

Tips for recruiting TOP TALENT

THE COMPANY WITH THE BEST TALENT has the best chance of winning in the competitive marketplace. Employee recruitment forms a major part of a company's overall resourcing strategies, which identify and secure the best talent to help the organization succeed, in both the short and long term. Recruiting activity needs to be responsive to the ever-increasingly competitive market to secure qualified and capable candidates at all levels. That said, recruitment should be constant and conducted by all people in the organization, regardless of backlogs or current staffing levels. Yes, it is true that we all need to be recruiting the best people to join our companies.

If you really believe in your company, you will want good people to join your team. The company needs to be noticed by passive job seekers before the competition catches their eye.

Companies that implement a plan of continuous recruiting experience unexpected positive benefits. Active recruiting means being visible and vocal in your industry, which helps your public relations, as well as your positioning with trade schools and universities.

You have to always think smart. Smart employers who are in touch with the best candidates as a result of "always recruiting" develop a pre-qualified candidate pool before there is a need to fill a job. You can develop relationships with candidates long before there is a need to hire them. This will help create a large pool of candidates that will be useful when you have a new position available. As you know, things can change quickly — a key employee leaves, you suddenly get a large backload of work, there is a desire to expand into a new market, or you need to make a sudden personnel change. These things are all made a bit easier when you have a pipeline of candidates.

Your capability and capacity to deliver targeted results and sustain economic prosperity within your organization is highly dependent on "always recruiting" strong talent. It is a fact, as published by the Harvard Business School Press, that organizations that "always recruit" score in the top 20 percent in talent management, and produce an average of 22-percent-greater total returns than those companies who aren't always recruiting.

You always need to have an edge over your competition, and "always recruiting" will give you that edge.

Once you have mastered the concept of "always recruiting," hiring the right candidate becomes a less challenging process. Hiring the wrong employee is expensive, costly to your company, and time consuming. Hiring the right candidate, on the other hand, pays you back in employee productivity, employee morale, positive forward-thinking planning, and accomplishing challenging goals. It also cements a successful employment relationship and makes a positive impact on your total work environment. You can develop relationships with potential employees long before you need them. This idea will also help you in recruiting a large pool of candidates when you have a position available.

Some key steps when hiring a new employee are as follows:

Define the job before hiring: Hiring the right candidate starts with analysis of the job. The job analysis enables you to collect information about the responsibilities, competencies and work environment of the position. The information from the analysis is necessary in developing the job description. The job description assists you in planning your recruiting strategy.

Review applications and credentials carefully: Reviewing resumes and job applications starts with a well-written job description. Making a bulleted list of your

most desired characteristics, then screening all the applicants against this list, will be a good use of your time and a good way to draw out the most qualified candidate.

Prescreen all candidates: A candidate may look great on paper, but a pre-screening interview will tell you if their qualifications and salary requirements are truly a fit. A phone interview will also obtain evidence whether the candidate will fit within your culture.

Ask the right interview questions: The job interview questions asked are critical in magnifying the power of the job interview in assisting you in hiring the right person for the job. Interview questions should always be open ended, such as, "What is your most memorable accomplishment and why?" The idea is that the interviewer should talk less and listen more. You want to get to know the candidate, and, let's face it, most people like talking about themselves and their accomplishments.

References and background checks: References and background checks should always include past supervisors, educational credentials and actual jobs held.

The bottom line is that managers must always be recruiting. That does not necessarily mean an official posting of a job, but a good manager should always be networking and looking for great talent. A manager should always have a half dozen people they would like to hire, if the occasion were to present itself. That doesn't mean offering them a job — it means getting to know them well, understanding their strengths and weaknesses, and exploring their aspirations and how they may fit into your organization.

Good managers have succession plans in place for every role in their organization. Good managers are always recruiting. If you lost one of your key people today, could you pick up the phone and call a half dozen replacements tomorrow? If you couldn't, you need to start recruiting. ■

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