Talent Tools & Tips:
How to Find and Attract Top Talent

Adding the right talent is one of the most important activities of an organization. This handout provides an overview of the general recruitment process, highlighting best practices and the creation of a talent rubric to assess candidate skills and fit.

Recruitment Process Overview and Best Practices

Although there is some variation from industry to industry, as a rule, a recruitment strategy will be most impactful when it is:

- **Easy -** The hiring process should be clear and easily accessible. Presenting multiple means of contact (e.g., email, phone, in-person) can prevent candidates from being discouraged by inconvenient expectations. Information on career opportunities, critical job details (including wage and schedule information), and how to apply should be readily available.

- **Fast -** It's been found that 60% of candidates have quit an application process because it took too long, and job-seekers can be up to 365% more likely to apply to a role if the initial application process takes less than 5 minutes. After application, providing an outline of next-steps along with a clear timeline will allow candidates to set appropriate expectations and lessen the chance of them abandoning the process.

- **Supported -** Lack of communication is a major factor in hiring-process abandonment, and applicants are likely to share negative application experiences with fellow job-seekers, further limiting the pool. Managing many applicants during a mass-hiring period can be overwhelming even for professional recruiters, so it may be worthwhile to invest in an application tracking system or enlist an organization-savvy employee to develop an internal tracking system.

- **Adaptive -** Assess your process as you go; keep track of what is successful and shift resources accordingly. This includes:

- **Candidates sources -** Not all job boards attract the same types of candidates. What works best differs from industry-to-industry and location-to-location, but if you track the number of applicants, hires, and how those hires succeed in the role, you can use that data to better plan future process development.
- **Process -** If you note a specific point in your process where candidates are dropping out (e.g. between initial contact and coming in for an interview), take the time to evaluate that stage and determine if there are changes that could be made to improve engagement. Current employees are a good resource for insight on the applicant-side of your process.
- **Messaging -** Depending on where you are posting a position, it may be worthwhile to tweak messaging to better engage with job-seekers. For example, messaging around your commitment to ethical service may be highly attractive to experienced professionals, while language promoting tools, resources, and investment in professional development may be more effective on a university job board.

When faced with organizational growth or high employee turnover, an employer's recruiting process should have two goals:

1. Filling the role
2. Building the pipeline for your next vacance

Effective Recruiting: Before You Post		
Task	**Filling the role**	**Building the talent pipeline**
Develop the job description	If the role already exists, review the description, speak with existing employees, and confirm that the description still aligns with current practices and organizational needs. If creating a description for a new role, think of the following: the job title, position type and expected number of hours, education and experience, objectives, who the job reports to, the work environment, salary range, etc.	Regularly audited/updated job descriptions save time when an unexpected vacancy arises and can be referenced easily when discussing possible future opportunities with current and potential employees. Misleading and/or out-of-date descriptions can lead to poor-fit hiring, which can, in turn, negatively impact both retention and employer reputation.

215 W. Michigan Ave., Ypsilanti, MI 48197
Phone: 734-657-0370 E-Mail: Amy@AmyCellTalent.com

<table>
<tr><td>Determine the compensation range</td><td>Salary insight can be gained through websites like Glassdoor and Payscale, word-of-mouth from current and prospective employees, or by reviewing data compiled online by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. If there are concerns about appropriately defining compensation ranges, it may be worthwhile to engage a consulting firm that offers customized compensation reports.</td><td>Part of building a healthy talent pipeline is building an attractive employer reputation. Specialized professionals are more likely to be aware of their worth than the average job-seeker. A competitive (i.e. above-market rate) salary and benefits package may not ensure that every qualified candidate reaches out, but a below-market salary will guarantee that many do not.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Develop the hiring process</td><td>An efficient hiring initiative benefits greatly from a well-defined plan. Identify the decision-makers, timeline, budget, and technology to be used before the search begins.</td><td>Create a positive experience for all applicants, not just those that move through to interviews. With a limited talent pool, it’s vital that candidates are willing to re-apply. Preferences may vary, but most candidates appreciate an efficient, responsive and transparent process.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Hiring Team: Whoever is responsible for the more time-consuming tasks (screening, interviewing, etc.) should have adequate time available to be thorough and responsive in their approach. If there is no long-term need for hiring assistance, a third-party recruiting/staffing service is a good option.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Timeline: Define a deadline for when a hiring decision should be made. Within those parameters, individual candidates should be moved as quickly through the process as possible. Otherwise, candidates should be provided with a clear timeline. When possible, front-load the process with the easily evaluated “deal-breakers” and inform unqualified candidates as soon as possible that they are not moving forward.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Technology: An Applicant Tracking System can help manage current recruiting operations, and assist with maintaining records of prior applicants for reference in future searches. If a CRM is already in use, it may serve as an alternative to investing in a separate recruiting</td></tr>
</table>

	system.

