick up, drop off, and transport members safely and on time
- Operate lift gates, stretchers, carts, and dollies
- Complete daily trip logs and weekly vehicle use logs
- Perform vehicle maintenance, including car washes and oil changes
- Participate in random drug screens
- Be courteous, patient, professional, neat, and clean
- Work nights, weekends, and holidays as needed

Physical capabilities

- Must be able to stand, walk, sit for long periods, reach with hands and arms, climb or balance, stoop, kneel, and crouch
- Must be able to regularly lift or move 100+ pounds

Qualifications

- Age: 18 or older
- Valid driver's license
- Your requirements re suspension, revocation, and accidents

Benefits that apply

- Flexible schedule
- 401(k)
- Health insurance
- Dental insurance
- Life insurance

Referrals

Asking colleagues, drivers, family, and friends for referrals is fast, easy, and free. Candidates have often heard of your company—and once hired, they're less likely to quit, according to the New York Times. But people generally recommend candidates similar to themselves, so make sure that's what you want.

Also post available positions on your personal social media sites and ask employees, family, and friends to do the same. Expand the number of possible candidates by making your post shareable.

Online media and job boards

Take online media a step further by posting on business pages and online job boards. For example, if your company has a Facebook business page, post your job there. Include a job title, location, salary range, job type, and description. The two most essential items: salary and required qualifications.

Job postings are free for 30 days. After that, you can pay to boost the post. Here again, family and friends can help by sharing the ad.

Facebook has 1.9 billion active users every day as of Q2 2021, compared to only 240 million unique visitors each month on Indeed. But almost everyone on a job board is looking for work. You can also communicate easily with prospects via email and direct them to your web site or Facebook business page for more information.

Postings on sites like Craigslist can be a good bet to attract local candidates. The cost ranges from free to \$25. You can usually be as specific as you like, and even include a logo or image in your ad. But you may get a fair number of unqualified applicants. Beware that newer ads appear at the top, so you may need to repost to keep yours visible.

Indeed is the #1 job board in the country. The search engine aggregates listings from other sites, but you can also post a job ad on Indeed. Costs range from free to pay-per-click charges depending on your ad's visibility. Your description can be as complete as you like and include job requirements and duties, along with salary, benefits, and perks.

Community resources

Community resources such as newspapers, flyers, and job fairs can also attract new drivers.

Newspapers usually charge by the column-inch for ads. If your budget allows, you can include an image and longer ad in a popular section like sports or entertainment. Critical elements are a great title, short description, source for more information, and way to respond.

For example, your ad might look like this:

Safe, Compassionate Driver

(Non-Emergency Medical Transport)

Good driving record, excellent communication skills, comfortable with mobile and GPS apps, able to lift and move 100+ pounds and assist customers safely. For more information, see www.yourcompany.com or contact us at **123-456-7890**. To apply, send cover letter and resume to info@yourcompany.com.

Posting flyers on community and job boards or at churches and local businesses can also attract excellent candidates. Graphic design sites like Canva or Adobe Spark offer flyer templates. Much like newspaper ads, flyers should include your company name, position, brief qualifications, email, phone, website, and how to apply. Tear-off flyers give prospects your company info on small slips of paper. Or include a QR code so prospects can access further information immediately on mobile.

Job fairs help you find and filter out candidates, because you meet them face-to-face. State employment commissions, chambers of commerce, healthcare organizations, veterans groups, and schools all sponsor job fairs. Choose your company representative and prepare pre-qualification questions in advance. Take along promotional materials, business cards, and nametags. Let job seekers know the next steps and follow up with the best candidates.

One other way to find a new driver—put signs on your vehicles saying you're hiring. Your drivers cover a lot of territory every day and the right candidate could be in the car behind them.

Finding exactly the right driver takes considerable effort, but it's worthwhile. It can make the difference between a successful business with satisfied customers—and no business at all.