Quick-Start Implementation Kit

KIT 2: MID-MARKET SCALING

For Directors of TA and CHROs at Scaling Companies | 100-500 Employees

What This Kit Is For

You are past the startup stage. The founder is no longer in every hiring conversation. You have recruiters, probably an ATS, and a growing list of hiring managers who all do things differently. The chaos is starting to cost money. This kit gives you the structure to build a real RCoE - one that runs on discipline, not heroics.

PROOF OF CONCEPT: THIS MODEL IN PRACTICE

A a single-source global manufacturing and total energy solutions company implemented this model and produced the following results across a two-year period:

$2M+	18 days	100%	350+	$1M+
OPEX Savings	Average Time to Fill	Offer Acceptance Rate	Total Hires Completed	Year 1 Annualized Savings

The model began as a cost problem - agency spend exceeding $350,000+ annually with volume projected to multiply 2-3x. It became the infrastructure that hired a CEO, three Presidents, a VP of Finance, and a CHRO. The same VP of Talent who built the cost case that justified the investment went on to recruit the full executive architecture of a scaling global company. The parent company preparing for public markets subsequently adopted the RCoE framework for executive recruiting across its business groups - institutional validation that the model scales beyond a single implementation.

In the first 90 days: 5 salaried positions filled at 15-day average TTF and 100% offer acceptance rate - within the window required to justify the cost of the Talent Strategy Advisor role. The ATS was activated from unused shelfware to functioning infrastructure. SOPs were established. Hiring Manager training was built as a self-serve video module. The business case was proven before the full model was complete.

SECTION 1: TSA ROLE CHARTER

At this stage, you need the Talent Strategy Advisor function formally defined and empowered - whether that is a dedicated role or your Director of TA operating in dual capacity. The charter gives this function standing. Without it, the TSA is advisory in name only.

ROLE TITLE	Talent Strategy Advisor (or Director of Recruiting serving in dual TSA capacity)

REPORTS TO	CHRO or CEO. Not a VP of HR or Talent Ops. Direct line to the executive making organizational decisions.
SCOPE OF AUTHORITY	Validates all open roles before sourcing launches. Has standing to pause a search and require intake revision. Has standing to challenge compensation ranges, role level, and success profile definitions regardless of who submitted the request.
ESCALATION RIGHTS	Can escalate directly to CEO or CHRO when: (1) a search is launched without intake completion, (2) a hiring decision proceeds against documented advisory, (3) an offer is structured outside approved range without documented justification.
EXECUTIVE CADENCE	Monthly: 1:1 with CEO or CHRO reviewing active critical searches and talent risks. Quarterly: talent strategy briefing to executive team. Annual: workforce planning participation aligned to budget and headcount modeling.
NOT THIS ROLE	Not a coordinator. Not a scheduler. If the TSA is handling operational logistics, the function is broken. Operational work belongs to recruiting coordinators and talent operations.
PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY	Measured on offer acceptance rate, 90-day quality-of-hire ratings, intake compliance rate, and time to fill on TSA-governed searches. Not measured on req load or activity volume.
UPGRADE TRIGGER	When hiring volume exceeds 100 per year or the business expands to 3+ geographies, split TSA from operational leadership. See Section A of the full Blueprint.

> **The Authority Threshold - Critical**
> The most common failure point in TSA deployment is authority ambiguity. Define explicitly what the TSA can halt, what they can escalate, and what thresholds trigger a formal leadership review. A TSA with accountability but no authority is a liability, not an asset.

Building TSA Authority When You Do Not Have It Yet

Most TA leaders reading this do not walk in with enforcement authority pre-granted. They walk in with a mandate to improve hiring and have to earn the standing to enforce governance. This is not a structural failure - it is the normal starting condition. The path from advisory to authoritative runs through demonstrated financial impact, not through org chart redesign.

