

# How To Guide for Hiring OpenEdge Developers

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WHITEPAPER

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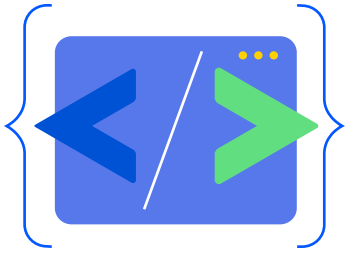
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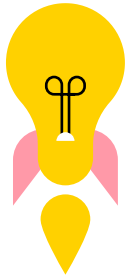
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## Building the Next Generation of OpenEdge Developers

Many organizations that run their businesses on the Progress® OpenEdge® platform may inadvertently limit their talent pool by focusing solely on candidates with extensive OpenEdge experience. While hiring experienced professionals may seem like the ideal solution, offering immediate expertise and minimal training needs, this approach will significantly narrow recruitment options. It limits access to emerging talent, increases hiring costs—whether from extended job vacancies or the premium required for experienced developers—and may not align with long-term growth and innovation strategies. Balancing experience with potential can help organizations build more adaptable, future-ready teams.

In today's job market, businesses must rethink their hiring strategies, prioritizing adaptability and a strong technical foundation over specific language expertise.



## A Broader, More Effective Hiring Strategy

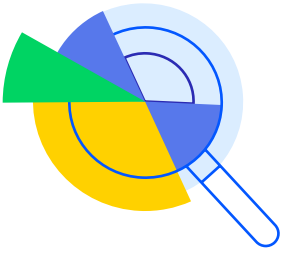
Thanks to the intuitive syntax of Advanced Business Language (ABL), the [Progress OpenEdge development language](#), built-in database access and focus on business logic, developers with backgrounds in Java, C#, Python or other programming languages can quickly adapt to the OpenEdge platform, bringing fresh perspectives and valuable cross-industry insights. Instead of looking exclusively for developers with OpenEdge expertise, broadening hiring criteria to include candidates with transferable skills allows organizations to build a more dynamic, agile and innovative development team—one that can evolve with business needs.

Michael Vallière, a 28-year-old full-stack developer, uses the OpenEdge development platform to build complex applications. He learned the language in just two weeks. When asked what it was like learning the programming language, he said, “OpenEdge is easy to learn and very efficient to code.”

[Read Michael's story.](#)

To be more strategic about your development workforce, consider:

- Expanding recruitment efforts to attract developers with transferable skills
- Investing in structured training programs to upskill new hires in the OpenEdge platform
- Developing in-house internship programs to build a steady pipeline of talent



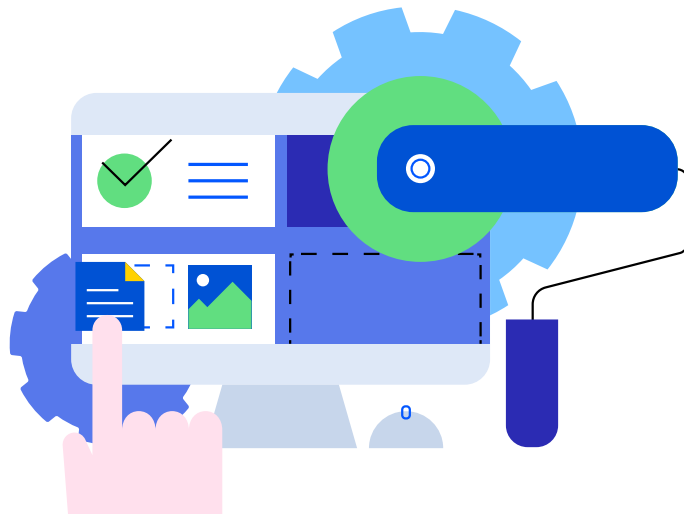
## What to Look for in a Candidate

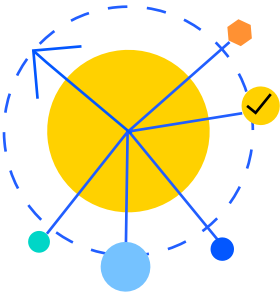
The ideal candidate is someone with a strong technical foundation, a growth mindset and a willingness to learn. **While direct OpenEdge experience can be a plus, it's not essential.** Instead, focus on hiring developers with transferable skills who can quickly adapt to new environments and technologies, especially ABL.

