25 INNOVATIVE RECRUITING STRATEGIES.
1. **ADD RECRUITMENT MARKETING TO ACCELERATE HIRING.**

Many companies are building comprehensive recruitment marketing strategies which means bringing together their employment brand, career websites, email campaigns, diversity hiring, university outreach and other career events into one cohesive strategy. New roles that feel more like marketing than recruiting are being created with the charter of establishing and managing talent nurture campaigns to engage passive candidates. Here are some tips to get you started:

**Define and setup pipeline categories**

Work with your workforce planners to take a broad view about future company hiring needs. Structure your pipelines around those future needs and begin systematic outreach. Prospects should receive regular, personalized content based on their interests to keep them engaged.

**Develop an annual talent community content calendar**

Take a proactive approach to recruitment marketing by defining your annual plan. Set goals, define key targets, and design campaigns. Be sure to define your measures of success.

**Gather content and partner with content creators.**

Great content can come from anywhere. You’ll find it in your company’s marketing and communications including recent news and brand outreach. Other times, hiring managers or executives are willing to write articles or even set up an Ask-Me-Anything event about a relevant topic. Many times, the content is already there and you just need to repurpose it.

Leverage your recruitment marketing tactics to increase engagement.
2. IMPROVE THE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE.

Candidates should be impressed at their first interaction with your brand. When you’re trying to hire the best people, great brand expression means a great candidate experience. Review these 15 areas of your candidate experience to evaluate your company’s performance. We recommend surveying candidates, post-interview, for critical feedback on your process.

- Your brand story should be very clear and present in your career portal and recruiter dialogue. Be sure both are telling your story succinctly and accurately.

- All job descriptions should be clearly written and describe the role, responsibilities and qualifications. Include a video from the hiring manager or pictures from the team and office for added appeal.

- If the candidate can’t identify a job that’s a perfect fit for them, they should be able to join a talent community to express interest in working for your organization so they can stay connected to your opportunities.

- Your talent community should allow the candidate to establish and manage their profile so they can express their history, interests and competencies.

- When they visit your career site or even apply to a job, they should be able to do it from any device (mobile, tablet, desktop), with an easy resume/cv upload process or apply with LinkedIn.

- Make sure your processes don’t include redundant questions or requests for information that should have been parsed in from their resume in the first place.

- Candidates should get plenty of confirmation communication: when they join, when they apply, when there is a job that is the ideal fit, when there is an upcoming career event that they would be interested in, etc.

- Of equal importance, candidates should not receive any information that would not be relevant — especially a job opening that is not in their interest area.

- When setting the first screening call, the candidate should be able to easily schedule with the recruiter by selecting a time from a list of open times.

- They should be able to save opportunities to their favorites, and conversely, they should be able to withdraw their application if they’re no longer interested in a particular role.

- Before the interview, they should be able to learn about about their interview panel in advance. Include links to their LinkedIn profiles to set them up for success.

- The interview should feel structured. Each interviewer should have specific questions to ask to assess the candidate’s skills with no redundancy — nothing is more frustrating than answering the same question over and over.

- If there are any assessments or take home projects, these should appear on the candidate dashboard for completion and return.

- Offer letters should be able to review and signed right away from their mobile device.

- And, once the offer letter is signed, deliver a seamless onboarding experience in the same candidate dashboard they’ve become familiar with.
3. **BUILD TALENT COMMUNITIES TO NURTURE TALENT.**

To attract future talent, you’ll need to start the conversation earlier. The days of posting a job to find your ideal candidate are behind us. Today’s best talent communities have very clearly defined pipelines of the talent and hiring plans aligned with their workforce planning. They actively engage talent with relevant information and engagement. They engage employees and candidates alike with events in which thought leaders discuss relevant topics within your industry.

