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A Simple Guide to Recruiting

Practical steps for HR professionals who wear many hats

Human resources professionals often juggle a lot of priorities across the human capital management (HCM) lifecycle. Managing a recruiting strategy on top of all their other responsibilities can be highly challenging because recruitment is such an involved, multiphase process. And at a time when unemployment numbers are low, competition for best-fit candidates can be fierce.

By breaking recruiting into digestible phases and exploring foundational processes, HR professionals can feel more confident in their ability to handle the pressures of recruiting. With some well-placed technology and sound strategy, you can put in place all the tools you need to recruit and retain great people and build a more productive workforce without losing track of your other tasks.

This eBook explores five distinct areas of recruiting that HR professionals must work through to find the right hire for their company and continually improve and refine their recruitment process. Let's explore.



Recruitment marketing
Promotional strategies, integrating with job boards, the basics of social media

Applicant access
Branding and embedding job portals, mobile-friendly formats, placing knockout questions

Applicant tracking
Understanding application phases, stakeholder communication, opportunities for automation

Hiring
The candidate experience, tips for onboarding, leveraging your HCM systems

Talent analytics
Metrics to measure, monitoring employee development, understanding recruiting effectiveness

RECRUITMENT MARKETING

A Targeted Approach Goes a Long Way

The key to business success today starts with recruiting and retaining great people. Successfully recruiting talent is more involved than just posting your job listings and waiting for resumes. It's about making sure the right people find those listings. The idea of recruitment marketing might make you anxious because it means stepping out of your comfort zone and thinking more like a marketing professional. The good news is, you can get a lot of mileage out of crafting a thoughtful and targeted approach.

First things first:

What's your message?

To get the right applicants interested, you need to communicate key information about what it's like to work for your company. Company culture — its personality, values, mission, work environment, and "wow" factor — are all key things candidates factor in when selecting their next employer. Use your job descriptions to get specific about what makes your company unique.

Who's your ideal candidate?

You can't recruit the right candidate unless you're very clear about who you're trying to recruit. Consider creating target candidate personas to help you focus on the qualities you're most looking for in a candidate. Then figure out what those candidates might want and aspire to — and create messaging and job descriptions with those personas in mind.

> 52% of talent acquisition leaders say the hardest part of recruitment is **identifying the right candidates** from a large applicant pool.[1]

[1] *AI for Recruiting: A Definitive Guide for HR Professionals* (2019), found at: https://ideal.com/ai-recruiting/.

A quick example: Say you're looking for someone to help handle IT at your organization. You've got a list of skills and responsibilities you'd like them to have, sure, but how do you go deeper to make sure you find the right person? What does your performance data tell you about what makes a strong IT professional based on who's already employed with you?

- What's the ideal background, previous experience, geographic location, and demographic information for someone in this role?
- What goals and fears do they have? What objections might they have to your company's culture/approach?
- What's the best way to get in touch with them?

These are all the kinds of questions that make for a successful candidate persona.



70% of employers use social media to screen candidates,[2] and **95% of recruiters** are active on LinkedIn.[3]

Use targeted social media

There's a reason more and more companies are using social media sites to find job candidates. Not only can you learn a lot about potential candidates through social media, it's also a highly cost-effective tool to expand your reach. Focus on a few key platforms to get the word out. For example:

LinkedIn is the best place to post an open opportunity, promote positions to key talent pools, and search for quality talent. Don't forget to post announcements of new job listings in addition to the listings themselves. This is an easy way to get some more traffic.

Twitter is the place to build up what makes your company special and generate awareness around talent initiatives. Don't just post job listings. Put up stories that highlight your work environment, snapshots of office activities, or recruiting events you're headed to.

Make job boards work for you

Job boards and career site databases can be a treasure trove for recruitment. You can automatically push job requisitions out to job boards and keep recruiting activities centralized in your HCM platform, letting you track things from one location and saving you from manually making individual posts on a bunch of sites. Be sure to use the links in your postings to drive applicants directly to your carefully crafted and branded jobs portal to give the best impression and bring applicant data straight into your HCM environment.

Don't forget your database

Remember, your own database is also a good source for talent. If you have applicant tracking tools as part of your wider HCM platform, you can pull from qualified candidates with whom you already have a relationship and who are just waiting for the right opportunity to come along.

[2] Saige Driver, *Keep It Clean: Social Media Screenings Gain in Popularity* (October 2018), found at: https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/2377-social-media-hiring.html.

[3] Arnie Fertig, *How Recruiters Use LinkedIn to Find Talented Candidates* (May 2017), found at: https://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/outside-voices-careers/articles/2017-05-05/how-headhunters-use-linkedin-to-find-talented-candidates.

APPLICANT ACCESS

Create a Seamless Experience for the Applicant — and You

Once you've attracted applicants from different channels, make sure they all land in a place that allows them to intuitively find and apply for the jobs that are right for them. No matter where or when they apply, it's important that the place where they land accurately reflects your company's brand and culture.