When evaluating candidates, look for qualities that suggest they can learn quickly, solve complex problems and work collaboratively in a business-focused development environment.

### Key Skills to Consider:

- **Proficiency in Object-Oriented Programming (Java, C#, Python):** These languages form the foundation of many modern development environments, and candidates with experience in Object-Oriented Programming (OOP) are likely to grasp the OpenEdge development concepts quickly. Their understanding of classes, objects and more will allow them to adapt seamlessly to the object-oriented features in ABL.
- **Experience with Relational Databases and SQL:** Understanding how to work with relational databases is helpful. A major advantage of the OpenEdge platform over other languages and databases is that it simplifies data access by managing many of the complexities for you, making development faster and more streamlined. Candidates who are comfortable with relational database concepts and can write SQL queries will have an edge when learning to manage the OpenEdge built-in database.
- **Understanding of Client-Server Architecture:** OpenEdge applications often rely on a client-server model, where the client (user interface) communicates with the server (database or application logic). Candidates who have a solid understanding of client-server architecture will be able to understand how OpenEdge applications are structured and how components interact within the system.





## Additional Qualities to Look for:

- **Adaptability and Willingness to Learn:** Candidates who demonstrate a genuine curiosity about new technologies and are open to learning ABL will be more likely to succeed. Look for candidates who have successfully picked up new programming languages or technologies in previous roles or projects.
- **Problem-Solving Ability:** Strong developers don't just know how to code—they know how to approach problems methodically, think critically and design solutions that are efficient and scalable. Candidates with a demonstrated ability to solve problems, whether through coding challenges or real-world projects, will be valuable assets.
- **Team Collaboration:** OpenEdge development often requires close collaboration between developers, business analysts and other stakeholders. Look for candidates who have worked effectively in team settings and are willing to communicate and share knowledge with peers. Strong interpersonal skills and a team-oriented mindset are key for success in a collaborative development environment.
- **Passion for Business Impact:** OpenEdge applications are typically used for business-critical processes. Candidates who understand the importance of building software that supports business operations—whether in finance, manufacturing or healthcare—will be more likely to produce high-quality, effective solutions.

## Expanding Your Talent Pool

While a traditional computer science degree has its value, it shouldn't be a barrier to entry when building your development team. The tech landscape is evolving rapidly, and many highly skilled developers gain their expertise outside of traditional degree programs. Coding boot camps, online courses and self-directed learning are alternative pathways that can produce talented candidates who are just as equipped to succeed in a professional development environment.



# Why Expand Your Talent Pool?

- **Diverse Educational Backgrounds:** By broadening your recruitment criteria, you tap into a diverse range of educational backgrounds. Developers who have learned through boot camps or free online platforms, such as the [OpenEdge Developer Learning Path and Certification](#), often bring a unique, hands-on understanding of modern technologies, frameworks and development practices. Their education is frequently more aligned with the practical skills needed in real-world applications, as these programs tend to focus on current industry trends and tools.
- **Up-to-Date Skills:** Traditional computer science programs may not always align with the latest technologies, but many alternative learning programs and self-taught developers stay on the cutting edge by focusing on current coding practices, frameworks and languages. These candidates are often well-versed in modern programming paradigms such as Agile development, DevOps, cloud computing and AI integration—skills that can complement OpenEdge development.
- **Motivated and Results-Oriented:** Candidates who pursue alternative education paths like boot camps or self-learning are often highly motivated and driven. Many have chosen this route to improve their career prospects, demonstrating a strong desire to succeed and a commitment to continuous learning. This intrinsic motivation can translate into the quick adoption of technologies like the OpenEdge platform and a positive attitude toward personal and professional growth.
- **Practical Experience:** Many boot camps and online courses involve project-based learning, meaning candidates often come with hands-on experience in coding and problem-solving. These individuals are used to tackling real-world problems, making them more adaptable when learning new programming languages like ABL and integrating with different technologies like the OpenEdge platform.