4. **AUTOMATE RECRUITMENT MARKETING.**

Everything is moving toward automation, from drone deliveries to autonomous cars. Many recruiting platforms have the ability to pre-screen candidates so that the best people filter to the top. Establish regularly scheduled email campaigns to nurture relationships, send reminders to inform people of critical reviews or approvals. Automate triggers that launch upon a completed tasks. Teams are small and resources limited, so put routine functions on auto-pilot.

5. **GET MORE EXPOSURE FOR JOB OPENINGS.**

More job boards will be acquired next year, resulting in a continued decline of this channel. Your teams need to transition to new models. You’ll need faster, easier, less expensive tools to distribute jobs to not only the major job boards, but also to diversity sites and smaller niche boards. Your own career site will become a more central core for job opening information, so make sure it is SEO optimized and mobile responsive to engage talent on the move.
6. **DRIVE DIVERSITY INITIATIVES.**

Companies with diversity programs outperform less diverse organizations. Diversity initiatives are a growing trend at most large companies. Whether attracting women in technology, connecting with military veterans, or engaging minorities, consider establishing unique talent communities to attract and engage specific talent segments.

Interested in spearheading diversity initiatives? Here are some examples of how companies are incorporating their diversity initiatives directly into their overall recruiting strategies:

7. ALIGN UNIVERSITY RECRUITING TO YOUR STRATEGY.

Campus recruiting is a great place to start building your employment brand. It’s a great opportunity to showcase your culture through the people you send on campus to engage with students. Here are some best practices that will help you win over young minds:

- Identify key schools and build relationships with faculty.
- Build a campus recruiting calendar of events.
- Have a year-round presence to stay top of mind.
- Develop brand consistency in recruiting collateral.
- Measure and track performance against goals.
- Send representatives on campus that represent your brand.
- Integrate campus efforts with broader recruiting initiatives.
- Get executive support and participation.

“Consider establishing unique talent communities to attract and engage specific candidate initiatives.”

8. ENACT STRATEGIES TO ATTRACT MILLENNIALS.

By 2030, millennials will make up 75% of the workforce. A study by Deloitte found the majority of millennials want to work for a company because it gives them a sense of purpose. A study by McCann WorldGroup shows that their greatest need at work is connection and community which shows how much they value relationships over power or influence. Here are some ideas to explore to connect (and retain) the next generation:

- Set competitive pay and offer growth opportunities
- Create mentoring programs to pair them up with
- Build trust through transparency and openness
- Invest in training and development programs
- Clearly share (often) your mission and purpose
- Engage employees and help them see their contributions
9. CONNECT WITH HARD-TO-REACH TALENT.

The market for great talent is changing and getting their attention will become increasingly difficult. You’ll need to get creative with your content and messaging. You’ll need to go where they go, whether that’s niche sites or social networks. Find a way engage talent in something they value—industry news, thoughtprovoking content or an invitation to a meet-up at your office for pizza and a presentation. Make it fun.

10. IMPROVE TEAM COLLABORATION.

A recent study showed that a key determinant of quality of hire was how strong the relationship was between the recruiting and hiring manager. Yet, at most companies, these relationships are frayed. Hiring managers are usually disappointed at the quantity or quality of candidates that are provided and recruiters are frustrated by the lack of feedback and support. Many of these challenges can arise if teams simply can’t agree on a job description and approach. Here are some tips that can help you get on the same page with your hiring manager.

- Start out with an intake form that captures everything about the role: draft of job description, salary, required skills, expected level, location, and where to find top talent.
- Hold weekly briefing with managers (daily on tough assignments) and elevate the communication with progress reports and analytics.
- Make it easy to engage in candidate profiles and feedback. In today’s world, that means mobile devices.
- Use @mentions to keep the communication rapid and efficient.
11. ENABLE EVERYTHING FROM A MOBILE DEVICE.

According to a recent study by Flurry, the average person spends 5 hours per day on their mobile device. The mobile device needs to be considered first for engagement with recruiters, hiring managers and candidates alike. Every aspect of the experience should be accessible on a mobile device.