Having an HCM platform with an embeddable recruiting portal can help a lot here, as it allows you to seamlessly roll your job listings into your website while preserving all the automation and record keeping you need in order to efficiently manage the new applicant pool. It's also essential that your career portal be mobile-friendly so the experience is seamless and convenient if applicants want to view and apply for positions on their phones.

> Companies can benefit from using mobile apps for recruitment: Data demonstrates that **86% of active candidates use their smartphones to begin a job search**.[4]



[4] Dave Zielinski, *Most Job Seekers Abandon Online Job Applications* (March 2016), found at: https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/technology/pages/study-most-job-seekers-abandon-online-job-applications.aspx.



Recruiters can boost conversion rates by up to 365% by reducing the length of the application process to 5 minutes or less.[5]

Remember, you want your job portal to be:

Embedded and branded

Having your open job requisitions in the same place as the rest of the information about your organization on your website is a best practice. It's an opportunity to align the look and feel of your career site with your company branding — reflecting and reinforcing your company's culture.

Mobile-friendly and responsive

Create your portal using responsive design so it can be viewed on all types of devices, including mobile. This means that you build your website to automatically adjust its layout to match the device it's being accessed from. This way, you can reach potential candidates anytime, anywhere — from the new college grad scanning their phone for a great first job while at a café with friends to the mom looking for a career change while sitting in on soccer practice. This is how you satisfy the expectations of the modern workforce.

Able to filter applicants

It's important for you and the applicants you're considering to know quickly when something's not the right fit. This lets applicants move on to the next opportunity and lets you focus your efforts. Set up your portal to present knockout questions early. This will allow you to find candidates who are a good fit for the position based on their skill set and your core requirements for the job.

[5] Dave Zielinski, *Most Job Seekers Abandon Online Job Applications* (March 2016), found at: https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/technology/pages/study-most-job-seekers-abandon-online-job-applications.aspx.

APPLICANT TRACKING

Keep the Process Moving for Candidates

As soon as a candidate applies for a job, recruiting becomes more complicated because additional stakeholders get involved. As an applicant moves through different evaluation steps, it's essential that this phase of the process proceeds efficiently so you don't lose qualified candidates. That means having a streamlined and automated communications strategy, a clear checklist of steps in the process, and a way of methodically handing off responsibilities to key internal stakeholders. Remember, it's a candidate's job market — you've got to get your star applicants through the process and give them an offer before someone else snatches them away.

WHY IS APPLICANT TRACKING IN YOUR HCM PLATFORM A BETTER CHOICE THAN A STAND-ALONE APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEM?

- It **boosts the candidate experience** by removing duplicate information entry
- It greatly **reduces data transfer errors** since everything's in the same system
- **Time to hire is greatly reduced** thanks to information being in the same system
- You can **compare your candidate data** directly to employee data to improve development and understand which kinds of hires succeed in your organization



Accurately tracking your applicants is key to finding — and keeping — the right candidate:



Have a plan

Define the phases you want your candidates to go through and how long you want each of these phases to take, then build the infrastructure for them into your HCM platform using checklists, automated actions you can assign, and notification workflows to make sure the right people are in on the right conversations.



Communicate with the candidates

Set up touchpoints that keep your candidates informed at every stage of the application process, so they don't start exploring other options. Use automation to keep your communications timely and reduce the manual overhead that comes with building custom communications every time.



Track the process

It's imperative that you can quickly and efficiently track your candidates. With automated process tracking, you can view the stage each candidate is at, understand if the processes have stalled, and respond quickly to get things back on track. Plus, this data helps you understand if and when your candidates are abandoning your hiring process, so you can keep improving.

- Candidates who are not informed about their application are **3.5x less likely to reapply** to that company.[6]
- 65% of candidates say they **never, or rarely, receive notice** about their application.[7]
- Of those who do receive notification, **51% say it takes more than a month**.[8]
- Among the candidates who have had a poor application experience, **72% have shared that negative experience** online or with someone directly.[9]

[6] Career Arc, *The State of the Candidate Experience* (2016), found at: http://d31kswug2i6wp2.cloudfront.net/marketo/content/careerarc-2016-candidate-experience-study.pdf.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

HIRING

It Doesn't Stop with the Job Offer

While it may seem like the recruiting process should end once the decision to hire an applicant is made, that's just not realistic. Companies are missing an opportunity if they aren't considering the bridge between the candidate experience and the employee experience. Once an offer has been extended to a candidate — and accepted — there's a lot that needs to happen to ensure proper transfer of information and resources, and to get the candidate plugged into the onboarding process as quickly as possible. Proactive pre-boarding and onboarding strategies can keep a potential new hire engaged and excited, often pre-empting a change of heart or a counteroffer from their current employer.