## How to Identify Talent Beyond Degrees:

- **Look for a Portfolio of Work:** Many self-taught developers or boot camp graduates have a portfolio of projects showcasing their skills. Personal projects, freelance work and open-source community contributions are all good examples of projects that demonstrate a developer's abilities. A strong portfolio is a reliable indicator of practical skills.
- **Evaluate Problem-Solving Skills:** Focus on candidates' ability to solve problems and think critically. You can assess this by looking at how they approach coding challenges, past projects or even through technical interviews designed to evaluate their analytical abilities.
- **Assess Adaptability and Learning Agility:** Since OpenEdge development may be new to candidates, assess their adaptability and eagerness to learn new technologies. Developers who have shown they can quickly adapt to different tools and languages in their self-learning journey are likely to succeed with OpenEdge programming.

## Building a Sustainable Talent Pipeline: The Value of an Internship Program

By offering hands-on experience and targeted training, companies can develop a pipeline of OpenEdge talent while integrating interns into their workflows and company culture from the start. This proactive approach not only reduces hiring costs but can also boost retention rates, strengthening long-term success. The best part? An internship program can be as simple or elaborate as your organization needs—it doesn't have to be intimidating to get started.

[See how other companies are implementing this strategy.](#)

## How to Establish an Effective OpenEdge Internship Program:

### Step 1: Define Clear Objectives

Before launching an internship program, it's critical to establish what you aim to achieve. A well-defined purpose not only shapes the program's structure but also strengthens alignment with your broader talent and business strategies.





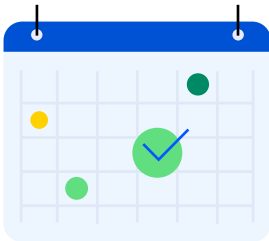
Start by asking:

- Are you looking to fill specific short-term roles or project needs with entry-level talent?
- Is your primary goal to build a long-term talent pipeline of OpenEdge developers?
- Do you want to test and identify high-potential candidates for future full-time positions?

Clear objectives will influence everything—from the type of candidates you recruit and the skills you prioritize, to the mentorship resources you allocate and the success metrics you track. For example, if your goal is to create a pipeline of future OpenEdge developers, you'll want to emphasize long-term mentorship, exposure to real-world projects and training in platform fundamentals.

Having strong objectives also helps internal stakeholders—HR, hiring managers and technical leads—align around the value of the program and contribute to its success.

Ultimately, a well-defined purpose gives your internship program direction, credibility and long-term impact.



## Step 2: Develop a Structured Curriculum

A successful internship program thrives on a well-structured curriculum that blends foundational training with hands-on experience. If you don't have the time or resources to create your own internal training program, Progress offers a comprehensive suite of educational opportunities to accelerate team readiness and long-term success. Whether you're onboarding new developers or helping experienced professionals deepen their expertise, Progress training equips your team with the knowledge and confidence to thrive with the OpenEdge platform.

You can choose from on-demand, instructor-led or customized training options to match your team's learning style, schedule and technical needs:

### On-Demand Training

Perfect for self-paced learners, on-demand training provides flexible access to a wide variety of courses that cover everything from foundational concepts to advanced topics. Developers can train at their own pace, revisit content as needed and fit learning into their daily workflow.





Popular OpenEdge on-demand courses include:

- **ABL Performance Tuning** – Learn how to optimize application performance through coding best practices and system tuning.
- **Introduction to Progress OpenEdge Integration** – Explore how to connect OpenEdge applications with external systems and APIs.
- **Progress OpenEdge Database Administration** – Gain essential skills for managing, maintaining and securing OpenEdge databases.

[Learn more about Progress On-Demand Training.](#)

## Instructor-Led Training

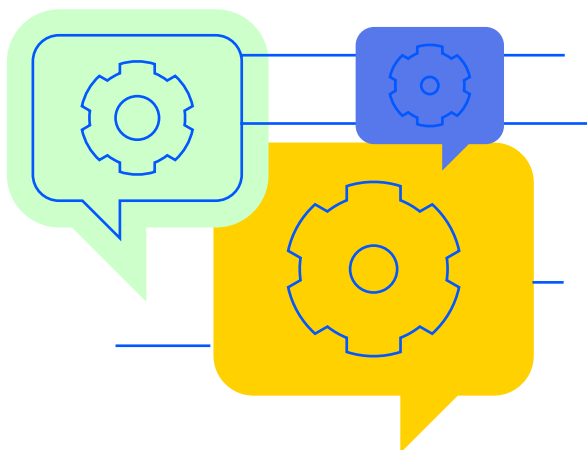
Ideal for teams that benefit from real-time interaction and guided learning, instructor-led courses are delivered by OpenEdge experts who can answer questions, explain complex topics and provide practical examples. These live sessions held virtually foster a more collaborative and engaging learning experience.