> **Step 1: Build the Cost Case First (Days 1-30)**
> Before you push back on a single search, before you challenge a single comp range, build the financial model. What is current agency spend? What is average vacancy cost per open role? What is the estimated annual cost of your current mis-hire rate? This work takes two to three weeks and produces a single document: the cost of the current state, quantified. That document

is what earns you the executive conversation. It is not an HR argument - it is a margin argument. A global manufacturing company used exactly this approach: the VP of Talent built the agency spend model, overlaid turnover data from agency hires, and projected forward cost. That financial case created the mandate. Everything else followed from it.

Step 2: Win One Visible Search (Days 30-90)

Identify the highest-visibility open role in the organization. Offer to own it personally with the new model. Run a complete intake, build a proper success profile, enforce structured feedback, and close it fast with a strong hire at 100% offer acceptance. Five salaried positions filled at 15-day average TTF and 100% offer acceptance within 90 days - that proof point was sufficient to justify the full TSA role cost and shift the conversation from 'should we do this' to 'how do we scale this.' One well-executed search in a visible role is worth six months of process documentation.

Step 3: Make the TSA Value Visible in Executive Language (Days 60-90)

Once you have a proof point, translate it into the language your CEO or CFO uses: cost per hire, vacancy cost recovered, agency spend eliminated, offer decline risk reduced. Present it in a 10-minute briefing - not a slide deck, not an HR report. A number, a comparison, and a projection. When leadership begins associating the TSA function with financial outcomes rather than process compliance, the authority question begins to answer itself. You do not need to demand the authority. You build it through demonstrated impact until the authority is offered.

Step 4: Use the First Pushback as the Authority Test (Month 3-4)

At some point a hiring manager will push back on your intake requirement or your comp range guidance. This is the moment that defines whether the TSA function has real authority or advisory theater. Do not avoid the confrontation - frame it. Present your position in writing, with data, through the CHRO or CEO. One documented escalation that lands in your favor, where leadership backs the TSA position over the hiring manager's preference, signals to every other hiring manager in the organization that the governance model is real. That signal is worth more than any charter document.

Step 5: Document and Publish Every Win (Ongoing)

Quality-of-hire at 90 days. Offer acceptance rates. Time-to-fill trends. Agency spend reduction quarter over quarter. Every data point that validates the TSA function's impact gets documented and delivered to leadership in a standing intelligence briefing. Authority compounds with evidence. The function that consistently surfaces accurate market intelligence, predicts search risk before it materializes, and produces measurable hiring improvement does not have to argue for its authority. The results make the argument.

SECTION 3: RCoE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

At 100-500 employees, your RCoE does not need to be large. It needs to be clear. Role boundaries determine whether each person operates at the right altitude.

Structure Decision: Which Model Fits Your Stage

Centralized Model	Hybrid Model	When NOT to Use Hybrid
Recommended for 100-300 employees. All recruiters report to RCoE Director. Single process standard. Unified governance. Maximum consistency across all searches. Best when: Single primary location, one or two business functions, growth is primarily volume not complexity.	Consider for 300-500 employees. Dedicated recruiters aligned to specific BUs. Enterprise process standards maintained centrally. Local execution autonomy within defined governance boundaries. Best when: Multiple business units with materially different hiring profiles.	**Avoid hybrid when:** Process standards are not yet stable, governance is not enforced, or business unit leaders have a history of bypassing central process. Hybrid amplifies existing dysfunction.