Effective Recruiting: Posting and Attracting Candidates		
Task	**Filling the role**	**Building the talent pipeline**
Develop the job posting	Postings should provide a brief synopsis of the job description, covering the key responsibilities and what the day-to-day of the role will entail. Keep this as concise as possible - LinkedIn research has found that posts with fewer than 150 words are 17.8% more effective than those in the 450-600 word range.	If there is time available to screen a larger pool, consider keeping the posting more general and less requirement-heavy. Although it may attract some candidates who are inappropriate for the current role, it will provide a larger pool of future candidates to keep in your pipeline.
Decide where to post	There is no clear best-pick on where to post jobs most effectively. Depending on the urgency of the search, it's advisable to take a progressive approach, posting on cost-effective boards first and expanding from there.	As roles are posted and reposted, trends should emerge on which boards are most effective. This information, if tracked, can provide valuable insight into how to most effectively post.
Additional distribution	Using personal networks to distribute information about job openings, either directly or through an employee referral program, can be one of the most effective ways to find good-fit talent.	-
Passive candidates	Some positions require a more active approach to attracting candidates. This can be accomplished via connections on LinkedIn or through a resume database. Start with an introduction and an offer to	Occasionally reviewing resume databases and LinkedIn for new potential candidates, particularly for hard-to-fill roles, is another good way to prepare for unexpected vacancies. Connecting on LinkedIn helps to grow that

	provide some information on the organization when “cold-contacting” candidates. Be respectful of people’s time and only reach out with truly relevant roles and, where possible, with personalized messages.	network as well as building name-recognition.

Effective Recruiting: Evaluating Candidates	
Task	**Filling the role**
Pre-screen	The purpose of pre-screening is to “weed out” applicants who do not meet the basic requirements of the job. This process typically involves a detailed review of candidates’ resumes and other documents, followed by a telephone interview.
Invite them in	Even if you initially invite the candidate to meet with you via phone or video meeting, sending them an email or calendar invitation with all necessary details will help candidates feel more comfortable with the process. This should include: • Date, time, and expected duration of interview • Location, including any specific directions • Who they will be meeting with (name and role) • Interview format (e.g. one-on-one, panel interview, lunch meeting, etc.) • What, if any, materials they should bring for reference
Conduct the interview	If conducting multiple interviews, keep questions consistent between candidates to assist with comparisons. Ideally, interviewers will spend roughly 80% of the interview listening and only 20% talking. That said, do take time to provide additional information about the company and opportunity that has not been addressed earlier in the process. Leave time for additional questions or concerns that may arise during the course of the conversation.
Follow up	Regardless of the outcome of the interview, candidates should receive follow-up within 48 hours. If the candidate is no longer in consideration, informing them sooner will allow them to more appropriately respond to other opportunities. If there is some

Effective Recruiting: Evaluating Candidates	
	uncertainty, let them know you will be in contact once a decision has been made. From there, you can schedule a follow-up interview or focus on alternate candidates while making a determination. If you've narrowed your search to top candidates, this is a good time to request and check references. Additionally, if the organization requires a background check, request authorization paperwork at the same time.
Extend an offer	Once references have been checked and a final determination has been made, develop an offer letter and reach out to the top candidate. It may be advisable to not inform 2nd and 3rd choice candidates of the decision until the offer has been officially accepted.

Creating a Talent Rubric

It is imperative to get an authentic understanding of the candidate's skills and whether or not a candidate fits into the organization's culture. We suggest creating a "talent rubric" or a list of criteria that includes how you plan to assess the attributes.

Here is an example for a bookkeeper search.

Criteria	"Must have"	"Ideal/nice to have"	How to assess
Accounting knowledge	Experience managing A/P, A/R and payroll	Implemented new chart of accounts	Resume, interview, reference check
Communication skills	Able to provide clear reports		Provide work sample, provide a short assessment

These are just some of the learnings and best practices that we have gleaned through extensive research and years of service that make for a more efficient, transparent, and effective recruiting process.