12. LEVERAGE SOCIAL NETWORKS.

Build a Facebook careers tab and engage potential candidates that are already a fan of your brand. Ask employees to post news and hard to fill job openings over their social networks. Leverage employee referrals through social networks and drive down recruiting costs and time to hire. Be sure to consider appropriate social networks including Instagram and Pinterest.

13. ENSURE PROPER USE OF TEXT MESSAGING.

Text messaging is a powerful communication channel. Over 95% of text messages are read and most cases in the first 3 minutes. Text messaging is rapidly becoming a preferred form of communication, but be mindful in your approach. Be sure to establish permission first. If they text you, permission has been granted.

**DO use texting as a communication channel to:**

- Tell them about a new job opening that is a perfect fit.
- Coordinate and set interview schedules
- Send reminders about an interview day/time.
- Ask for additional information you need, such as a resume/CV.
- Share exciting news with a candidate that an offer letter is pending.
- Remind others on the interview team to provide feedback.
- Obtain the necessary internal approvals on job requisitions or offer letters.

**On the other hand, DON’T use texting to:**

- Text a candidate without getting their permission first.
- Text message as your initial outreach. Start with email, phone or social connections before texting. Over half of people consider cold texts too invasive.
- For compliance reasons, make sure your system has the proper permissioning protocols and allows users to adjust contact settings. There are privacy compliance implications with texting candidates, so ensure that you’re following proper procedure.
14. **LAUNCH (OR RELAUNCH) YOUR EMPLOYEE REFERRAL PROGRAM.**

Employee referrals are an amazing source for talent. In many cases, referral hires work harder, stay longer and fit the company culture — and the cost of hire is minimal. Here are some important considerations if you are launching (or relaunching) an employee referral program.

- Make sure accessing and engaging the program is easy and available on mobile devices.
- Set and track a company goal such as an “Increase in referral hires from 10% to 30% over the next 12 months”.
- Tie the employee referral program to the same system where employees visit for internal mobility — you need plenty of reasons for employees to visit the portal.
- Make it easy for employees to find jobs and refer them out over social networks or directly to people they know with just a few clicks.
- Keep referring employees in the loop with automated emails — eliminating the black hole on referrals.
- Send monthly or quarterly reminders company-wide with hard to fill roles and ask for help filling the opportunities.
- Make it competitive and rewarding. Rather than setting a dollar amount on a role, reward employees for activities at each stage. Points are be awarded for various behaviors that produce results along the way. Then, allow employees to redeem points for cash or prizes.
- Set up and publish a leaderboard and celebrate the victories of the top performers.
- As you onboard new employees, ask them to refer other candidates in their network. Make it an onboarding task.
- Provide employees with pre-written email and social posting templates they can use to promote the company’s job openings. save them time and avoid off-brand messaging.
15. SEARCH INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY AT THE SAME TIME.

Enable recruiting teams to search for people inside the organization (including contractors, interns and temps) or outside the organization (candidates) to fill openings. Recruiting inside the organization supports talent management and career growth, succession planning and leadership programs.

16. FIND A PLATFORM DESIGNED AROUND PEOPLE, NOT REQUISITIONS.

Most applicant tracking systems were designed around a requisition first and people second. In fact, some legacy software still considers the job to be like a shopping cart. That makes people hard to find and nearly impossible to categorize or pipeline. It also becomes very hard to see the complete history of a candidate across multiple requisitions and interactions. Some candidate never even apply to a job, and instead simply join a talent community. You can see why this legacy architecture breaks down quickly. Recruiting is above engaging people, and people should be the focus.