Core Team: Role Boundaries and Minimum Viable Structure

Role	Primary Function	What It Is NOT	When to Add
Director / RCoE Lead	Owns process governance, executive relationships, team development, and system evolution. Strategic altitude, not operational firefighting.	Not a senior recruiter. Not a coordinator. If the Director is running searches, the function is understaffed.	Day 1
TSA (or Director dual cap.)	Validates role design, advises on feasibility, governs quality-of-hire, produces market intelligence. Has enforcement authority.	Not a recruiter with a new title. This person pushes back and it sticks.	Day 1
Senior Recruiter(s)	Owns full-cycle search: intake, sourcing, assessment, stakeholder alignment, close. Develops search strategy per role.	Not a scheduler. Not an ATS updater. Operational support frees the recruiter for judgment work.	1 per 15-20 active searches
Talent Coordinator / Ops	Scheduling, ATS hygiene, candidate communication, compliance, and logistics.	Not a recruiter pathway. A specialized operations function.	When recruiter admin load exceeds 30% of capacity
Talent Analytics Partner	Owns dashboard integrity, metric reporting, and data quality. Produces pipeline visibility and QoH analysis.	Not a shared resource with HR or Finance.	When manual reporting exceeds 5 hours/week

SECTION 4: ATS WORKFLOW - 5 NON-NEGOTIABLE GATES

Your ATS is only as useful as what your workflow requires people to do inside it. These five gates are the minimum enforcement required to make the system work. They are not optional and they are not suggestions.

GATE 1 Intake Completion Before Search Launch

Rule: No search can be opened in the ATS until an intake record is complete: role necessity justification, success profile with 3-5 behavioral competencies, approved comp range with market source cited, target start date, and hiring manager sign-off.

Why it matters: Intake failure is the single most expensive breakdown point. Every search that launches without it creates downstream rework.

Violation response: TSA or Director closes the req in ATS and requires intake completion. The search does not reopen until the gate is cleared. No exceptions without CEO or CHRO approval.

GATE 2 Competency-Based Interview Feedback Required to Advance

Rule: Candidates cannot be moved from interview stage to decision stage without all assigned interviewers submitting a scored feedback form: a rating per assigned competency plus one written behavioral observation.

Why it matters: Unstructured verbal debriefs create anchoring bias. Written scores submitted independently before discussion is the structural fix.

Violation response: Recruiter gives 24-hour deadline to non-submitting interviewers. Candidate stage does not advance until all scores are in.

GATE 3 Compensation Alignment Before Offer Stage

Rule: Before a candidate is moved to Offer stage, the TSA or Director must confirm the proposed offer falls within the approved range. Any exception requires written justification and authorized executive approval.

Why it matters: Ad hoc offers become your comp structure. Three exceptions normalized creates uncontrolled pay equity risk.

Violation response: Offer stage is locked in the ATS until the compensation confirmation field is completed by an authorized reviewer.

GATE 4 Decision Rationale Documented Before Close

Rule: Before a candidate is moved to Hired or Declined, the recruiter must enter a decision rationale using a defined list of decline reasons. Free-text only is not acceptable.

Why it matters: This is the data that powers quality-of-hire analysis 90 days later. Without structured rationale at the decision point, you cannot identify which predictors of success are actually predictive.

Violation response: ATS configuration blocks final disposition until the rationale field is completed. System control, not manual compliance.

GATE 5 30/60/90 Day QoH Review Initiated at Offer Accept

Rule: When a candidate is moved to Hired, the system automatically creates three follow-up

tasks: 30-day check-in (recruiter), 60-day QoH survey (hiring manager), 90-day performance review (TSA). These tasks cannot be deleted without documented justification.

Why it matters: Quality-of-hire data does not exist unless you build the collection mechanism into the workflow.

Violation response: Uncompleted tasks surface in the weekly pipeline review. Patterns of incomplete follow-up reviewed in monthly governance audit.

WHAT YOU CAN SHOW THE BUSINESS IN 60 DAYS
Proof points you can produce before the structural work is complete

Present the agency spend number to your CEO or CFO this week

Do not wait for the transformation to be complete. Pull your last 12 months of agency invoices, total them, and put that number in front of a decision-maker with one sentence: this is what unstructured hiring costs us annually. That conversation funds the implementation.

