Recruiting Technology

A Practical Guide for Finding Top Talent Effectively and Efficiently

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Many organizations say that talent is a key differentiator in their business, however, when it comes to talent acquisition, they're not doing anything to set themselves apart from the crowd. Today's job seekers are doing their homework and are becoming more selective. They are not only researching companies before they accept the job offer, they are researching companies before they even apply.

In 1997, the term "war for talent" was coined by McKinsey & Company to reflect the competitive landscape for talent. While part of the competitiveness is a natural part of business, a big portion is attributed to the Department of Labor predictions that, as the Baby Boomer generation retires, there will be a shortage of workers[1]. Thus creating a competition (or war) for talent.

Add to this situation, the fact that technology is moving at a phenomenal rate. People need to maintain their skills constantly, sometimes on their own time with their own resources. For those individuals who are falling behind, or for those companies that are on the cutting-edge of innovation, there's a gap between the skills people have and the skills companies need.

The War for Talent and the skills gap make sourcing qualified candidates tougher. Companies are developing strategies to improve their candidate experience. That's a good start. The next step is making sure the business can effectively and efficiently manage the process. Technology is changing the recruiting game.

What Can Technology do for Your Recruiting Efforts?

Organizations can no longer afford to have an inefficient recruiting process. Inefficiencies not only increase costs but they could cause a company to lose qualified candidates. There are several reasons that companies are looking at technology solutions to create and improve efficiencies in their recruiting process:

> Consistency: As recruiting gets tougher, human resources departments will have to speed up their recruiting process. To ensure all the compliance steps are taken, automation becomes a logical choice.

> Collaboration: Organizations are realizing the benefits of having more people involved in the hiring process. It creates buy-in and improves the candidate experience. The most efficient way to manage a collaborative hiring effort is with technology.

> Resource Allocation: By strategically using technology solutions for those tasks that are scalable, the business can focus other resources on those tasks that are best handled in-person. Building a process that

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[1] https://www.conference-board.org/press/pressdetail.cfm?pressid=5175

allows the people and the technology to do what they each do best is very efficient.

In addition, organizations cannot afford to have an ineffective recruiting process. The company needs results. The absolute worst thing that can happen is for the business to need employees and human resources not be able to attract, select, and hire people. There are several ways that organizations can use recruiting technology to make their current processes more efficient:

Career portals: It starts here. This is the first impression candidates have of your organization as an employer. The company's career portal should be the one stop for a candidate to learn all about coming to work for the company. It should educate candidates about the organization, share a "day in the life" of an employee, and outline how to apply. Your career portal should answer the question: Why should someone apply here?

Mobile responsiveness: Just about everyone today has a cell phone. Many of those cell phones are smart phones. People have the ability to plan their vacation, buy products and services, and much more. They want the ability to apply for jobs and monitor their status in the hiring process. Having a mobile responsive career site tells candidates that the company is keeping current with the times.

Talent networks: For people who aren't ready to apply but want to stay engaged with the company, having a talent network is a way to keep them interested in your organization. Talent networks are a way to communicate with potential candidates about the company and upcoming openings while at the same time build relationships and strengthen their employment brand. A talent network tells people that the company thinks long-term.

Applicant tracking systems: Once a candidate is ready to apply, they want a smooth and speedy process. To understand how your current application process works, take a moment to apply for a job the same way a candidate would. Critique your application process. The last thing a company wants is for a candidate to abandon the application process because it's too confusing. Applicant tracking systems (ATS) should give candidates a quick and painless way to express interest in job openings.

Social integration: When organizations create a positive candidate experience, people will share that experience with others. Companies have always wanted the benefits of "word of mouth" advertising about

their product or service. When it comes to recruiting, companies want "word of *mouse*". With one-click, having the ability to share a job opening with a friend or colleague is a win-win.

Onboarding systems: Organizations cannot use the latest and greatest technology to hire people, then revert back to manual processes. Consistency is key. Employees want to know their technology devices are welcome in the workplace. Technology helped them get the job, so technology will help them keep the job.

The good news is recruiting technology can do all of these things. It can make recruiting both effective and efficient. It can bring consistency and focus. It allows organizations to properly allocate resources.

In order to take advantage of everything that recruiting technology offers, it's important to approach the conversation with the right information. Think of it as strategic planning. The environmental scan is a critical component. Without the right information, poor strategic decisions can happen.

This is *strategic* recruiting. For recruiting technology to benefit the organization, there are several key elements to review and evaluate before making the first decision.

