Need Talent? Build a Community

Get social to attract, engage and hire the best (even passive talent!)

Social Recruiting is King

Sources:
1 Jobvite 2014 Social Recruiting Survey
2 Career Enlightenment [Infographic] Getting Hired in a Digital World
3 CareerBuilder's Social Media Infographic: Job Seeker Perceptions and Expectations
4 "The Multigenerational Job Search" 2012 survey by Millenial Branding and Beyond.com

A quick Google search yields enough statistics on social recruiting to make your head spin:

- 93% of human resource and recruiting professionals use or plan to use social recruiting. [1]

- 73% of 18-34 year olds found their last job through a social network.[2]

- 70% of job seekers agree that positive posts and comments from fans or followers on a company's social media site would make them more likely to apply for a job at that company. [3]

- Across generations, job seekers are spending over 90% of their time searching online.[4]

Recruiting is moving in a decidedly social direction. To compete, you can't just go with the flow – you must develop new ways to stay ahead of the curve.

Can a talent community help you find the great people you need? And how do you actually *build* one?

This special report contains straight talk – and practical tips – for understanding, developing and leveraging talent communities.

Communities and networks and pools – oh my!

Social media has given rise to an entirely new recruiting lexicon. If you haven't already, it's time to wrap your head around these increasingly common terms:

Talent Pool: A database of everyone who has ever applied for a job with you, regardless of their relevance or potential value to your organization.

> How it differs from a talent community: Communication is one-way, which gives you a one-dimensional view of candidates (generally only from the resume itself).

Talent Network: An opt-in candidate database that enables you to build your candidate talent pool for future employment opportunities. Candidates opt-in to this network (via the job application process or your career site) and want to hear about your company and employment opportunities.

> How it differs from a talent community: Engagement is flat and one directional, with all content created by your organization.

But what's a TRUE talent community?

It's more than just a pool, pipeline or network. While countless definitions exist, most propose that a talent community:

- Has two-way communication.

- Has opt-in members.

- Allows these members, primarily through various forms of social media, to freely exchange ideas and information about topics ranging from your employment brand and company culture, to career advice and, yes, career opportunities (although the goals of communication are not focused solely on job openings or recruitment).

And why might you need one?

Social recruiting has made it easier than ever to find great candidates. If you're wondering whether a talent community is the right choice for your organization, consider these advantages:

- **Improve quality of applicants applying to job openings.** In their 2014 Social Recruiting Survey, Jobvite found that 43% of recruiters who use social recruiting saw an increase in candidate quality.

- **Attract passive candidates.** When you regularly engage candidates and nurture relationships with them, your company will be top-of-mind when the time is right for a community member to change jobs.

- **Identify candidate fit.** An online talent community allows you to interact and demonstrate your company's brand, values and mission. Candidates likewise have opportunities to engage you, demonstrating their values and capabilities to fulfill your job requirements. As a result, you can source candidates who are not just right for the job, but right for your company.

Even if you're not actively hiring...

Building a community can still be beneficial.

- **Find great talent before you need it.** Talent shortages have reached critical levels in many industries. By building a community, you can develop relationships with candidates ahead of your hiring needs. When a job opens up, you may already have viable prospects within your community – and fill your position faster.

- **Build your brand with potential candidates.** Even when you don't have a specific job opening, a community helps you maintain conversations about candidates' career aspirations and interests. You can position your company as a thought leader in specific subject areas and demonstrate your commitment to candidates' career development – effectively building your employment brand.

Lay the foundation.

You can connect digitally and socially with talent in a number of ways – Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, your company's ATS, your recruitment marketing and your CRM, to name a few.

With so many options available, how should you start building your talent community? Here are a few ideas to get the ball rolling:

- **Analyze your current talent inventory** and (as accurately as possible) estimate the volume and types of talent needed over a two- to three-year period. Only once you understand your strategic growth can you translate it into a tactical plan for building a community.

- **Develop a profile** of those with whom you're already interacting. If you're already using social media like LinkedIn or Facebook, you probably have a wide range of people who already know you and interact with your brand.

Choose the right platform.

Build your community where it already finds itself. Determine which platform is most highly trafficked by the types of individuals you want to engage. Then, if you don't have the expertise on staff, consider consulting with an experienced contact relationship manager (CRM) who can help you develop a platform that:

- captures vital information about potential candidates, which can later be used to attract and engage additional community members.

- is geared to the needs of your target talent segments, so they're more likely to engage in meaningful conversation (for example, while Gen Y candidates rarely retrieve emails, text message open rates exceed 99%, and 90% of all text messages are read within three minutes of being received).

Commit to investing.

A talent community requires vast resources. Not surprisingly, a robust, well-managed infrastructure that delivers specific, highly relevant information to candidates isn't cheap to build or maintain.

So before you take the plunge, make sure you're ready to commit the time, money and talent needed to create a true community. Do anything less, and candidates will see your so-called "community" for what it truly is – a self-serving, contact-list-gathering tool.

Final thoughts...

Though you will undoubtedly use your talent community to source candidates, make sure you don't just sell, but serve:

- Create a platform that encourages two-way communication and helps members further their careers.

- Work together to solve problems, share opinions and develop ideas.

- Make talented professionals feel included and compelled to contribute positively to the betterment of your community.

Do this, and you'll create a true community that's a self-sustaining source of inspiration and – yes – great talent!

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