[Learn more about Instructor-Led Training.](#)

## Customized Training

For organizations with unique requirements or specialized use cases, Progress also offers customized training programs tailored to your specific goals, technology stack and team structure. Work directly with Progress OpenEdge instructors to develop a curriculum that addresses your most pressing challenges and aligns with your strategic objectives.

[Learn more about Customized Training.](#)





## The FREE OpenEdge Developer Learning Path & Certification

The free OpenEdge Developer Learning Path & Certification is a valuable resource for developers transitioning from languages like Java, C# or Python. This structured training allows developers to ramp up quickly so they can contribute effectively from day one.

By promoting these free training resources, you can attract a diverse pool of developers eager to learn and contribute. This approach not only builds a skilled development team but also fosters a culture of continuous learning and innovation within your organization.

Through the free OpenEdge Developer Learning Path and Certification, new hires can gain the skills they need to be productive team members right away. This free program also removes the burden of external training costs, making onboarding both efficient and affordable.

### Core Concepts Covered in the Introduction Courses

Our introductory courses cover essential concepts that provide a solid foundation for learning the OpenEdge platform. These include:

- Progress OpenEdge Database
- OpenEdge Application Architecture
- Progress Application Server for Developers
- Progress Developer Studio for OpenEdge
- And more!

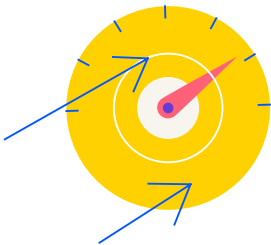


## Learning Features & Benefits:

- **Hands-on Learning:** Practical exercises help new hires apply what they learn immediately, building useful skills.
- **Step-by-Step Guidance:** An intuitive, structured curriculum provides a smooth transition to OpenEdge development.
- **Knowledge Checks and Skill Assessments:** Built-in assessments help reinforce learning and track progress.
- **Certification Exam:** Upon completing the course, developers can earn the Basic OpenEdge 12 Developer Certification, validating their proficiency.

By offering this free training, you can confidently onboard new developers, knowing that they are prepared to contribute to mission-critical projects and build industry-recognized expertise.

[Learn more about the free OpenEdge training and certification course.](#)



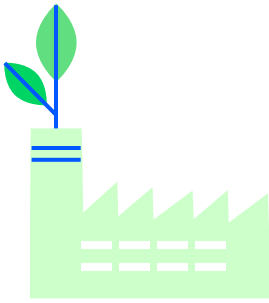
## Need Faster, More Intensive Training? Trust Progress Academy

For companies looking to speed up the onboarding process, Progress Academy offers a paid, fast-track training program that provides comprehensive learning in just four weeks. Using a combination of instructor-led virtual classes and on-demand training, this program gives new developers in-depth experience in OpenEdge ABL, allowing them to contribute to your team immediately upon completion.

### Program Highlights

- **Accelerated Learning Path:** A focused timeline that covers essential OpenEdge ABL concepts, advanced features and best practices.
- **Expert Instruction:** Led by experienced OpenEdge professionals who provide guidance and mentorship.
- **Comprehensive Coverage of OpenEdge ABL:** A program that covers everything developers need to know, from basic syntax to advanced application development.
- **Certification:** Receipt of an OpenEdge 12 Developer Certification upon completing the program to validate expertise.

[Learn more about the Beginner Hybrid Progress Academy for OpenEdge.](#)



## Step 3: Partner with Educational Institutions

To grow a sustainable pipeline of OpenEdge talent, it's useful to connect with developers before they enter the workforce. Building strong relationships with universities, community colleges and coding bootcamps can help you identify high-potential candidates early and introduce them to the power of the OpenEdge platform at a formative stage.