Enforce written scorecard submission before verbal debrief - starting with your next active search

No ATS reconfiguration required. Email your current interviewers the rule and enforce it. The first time it holds under pressure from a senior hiring manager is the moment your TSA function becomes real.

Identify your three most chronically slow searches and map which stage is creating the delay

Not time-to-fill as a single number - stage-level diagnosis. Is the delay at intake? Hiring manager feedback? Offer approval? The bottleneck is almost never where leadership thinks it is. Surface it with data in your next pipeline review.

Run a comp range audit on every active search

Pull every currently open role. For each one, identify whether the approved comp range was set against external market data or internal history. Roles set against internal history only are at high risk of late-stage offer decline. Flag them before they fail.

Deliver a 5-minute business impact update to your CHRO or CEO anchored to vacancy cost

Pick two open roles. Calculate monthly vacancy cost for each using revenue impact or throughput value. Present the total. Frame it as: every 30 days these roles stay open, we absorb X in unrealized value. This reframes recruiting as a financial function, not an HR function.

SECTION 5: CORE METRICS DASHBOARD (10-12 KPIs)

At this stage you need automated dashboards, not manual spreadsheets. Organized by category: leading indicators (diagnostic), lagging indicators (outcome validation), and intelligence indicators (qualitative signals that numbers miss).

Leading Indicators - Track Monthly

Metric	What It Diagnoses	Healthy Range	Action Trigger
Intake Compliance Rate	% of searches launched with complete intake	95%+	Below 90%: TSA audit all open reqs this week
Candidate Quality Ratio	% of submitted candidates meeting success profile	60%+ (ops); 30-50% (specialist/senior)	Below 20%: Sourcing strategy review
Interview-to-Offer Ratio	Calibration of assessment rigor	3:1 to 5:1	Above 7:1 or below 2:1: Assessment criteria review
Pipeline Velocity (Days/Stage)	Where searches are stalling	Intake to screen: 5 days; Screen to offer: 20 days	Any stage above 1.5x baseline: Governance intervention
Hiring Manager Responsiveness	Feedback and decision latency	Feedback within 48hrs; Decision within 5 days	Persistent violation: Escalate to CHRO or CEO
Time to Fill (by role tier)	System composite signal	Under 30 days (ops); Under 45 days (specialist/mgr)	Disaggregate by stage before drawing conclusions

Lagging Indicators - Review Quarterly

Metric	What It Validates	Healthy Range	What Poor Performance Means
Quality of Hire (90-day)	Predictive accuracy of assessment	80%+ rated meets/exceeds at 90 days	Intake or assessment failure. Trace back to which stage broke down.
12-Month Retention	Role design clarity and cultural fit	90%+ for most roles	Systemic failure - onboarding, role design, or manager quality
Offer Acceptance Rate	Process credibility and comp alignment	90%+	Trust gap, comp gap, or experience breakdown. Diagnose which.
Mis-Hire Rate (exits in 6 mo.)	Judgment quality and profile accuracy	Below 5%	Structural problem. Convene TSA review of last 3 mis-hires.
Time to Productivity	Onboarding structure and manager readiness	Under 60 days for most roles	Onboarding failure or under-scoped role at intake

SECTION 6: 18-24 MONTH TRANSFORMATION ROADMAP

Sequencing map for Phases 1 through 4 of the full Blueprint.

> Do not compress this timeline. Phase 1 typically takes 60-90 days of real diagnostic work. Organizations that shortcut Phase 1 encounter the same structural problems later - under higher pressure, at greater cost.