Before Selecting a Recruiting Technology Solution

Conducting a thorough assessment of the current recruiting environment will make the identification, selection and implementation of a technology solution much easier. The assessment allows internal stakeholders to address process issues prior to implementation. It also gives the organization an opportunity to think strategically about the recruiting experience they want to have.

Identify what makes your corporate culture unique. Whether it's the results that the organization produces or the company benefits package, knowing what makes employees stay is important. It's a question that candidates want to know the answer, "What makes the company special?"

The answer to this question will help create an authentic and effective career portal. The best career portals highlight their strengths. The key is understanding what they are. And what better source than current employees.

Invest in employment branding. The company's marketing brand conveys a message to consumers. Similarly, the company's employment brand should convey a message to candidates. Many of the reasons that make the business unique and special to employees will assist in developing a brand.

Once the organization has developed their employment brand, it will be important to market that brand within the organization, inside talent networks, and on social media. Having a communications plan to bring the company's

employment brand to life within the recruiting technology is an important key to success.

Determine your candidate experience strategy. There's a difference between providing service to candidates and giving them an experience. Providing service is about answering questions. The candidate experience is what the job seeker thinks about the hiring process.

Companies make huge investments to build a great brand and showcase their unique corporate culture. The candidate experience is the way that companies want the job seeker to feel after an interaction with the company. Even if the candidate doesn't get the job, the company still wants the candidate to have a positive candidate experience.

Build a recruiting team. People are equally as important as process. Organizations need to ensure that everyone on the recruiting team – that includes hiring managers and senior management – know the goals of the recruiting program and are able to support the effort.

Training managers on the process is essential, not only on how to conduct a legal interview but truly how the recruiting process works and their role in the process.

It's only after conducting this comprehensive assessment of the existing recruiting process that the organization should take steps to find their technology solution. Any good technology partner will want to know about company culture, employment brand, candidate experience and the recruiting team. That's because your technology partner is an extension of all those things.

The more your technology partner understands the company and the existing recruiting process, the better the implementation of your solution.

Implementation Strategies

Bringing a new technology solution into the organization isn't as simple as flipping a switch. To do it well involves planning. The company's recruiting team and technology partner will work together to develop an implementation strategy that meets the organization's operational needs.

In doing so, experience has shown there are three components to implementation that every company should consider:

Provide training to manage change. Organizations deal with change all the time from the marketplace. Yet, individuals still have challenges managing change. Implementing a new technology system will be no exception. It's important for the recruiting team to understand the implementation process and where potential hiccups might occur.

Training on change management techniques can help the project team deal with difficulties should they occur. It can teach them to focus on the positives and encourage them to celebrate their successes.

Develop a user communication plan. With a new system comes a new way of communication. It could be in the way that job openings are requisitioned. Or how interview notes will be maintained. Possibly in the information shared with candidates during the hiring process. Maybe in how users should communicate questions about the system itself. These are all communication issues. And they all have to be addressed.

In some cases, a new method of communication might emerge – using the capabilities of the new technology solution. Other situations might simply change the flow of information. Either way, companies have to think about the most effective means to disseminate information about applicants, candidates and new hires.

Create a phased approach. There's something to be said about not taking on too much too soon. Some organizations have had tremendous success implementing their recruiting technology solution in phases. Not only does it help with obvious issues like budgeting, but it helps with properly managing change, keeping communication levels high, and effectively deploying organizational resources.

The project team implementing the company's technology solution will also have other responsibilities. Everyone wants the implementation to be a success. No one wants their regular responsibilities to suffer. Scheduling the implementation in phases can create a win-win for everyone.

Measuring the Success of Your Recruiting Strategy

After your new strategy and technology solution have been implemented, the work doesn't end. The strategy must be evaluated and possibly even modified. There are three types of information you'll want to gather and review.

The first is data and reports from the recruiting technology. Some reporting has been created automatically because it's industry standard so organizations do not have to recreate the wheel. Common recruiting reports include:

- Applicants by source code
- Employee referral reports
- Hiring manager productivity reports
- Recruiter productivity reports
- EEO reports for all applicants

In addition to the reporting built into the technology solution, companies can create their own reports using the report writer feature. For example, if your company rehires seasonal workers every summer, the hiring team can run a

report of the prior year's seasonal workers to target a recruitment email message.