By collaborating with educational institutions, you can:

- **Promote awareness of OpenEdge** as a viable and rewarding career path
- **Offer guest lectures or workshops** led by your technical staff to provide real-world context and visibility into enterprise development
- **Co-develop curriculum modules** or offer access to OpenEdge tools for classroom use
- **Sponsor student projects** that involve solving real business challenges using the OpenEdge platform

For bootcamps and accelerated programs, consider:

- **Offering a final project** tied to your business needs
- **Providing scholarships or stipends** to make your internships more accessible

These partnerships not only expand your recruitment reach but also position your organization as a thought leader and advocate for professional growth. Over time, they help create a new generation of developers who are primed and ready to become OpenEdge experts.

## Step 4: Implement a Strong Mentorship Program

Assigning experienced developers as mentors enhances the learning experience for interns and fosters leadership skills among existing employees. A structured mentorship approach equips interns with the guidance, feedback and hands-on support they need to succeed. This personalized one-on-one attention can significantly accelerate their learning curve and integration into the team.

A strong mentorship program should focus on:

- **Hosting regular check-ins** to discuss progress, address challenges and set goals
- **Providing constructive feedback** on coding practices, problem-solving and teamwork
- **Encouraging knowledge transfer** from senior developers to interns, creating a culture of continuous learning
- **Offering shadowing opportunities** where interns can observe mentors handling real-world issues, providing valuable exposure to enterprise-level development

By fostering an environment of collaboration and support, mentorship programs not only help interns succeed but also empower your experienced developers to take on leadership roles, increasing their engagement and growth within the organization.



## Step 5: Engage Interns with Real-World Projects

Providing interns with meaningful, real-world projects helps them gain practical experience while feeling connected to the company's success. When interns contribute to actual business outcomes, they not only apply what they've learned but also develop a sense of ownership over their work. This real-world exposure fosters a deeper understanding of the company's goals and technology stack.

Real-world projects should focus on:

- **Tackling current challenges** that align with your business objectives, giving interns a chance to solve problems with measurable impact
- **Collaborating with different teams** so that interns gain insights into cross-functional workflows and how various departments rely on the technology stack
- **Contributing to OpenEdge development** by building new features, optimizing processes or resolving technical debt—tasks that provide lasting value to your company

When interns see their contributions make a tangible difference, they are more likely to transition into full-time employees who already understand your business, culture and technology environment. This investment in meaningful work can also enhance intern retention rates and boost morale across your development teams.



## Step 6: Continuously Evaluate and Improve

To maximize the effectiveness of your internship program, it's essential to regularly assess its success and make data-driven adjustments. This continuous evaluation helps keep the program aligned with shifting business goals and positioned to attract and nurture top talent.

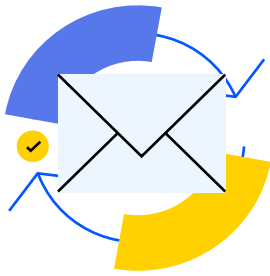
Key strategies for evaluation include:

- **Gathering feedback from both interns and mentors** to identify strengths and areas for improvement in the program. This feedback loop helps pinpoint where interns excel and where they need more support, while also giving mentors insights into their own development as leaders.
- **Tracking conversion rates** from internship to full-time hires. This metric provides valuable insight into the program's success in producing viable candidates for long-term employment and helps identify areas in need of refinement.
- **Reviewing skills and knowledge** gained during the internship and comparing them with your business needs to make sure that the program effectively prepares interns for full-time roles.
- **Analyzing conversion rates** and measuring the long-term impact of hiring from within your intern pool. If your internship program is consistently converting high-performing interns into full-time employees, it's a sign that it's adding significant value to the business.

## Attracting Top Talent with the Right Messaging

When recruiting developers from diverse backgrounds, your job descriptions should do more than list requirements—they should generate enthusiasm about the opportunity to work with the OpenEdge platform. Crafting compelling messaging is essential to attract candidates who may not have direct OpenEdge experience but possess the skills and motivation to excel.

To effectively draw top talent, focus on the benefits of learning about OpenEdge development, how it complements their existing skill sets and how it can accelerate their professional growth.