> 40% of all turnover in 2017 was attributed to employees who quit in their first year of employment, and **50% of first-year turnover was within the first 90 days.**[10]



[10] Work Institute, *2018 Retention Report: Truth and Trends in Turnover* (2018), found at: https://info.workinstitute.com/2018retentionreport.

Here are some examples of pre-boarding and onboarding best practices and policies that can keep your potential hires happy and engaged:

Keep it seamless

Save yourself time and impress new hires with a seamless, automatic transfer of information between recruiting and onboarding. Having a single HCM platform lets applicants and candidates enter information only once — after that, the system makes sure an employee's record follows them through the lifecycle at your company.

Create a pre-boarding package

Keep new hires engaged from offer acceptance to start date with timed communications that provide them with key pre-boarding information. Below are some pre-boarding materials to consider sharing with your new hires:

- A letter or video from senior leadership
- Company literature or culture highlights
- Employee handbook, or equivalent
- Onboarding plan and checklist
- Benefits information
- Hyperlinks to follow the company on social media

Make onboarding easy for everyone

Provide an easy way for new hires and their managers to track the onboarding process so they can complete the tasks assigned to them in a way that's visible and manageable. Such things as online form completion, meet-and-greets, trainings/certifications, benefits enrollment, and performance goals can all be tracked in your HCM platform to give your new hires easy access to what they need to get done in order to be successful. There are a lot of items and activities to consider here — you might even want your own checklist to get it all set up!

Don't hesitate

Let your new hires know they can ask questions and receive further guidance whenever they need it. And if they do ask questions, follow up immediately.





TALENT ANALYTICS

Let the Data Lead You

Now that you have a foundation to build your recruitment strategy on, how do you keep improving the process and making it more strategic? You need to be able to get at your historical data quickly and see what's working and what isn't working — and proactively address those trends. Having people analytics integrated into your HCM platform can make a huge difference in how you move forward. All that applicant data can be analyzed alongside employee data to track hiring effectiveness — and, more and more, it can be used to predict outcomes.

> Employers could **prevent 3 out of 4 employees from leaving** by taking the right actions — based on the right data.[11]

You've got the data. Now what?



Identify key metrics to show how well your recruiting efforts are working, and use those metrics to discover areas of success and areas that need improvement. For example, our recent research shows that high-performing organizations track a variety of important data points on a regular basis, such as:

- ☑ Number of days from job posted to offer accepted
- ☑ Cost per hire
- ☑ One-year turnover rate
- ☑ Time to proficiency/productivity for new hires
- ☑ Training/assessment scores



Build on data points such as geographic hiring patterns, application volume, average number of days a job request is open, diversity percentages, and many other variables to anticipate next steps and determine improvements



Track day-to-day developments with intuitive data visualizations and heads-up dashboards to monitor progress, instantly identify issues and priorities, and drill into details

[11] Work Institute, *2018 Retention Report: Truth and Trends in Turnover* (2018), found at: http://info.workinstitute.com/2018retentionreport.

Recruiting Checklist

Is your recruitment process leading you to best-fit candidates? Use this checklist to reaffirm your recruiting process or add important steps that could lead to more efficient and effective recruitment.

	Currently Doing	Need to Add
Recruitment marketing		
Present a company message that is specific and concise	☐	☐
Maintain target candidate personas for clarity about who should be recruited	☐	☐
Use key social media platforms to get the word out	☐	☐
Use job boards to drive applicants to a branded jobs portal	☐	☐
Regularly search the current applicant database for talent	☐	☐
Applicant access		
Embed and brand the company's job portal	☐	☐
Use responsive design for mobile-friendly applicant access	☐	☐
Use knockout questions to quickly filter candidates	☐	☐
Applicant tracking		
Define the company's recruitment phases	☐	☐
Set up touchpoints to keep candidates informed	☐	☐
Use automated process tracking to keep track of every applicant	☐	☐
Hiring		
Automate your applicant data transfer process from recruiting through onboarding		☐ ☐
Create a pre-boarding checklist for your new hires	☐	☐
Track onboarding tasks to keep them manageable	☐	☐
Answer new hire questions in a timely manner	☐	☐
Talent analytics		
Identify key metrics that demonstrate how recruiting efforts are working	☐	☐
Build on data points to anticipate next steps and determine improvements	☐	☐
Track day-to-day developments to monitor progress and identify issues and priorities		☐ ☐



Technology Makes Recruiting Manageable

Recruiting adds a lot to an already-busy HR professional's plate. For organizations with limited HR staff, being smart about the steps you take with your recruiting strategy makes all the difference. Setting specific goals and considering all the different recruiting phases upfront ensures you'll build something manageable — andenjoy successful outcomes.

Make sure your strategy and technology are working together to make the entire recruiting process easier, from application through onboarding. The right solution can help you recruit, screen, track, hire, and verify best-fit candidates, building a more engaged and productive workforce for your organization.

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