The second way to gather data is via surveys. These can be set up within the recruiting technology to be completed at certain times. For example, an organization might want to survey new hires on their first day, after orientation, and after their introductory period. The survey can employ a variety of questions with some having Yes/No answers, a Likert scale, or qualitative response. This data can be benchmarked over time to identify trends in the candidate experience. Here are a few examples of survey questions:

> I felt welcomed during orientation and the information presented helped me to get settled into my new role. (Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree)

> Did you find the materials provided at orientation easy to follow? (Yes or No) If not, what materials were not clear? (Open answer)

> My manager was well-prepared for my arrival on my first day at work. (Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree)

Lastly, the human resources team can create a metrics dashboard for distribution. The dashboard can include information from the system reports as well as survey data. A couple of recruiting metrics such as cost-per-hire and time-to-fill can be calculated directly within the recruiting technology. Others will need to be calculated manually.

Summary

Recruiting technology provides organizations with a robust solution to their hiring needs. As the search for talent becomes more difficult, companies will want to manage their resources closely. Technology brings scalability and consistency to the process, allowing the recruiting team to focus on building relationships with candidates.

Implementing a recruiting technology solution is not a daunting task. It does require forethought, planning, and a solid communications plan. Once the system goes live, regular feedback from all stakeholders will keep the process running effectively and efficiently.

Appendix 5: HR Recruiting Metrics

It's impossible to track everything, so here's a list of recruiting metrics that everyone should pay attention to. Note: some of these are automatically calculated within a recruitment technology solution.

1. Applicants per Source – Smart recruiters have multiple sources to find talent (i.e. social sites, mobile, job boards, etc.). To ensure that resources are being properly allocated, each job opening should be tracked by number of

applicants by source, number of qualified applicants by source, number of interviews by source, and source of hired candidate.

2. Time-to-Fill – Basically, this is the amount of time it takes to fill a position. This calculation has some flexibility because you have to decide when to start and end the calculation. Does the time start when an individual announces their resignation or when the company approves the requisition? Should the time end when the offer is extended, on the new hire's first day, or some other date? The metric can also be provided for the company at large or a single position (example: sales managers).

3. Yield Ratios – This measures the success of the recruiting process in increments. Yield ratios measure from one step in the process to the next step. It can identify possible weaknesses in the recruiting process. For example, let's say 100 people apply for a job opening:

75	Screening Interviews	75%
40	Department Interviews	53%
30	Job Offers	75%
25	Acceptances	83%
10	Complete Introductory Period	40%

4. Cost per Hire - According to the Society for Human Resource Management, the calculation for cost per hire (CPH)[2] is:

CPH = (External Recruiting Costs + Internal Recruiting Costs)
Total Number of Hires for a Time Period

External recruiting costs include any spend made outside of the organization like third-party recruiting fees, staffing agencies, advertising costs, job fairs, candidate or recruiter travel expenses, etc. **Internal recruiting costs** include resources used within the company like the salary and benefits of the recruiting team, physical infrastructure, and talent acquisition systems.

5. Quality of Hire – There are two different ways to calculate quality of hire. According to ERE, the quality of hire metric is driven by performance appraisal ratings 6 to 12 months into the new job as compared to their peers.[3] Lou Adler, author of the best-selling book "Hire with Your Head", recommends using quality of hire on the front end of the recruiting process. He defines it as "the measure of how well the new hire meets the performance needs of the job".[4]

[2] http://www.shrm.org/hrstandards/publishedstandards/documents/11-096%20hr%20standards%20booklet_web_revised.pdf
[3] http://www.ere.net/2008/07/07/6-good-metrics/
[4] http://www.recruitingdivision.com/lou-adler-on-recruiting-metrics/

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Sharlyn Lauby is author of the HR Bartender blog and president of ITM Group Inc., a South Florida based training and human resources consulting firm. Her company focuses on providing solutions to engage and retain employee talent so their clients can innovate and create shareholder value. Prior to starting ITM Group, Sharlyn was vice president of human resources one of the world's largest organizational consulting firms. She has designed and implemented highly successful programs for employee retention, internal and external customer satisfaction, and leadership development.

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About iCIMS

iCIMS is a leading Software-as-a-Service provider focused on taking the hassle out of talent acquisition processes. Through the implementation of easy-to-use web-based solutions, the iCIMS Talent Platform helps organizations manage everything from attracting, to recruiting, to onboarding all within one streamlined application. Pairing this vision with a dedication to superior customer support has proven to be a winning combination. iCIMS has been recognized by Forbes, Inc. Magazine, Deloitte, The Stevie Awards, and more for staying true to its core values of customer orientation, adaptability, and innovation.

To learn more about the iCIMS, take a look at our demo at: **www.icims.com** 1.800.889.4422