## Key Messaging Points for Job Descriptions and Interviews:

### Highlight the Ease of Learning ABL and How It Aligns with Their Existing Skills

Emphasize that ABL is designed to be intuitive and developer-friendly, making it easy to learn for developers experienced in languages like Java, C# or Python. The syntax and focus on business logic allow developers to leverage their existing programming knowledge to get up to speed quickly with ABL. Plus, if additional support is needed, stress that your organization will provide targeted ABL training to support the developer so they can excel in their new role and make an immediate impact.

#### Example messaging:

- “With your background in [Java/C#/Python], you’ll find that learning ABL is a smooth transition. The OpenEdge platform’s syntax and architecture empower developers to hit the ground running.”
- “No OpenEdge experience? No problem! We provide free training to help you transition from Java, C# or Python to OpenEdge ABL. Get the support you need to thrive in a platform that powers mission-critical applications worldwide.”
- “OpenEdge developers come from all backgrounds. With our comprehensive training program, you can master ABL and become a key part of our development team, no matter your starting point.”

### Showcase How the OpenEdge Platform Increases Developer Productivity

The robust OpenEdge platform integrates application development and database management in one unified system. Highlight the streamlined development process, where common tasks like database management, security and data access are already integrated, allowing developers to focus more on writing business logic and solving problems.

Example messaging: “OpenEdge capabilities help you accelerate your development by handling complex tasks like data management and security, letting you focus on building innovative solutions with fewer roadblocks.”



## Emphasize the Specialized Skills They Will Gain to Enhance Their Career Prospects

Learning how to code with OpenEdge ABL provides developers with a specialized, in-demand skill set, particularly in industries like finance, manufacturing and healthcare, where the OpenEdge platform is critical for business applications. Gaining OpenEdge expertise allows developers to distinguish themselves as experts in a field that supports mission-critical applications.

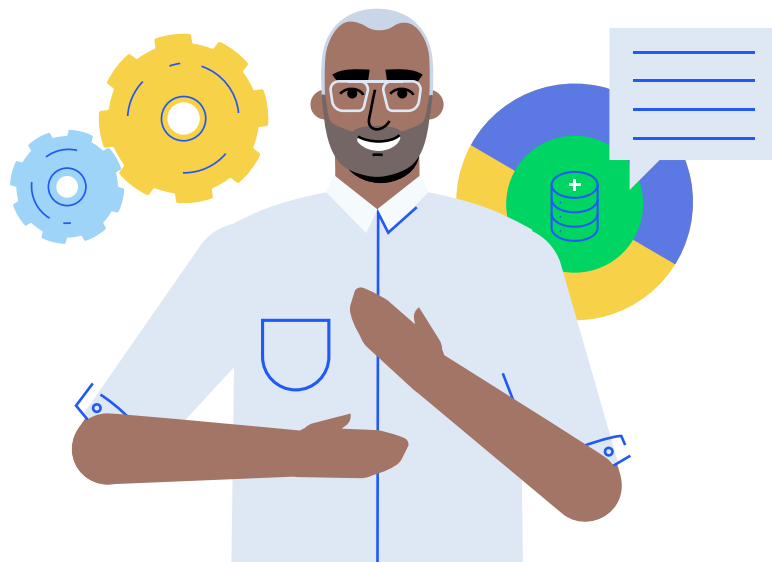
Example messaging: “Mastering OpenEdge development will set you apart as a specialized developer, positioning you to work on mission-critical applications in industries that rely on stability and performance.”



## Additional Tips for Effective Messaging:

- **Focus on the Learning Journey:** Frame OpenEdge development as an opportunity to learn and grow, highlighting how it can be a career-enhancing skill that adds value both in the short and long term.
- **Share Success Stories:** Include testimonials or stories of developers who have successfully transitioned into OpenEdge ABL from other languages. This can alleviate concerns and create a sense of possibility for prospective candidates.
- **Highlight Career Growth:** Make it clear that learning the OpenEdge platform isn't just about gaining technical skills—it's also about career advancement. Developers will have the chance to work on high-value projects that will bolster their portfolios and expand their professional opportunities.