17. BECOME A DATA-DRIVEN RECRUITING FUNCTION.

Recruiting analytics are key to measuring success and streamlining processes. Metrics-driven organizations perform better. Reporting can be achieved at every stage:

- **Pipeline reports:** health of talent pipelines
- **Workflow stages:** where candidates are in the process
- **Activity reports:** how much work is going into the effort
- **Source of hire:** where are we getting our best candidates
- **Time to hire:** how long does it take us on average
- **Sourcing reports:** what positions need the most help
- **Ratios:** how are some groups performing against benchmarks
- **Goal performance:** how are we doing relative to plan
18. **OPTIMIZE WORKFLOW AND SAVE EVERYONE TIME.**

Most employees need to move quickly through the work in front of them. Take the time to audit how long each task takes and identify a more streamlined workflow. Consider how you might automate to save everyone time: automated workflows, triggered task management, pre-written job descriptions, pre-configured approvals, and competency settings. Work with your system administrators or bring in an outside consultant who can streamline your sourcing and recruiting workflows and run programs more effectively.

19. **IMPROVE QUALITY OF HIRE.**

The secret to making better hiring decisions lies in your process. Often, companies rely on a free-form interview process where a hiring team will make decisions based on feelings and not facts. Start with a structured interview process where the position, qualifications and competencies are well-defined. During the interview process, distribute competency evaluations and questions amongst the hiring team to avoid duplication. If you’re hiring engineers, incorporate a coding exercise, if you’re hiring marketing folks, conduct a review using samples of your company’s own materials. Finally, one of the best improvements in comes from stronger collaboration with your hiring managers.

20. **DELIVER BEST PRACTICES AND TRAINING.**

We suggest you hold training sessions with your team in order to re-instill the values and best practices of your recruiting organization. Things change, systems evolve and what worked yesterday may not work tomorrow, so adapt. Your approach to hiring great talent should always be evolving. Take the initiative to keep abreast of the latest recruiting practices, technology and your company’s sector.
21. GET MORE OUT OF ONBOARDING PROGRAMS.

A great hiring experience isn’t over until your new employee is delivering value. Onboarding is more than asking employees to fill out legal documents and delivering a computer. Today, onboarding is an ongoing process that continues through the first few months of employment. Studies show that an employee’s first 90 days have an immense impact on their retention rates.

22. LEVERAGE DATA TEAMS TO DEVELOP INSIGHTS.

Be sure to leverage in-house data teams that pull data together from different systems to help you understand better how recruiting data can inform other aspects of the business and conversely, how other plans in the business (workforce plans, headcount reductions, succession programs) will influence recruiting activities. Most large companies now have a data group inside the organization, so be sure to tap into those resources to connect your mission to the overall vision of the company.
23. STAY COMPLIANT WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION.

As a global organization, you need to stay compliant with international laws. The EU recently adopted Privacy Shield, which will replace Safe Harbor as a compliance mechanism for personal data transfers from Europe to the United States.

Organizations are either working toward Privacy Shield or adopting Model Contracts. Check with your legal and compliance teams to ensure that all your vendors have up-to-date standards around data privacy.

Here are some additional considerations around EU compliance:

- **If you’re emailing or texting citizens in the EU, you’ll need to go through a double-opt-in process before you can send recruitment marketing related materials.**

- **The websites and landing pages you build as part of your recruitment marketing efforts will need to disclose the use of cookies and what information is collected.**

- **The vendors you work with will have data-related responsibilities, such as providing access to any data collected on an individual, when requested by that individual.**
24. CONSOLIDATE VENDORS AND TECHNOLOGY.

Your organization may have dozens — or even hundreds — of apps, systems, solutions and integrations to support. The burden of complex integrations can be overwhelming for small technology teams, not to mention expensive. So consolidate. Consider which systems would perform better if they were built together, and what features your team might give up to reduce complexity.

25. USE MACHINE LEARNING TO MAKE SMARTER DECISIONS.

The advent of machine learning has been one of the most exciting areas of innovation to watch over the last couple years. There are a few early technology providers exploring technologies within recruiting. Ask your vendor(s) about their future vision for using the data that’s captured in your platform to discover and explore patterns in recruiting, as well as trends in the workforce and the overall state of the talent market. Data supports smarter decision-making. Data isn’t the future, it’s right now.
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