Phase	Name / Timeline	Primary Focus	Completion Output
1	**Assess Current State Months 1-2**	Audit six domains: recruiter maturity, hiring manager behavioral stability, process consistency, ATS integrity, leadership alignment, employer brand credibility.	Talent Strategy Deficiency Report. Gap Heat Map. Top 3 structural risks with cost estimates.
2	**Build Strategy Layer Months 2-4**	Install TSA function with defined authority. Construct talent strategy engine. Establish executive engagement rhythm.	TSA Charter executed. First market intelligence briefing delivered. Intake compliance above 80%.
3	**Standardize Workflow Months 4-9**	Deploy 5 ATS workflow gates. Establish bilateral SLAs. Standardize interview scorecard library. Implement hiring manager accountability protocol.	ATS data reliability above 90%. SLA compliance above 75%. All active search stakeholders calibrated.
4	**Activate Measurement Months 9-18**	Launch automated dashboards for leading and lagging indicators. Conduct first quarterly QoH review. Present TSA intelligence briefing with business-consequence framing.	Monthly executive dashboard live and in use. First cohort QoH analysis complete. Leadership references metric data in hiring decisions without being prompted.

SECTION 7: SCALE READINESS - 5 CONDITIONS BEFORE YOU EXPAND

Scaling the RCoE before it has achieved operational stability is one of the most expensive mistakes a mid-market company makes. These five conditions must be confirmed before you add headcount, expand to new geographies, or move to Phase 5.

Condition	How to Verify It	What Premature Scaling Looks Like

Process compliance above 85%	Audit ATS gate completion rates for last 60 days. All required fields above 85%.	Scaling with 60% compliance creates a larger team operating with the same informal workarounds at higher volume.
QoH data is reliable and feeding back into process	Can you trace a recent change in sourcing or assessment strategy to a specific QoH data point?	If QoH data exists but decisions are still made on intuition, you have measurement without learning.
TSA authority demonstrated under pressure	Has the TSA successfully paused or redirected a search that a senior leader wanted to proceed? At least twice?	Scaling with unproven TSA authority means the function collapses under the weight of more searches.
Leadership calibration is stable	Are hiring manager SLA violations below 15%? Are violations corrected through protocol, not individual escalation?	Scaling with chronically non-compliant hiring managers means adding more searches the system cannot govern.
KPI narrative is in use at executive level	Are recruiting metrics referenced by CEO or CHRO using business-consequence language - cost, risk, timeline - not activity metrics?	Scaling without executive metric literacy means adding complexity no one will use to improve decisions.

SECTION 8: 90-DAY ACTIVATION CHECKLIST

Use this to confirm Kit 2 is implemented, not just understood.

FOUNDATION (Days 1-30)

- TSA charter drafted, reviewed by CHRO or CEO, and communicated to all hiring managers. Authority boundaries documented and explicit.
- RCoE structure decision made (centralized vs. hybrid) and documented with rationale.
- Current ATS configuration audited against 5 workflow gates. Gap list produced.
- Phase 1 diagnostic launched: active search audit, hiring manager interview schedule created, behavioral compliance assessment started.

WORKFLOW (Days 30-60)

- ATS Gate 1 (intake) and Gate 2 (scorecard) configured as system controls. Recruiters trained on compliance expectations.
- Bilateral SLA framework documented and shared with all hiring managers.

- Interview scorecard library built for top 5 most common hire types.
- First weekly pipeline review ritual established.

METRICS (Days 60-90)

- ATS feeding automated dashboard for at least 6 of the 10-12 core metrics.
- First monthly QoH proxy review conducted.
- Intelligence indicator review added to TSA monthly agenda.
- Phase 1 diagnostic completed. Deficiency Report and Gap Heat Map delivered to CHRO and CEO. Executive commitment to Phase 2 confirmed in writing.

Where to Go Next

Section A: Full TSA role architecture, market intelligence, and upgrade path when dual-capacity model reaches its limit

Section B: Complete organizational design models, role scaling thresholds, and governance frameworks

Section C: Complete workflow library, advanced SLA design, and ATS evaluation criteria

Section D: Full KPI architecture including predictive modeling and leading-lagging correlation

Section E: Full 5-phase roadmap including Phase 5 and scale readiness criteria in detail

Kit 3: When you cross 500 employees or inherit existing infrastructure that is structurally underperforming