[Read the positive things developers have to say in our OpenEdge developer spotlight blog series.](#)



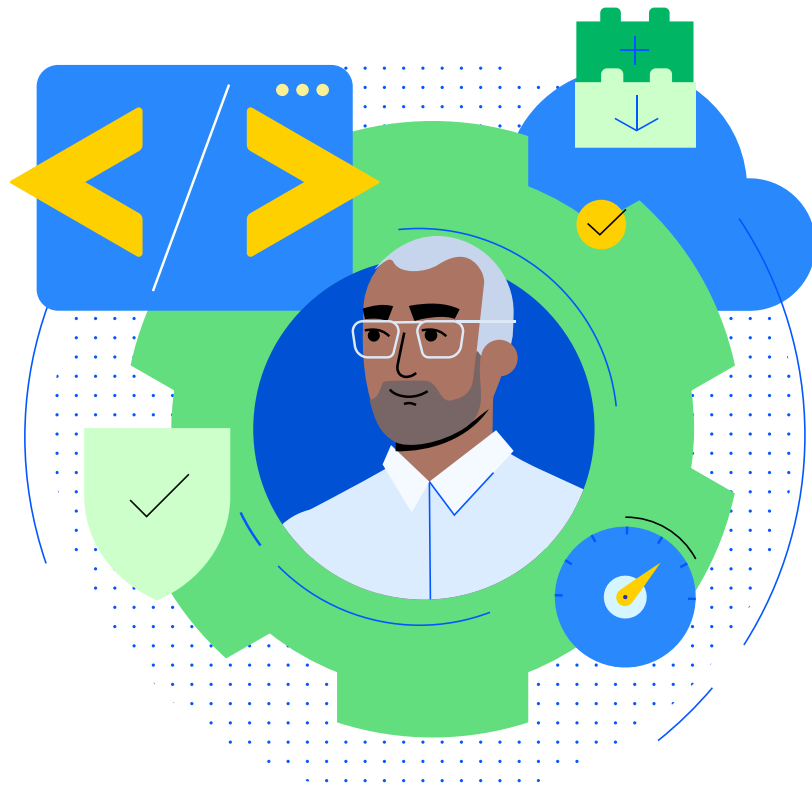
# Leveraging Platforms to Maximize Reach

To further enhance your recruitment efforts, consider promoting your job openings on platforms frequented by tech professionals:

- **LinkedIn:** Use LinkedIn's job posting features to reach a broad audience of professionals. Engage with potential candidates through your company's profile and by sharing relevant content.

Post your job openings in the Progress OpenEdge LinkedIn Jobs group to connect with potential developers: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1913256/>

- **Indeed:** Post your openings on Indeed to tap into a vast database of job seekers actively searching for new opportunities.
- **Stack Overflow Jobs:** Reach developers who are active in coding communities by posting your job listings on Stack Overflow's job board. This platform allows your ads to appear alongside relevant discussions, increasing visibility among qualified



## Stay Flexible and Open-Minded

Finding candidates beyond already-trained OpenEdge developers doesn't have to be daunting. The key is looking beyond traditional resumes and job descriptions. Developing your own internship and training programs can be a strategic approach to attracting and retaining top OpenEdge talent. By investing in the growth of emerging professionals, you not only cultivate a skilled workforce but also foster loyalty that will contribute to your company's long-term success.

Consider candidates with diverse backgrounds and experiences. A commitment to training and development allows you to build a highly capable team, even if candidates lack direct experience with the OpenEdge platform.

By embracing these strategies, companies can successfully hire and train OpenEdge developers, even if already-qualified candidates are in short supply. With the right approach, you can create a strong, adaptable team that propels your business forward.



**Build your team with confidence.** Access training, best practices and a thriving developer community to help you recruit and grow top OpenEdge talent.






### About Progress Software

[Progress Software](#) (Nasdaq: PRGS) empowers organizations to achieve transformational success in the face of disruptive change. Our software enables our customers to develop, deploy and manage responsible AI-powered applications and digital experiences with agility and ease. Customers get a trusted provider in Progress, with the products, expertise and vision they need to succeed. Over 4 million developers and technologists at hundreds of thousands of enterprises depend on Progress. Learn more at [www.progress.com](http://www.progress.com).

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