TALENT ENGINEERING ACADEMY

Recruitment Business Development

PRACTICE WORKBOOK

Connect market knowledge to useful client conversations and qualified recruitment opportunities.

PATHWAY	Recruitment Commercial and Independent Practice
LEVEL	Foundation
EDITION	2026.09
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Free learning. Practical work. Better recruitment.

An education initiative by Vitae.

WORKBOOK GUIDE

Build something useful as you learn.

This workbook turns the course into a practical piece of work you can review, refine and adapt. Print it, annotate it digitally, or use the prompts in your preferred notes tool.

YOUR COURSE DELIVERABLE

A focused market hypothesis and a four-week business-development experiment.

How to use this workbook

01 Work through the course lessons in order, then complete the matching workbook prompts.

02 Use fictional or properly authorised information. Do not add candidate or client confidential data.

03 Compare your decisions with the self-review guidance. Revise assumptions, gaps and unclear ownership.

04 Keep the finished workbook as evidence of your learning and as a starting point for real work.

BEFORE YOU START

None. Useful for recruiters starting commercial work.

Course page: https://talentengineering.org/courses/recruitment-business-development

PART 1

Plan your course deliverable.

Use these planning pages to define what you are producing before you work through the lesson exercises. Return to them as your thinking develops.

WORKSHEET 01

Buyer and hiring problem

Capture the evidence, decisions, assumptions, owners and next actions that make this section usable.

YOUR WORKING NOTES

WORKSHEET 02

Evidence of demand and alternatives

Capture the evidence, decisions, assumptions, owners and next actions that make this section usable.

YOUR WORKING NOTES

WORKSHEET 03

Credible contribution and proof

Capture the evidence, decisions, assumptions, owners and next actions that make this section usable.

YOUR WORKING NOTES

WORKSHEET 04

Contact purpose and next question

Capture the evidence, decisions, assumptions, owners and next actions that make this section usable.

YOUR WORKING NOTES

WORKSHEET 05

Qualification and decision process

Capture the evidence, decisions, assumptions, owners and next actions that make this section usable.

YOUR WORKING NOTES

WORKSHEET 06

Experiment measures and review

Capture the evidence, decisions, assumptions, owners and next actions that make this section usable.

YOUR WORKING NOTES

PART 2

Apply each lesson.

Each exercise is designed to turn the lesson into evidence of practice. Complete the task, then use the guidance to challenge your first answer.

LESSON 01 / 07

Choose a market you can understand

YOUR PRACTICE TASK

Write a one-paragraph ideal client hypothesis. Include a specialist hiring problem and the reason external recruitment support could be useful.

YOUR RESPONSE

LESSON 02 / 07

Research demand and timing

YOUR PRACTICE TASK

Create a five-column research brief: company, verified signal, source and date, hiring hypothesis, question to validate. Use fictional examples for practice.

YOUR RESPONSE

LESSON 03 / 07

Turn research into a useful conversation

YOUR PRACTICE TASK

Write a short first approach using your research brief. Then prepare five discovery questions that would establish whether there is a real opportunity.

YOUR RESPONSE

LESSON 04 / 07

Understand the buyer’s decision

YOUR PRACTICE TASK

Map problem owner, budget owner, decision maker and procurement route for a fictional client.

YOUR RESPONSE

FICTIONAL WORKED EXAMPLE

A plant manager urgently needs a quality lead, but procurement controls supplier onboarding and finance has not approved the role. The opportunity has a real problem but unresolved authority and budget.

SELF-REVIEW GUIDANCE

Show which facts are confirmed and which need discovery. A supportive contact is valuable but does not automatically represent an approved engagement.

LESSON 05 / 07

Build a credible value hypothesis

YOUR PRACTICE TASK

Write a value hypothesis with problem, method, proof and limitations.

YOUR RESPONSE

FICTIONAL WORKED EXAMPLE

An independent recruiter offers a structured market map and evidence-led shortlist for a defined technical niche. They do not claim to own the entire candidate market or guarantee a hire within an arbitrary number of days.

SELF-REVIEW GUIDANCE

Use claims you could substantiate. Replace broad statements such as best talent with a specific contribution and a question that tests whether it matters to the buyer.

LESSON 06 / 07

Qualify mutual fit before committing capacity

YOUR PRACTICE TASK

Create a qualification note with confirmed facts, gaps and a go, revise or pause decision.

YOUR RESPONSE

FICTIONAL WORKED EXAMPLE

A client requests a scarce profile below the confirmed market range and will not meet candidates for six weeks. The recruiter proposes a brief and process review before accepting a rapid shortlist commitment.

SELF-REVIEW GUIDANCE

Explain the delivery consequences of each gap. The decision should be based on fit and readiness, not only the attractiveness of the fee.

LESSON 07 / 07

Run business development as a learning cycle

YOUR PRACTICE TASK

Design a four-week experiment with weekly review questions and a stopping rule.

YOUR RESPONSE

FICTIONAL WORKED EXAMPLE

A four-week experiment creates twenty researched approaches and six useful conversations, but only one approved search. Feedback shows buyers need project-based mapping before full search support. The next experiment tests that scoped service.

SELF-REVIEW GUIDANCE

Include quality and learning measures, not just messages sent. State what evidence would support changing the niche or proposition and avoid presenting hypothetical results as actual traction.

FINAL REVIEW

Strengthen the work before you use it.

Review the completed workbook as one connected piece of work. The strongest deliverables are internally consistent, explicit about limitations and clear about who decides what happens next.

- [ ] The work distinguishes facts, evidence, assumptions and open questions.
- [ ] Decisions have named owners, dates and review points.
- [ ] Measures connect to the outcome rather than activity alone.
- [ ] Risks, accessibility needs, privacy considerations and limitations are visible.
- [ ] The next action is specific enough for another person to follow.
- [ ] The finished deliverable can be explained in plain language.

FINAL CHANGES AND NEXT ACTIONS

FURTHER READING

Continue with trusted sources.

These sources support further study. A reference does not imply endorsement. Check the current official rules and obtain appropriate professional advice for real legal, financial or regulated decisions.

CIPD: Recruitment

Professional context for the recruitment lifecycle.

https://www.cipd.org/uk/knowledge/factsheets/recruitment-factsheet/

GOV.UK: Set up a business

UK starting point. Business structure and obligations depend on the circumstances.

https://www.gov.uk/set-up-business

ABOUT THIS WORKBOOK

Original educational scenarios. Practical work is self-directed and is not independently assessed. Adapt any method to your context with appropriate review.

Talent Engineering Academy is an education initiative by Vitae.