

RECRUITMENT TRENDS



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(Published in HR Era, Issue # 64, September, 2009)

<http://hrera.com>

Economic pressures on workers combined with a higher unemployment rate might lead one to assume that recruiting and hiring are easier during a downturn. Depending on the nature of job openings, recruiting is not necessarily easier but it is different during such times. For instance there are fewer demands and less negotiating from the candidates, but there are new challenges such as candidates not wanting to change jobs because they perceive it as risky during a downturn. Even though layoffs are happening, qualified candidates are hard to find because talented people are retained by the company and those who are laid off are mostly those who are not so talented. The ways of recruiting have also changed.

Upgrading employment branding

Nothing is hotter around the globe in recruiting than employment branding. Firms throughout Asia, in particular, have increasingly adopted employment branding as a wildly important activity for 2009. The success of Google, a firm that has built the world's strongest employment brand over an amazing five-year period, has led others to focus on this impactful long-term strategy. Key focus areas include increasing media coverage, increasing visibility online, building your "green" brand, and countering your "negative" employment brand. Firms to watch: Facebook, Google, Yum Brands, Tata, E&Y, Enterprise, U.S. Army, and Sodexo.

Reinvigorating referral programs

Despite the growth of career-related Internet sites, the highest volume and quality candidates still come from well-designed employee referral programs. While heavy adoption was initially hampered by cultural issues around the world, today such programs are proving highly effective everywhere. Key focus areas include proactively approaching key employees for referrals (program targeting), leveraging non-employee referrals, making reward systems more comprehensive, immediate, and visible, and last but not least, helping employees leverage social media to restore relationships, make new relationships, and build stronger relationships.

Firms to watch: AmTrust Bank, Edward Jones, Whirlpool, and Amazon.com.

Renewing the focus on quality of hire.

As a result of strong research by organizations like staffing.org, recruiting leadership has begun to refocus its efforts on identifying factors that increase the quality or the on-the-job performance of new hires. Key focus areas include improved quality of hire metrics, calculating the performance differential between average and quality hires, and identifying sources that produce high-quality hires.

Firms to watch: Aimco and Wipro.

Reinforcing the business case for recruiting

As budgets tighten and slow economic growth continues, recruiting budgets face constant constraints. Instead of whining, many leading talent organizations are seizing the opportunity to reposition themselves as non-transactional organizations. When the focus in recruiting is placed on non-transactional, more systemic issues, such organizations can work with the CFO and risk management to demonstrate the importance of supporting recruiting even during times of reduced hiring volume. The key focus areas include predictive modeling, dollarizing recruiting results, and showing the dollar impact of vacancies in revenue generating positions.

Firms to watch: Aimco, DFS, Wipro, and Google.

Utilizing social networks

Although using social networks as a recruiting source has been a well-discussed concept for a while, few firms have found productive ways to truly leverage social media sites. However, as new approaches are developed that more accurately align with the paradigm of social media audiences, recruiting on social networks will become more mainstream. Focus areas include encouraging your employees to be more visible online and using networks to identify innovators. Key networking sites include Facebook (global), MySpace (global), Friendster (global), LinkedIn (global), Twitter (U.S.), MultiPLY (Asia), Mixi (Japan), Cyworld (Korea), and Xiaonei (China).

Firms to watch: E&Y, Zappos, CIA, Yum Brands, Google, and Facebook.

Utilizing video.

While it may be hard for some to fathom, 1:1 and 1: many videos have become a very popular communication medium, surpassing all other forms of Internet traffic. Second only to employee referrals, the most impactful tool for effectively demonstrating the excitement and passion at a firm is online video. If a picture is worth a thousand words, then moving pictures demonstrating what it's like to work at your firm would have to be "priceless." Focus areas include posting on video-sharing sites such as YouTube (global), Youku.com (China), and sharing employee-generated "unscripted" videos on your corporate site.

Firms to watch: Deloitte, Microsoft, and Google.

Upgrading succession planning.

A common practice becomes much more critical as global growth and large-scale retirement loom on the horizon. Focus areas include replacing retirees, improved succession planning metrics, adding external candidates to your plan, and fast-track leadership development.

Firms to watch: Intuit, Eli Lilly, Deloitte, and TVA.

Using employee blogs for recruiting.

A practice that is finally beginning to enter the mainstream is employee blogging to support recruiting efforts. The very best firms use blogs not just to spread their message but also to answer questions and to make their company appear more “real” and approachable. Key focus areas include blogs by employees other than recruiters and micro-blogs.

Firms to watch: Microsoft, Google, and Sun.

Using mobile-phone recruiting.

As mobile phones with amazing features spread throughout the population, recruiting managers are beginning to realize that they can be a powerful recruiting media. Key focus areas include text messaging, mobile video, and mobile-accessible corporate careers sites.

Firms to watch: Google and nearly any firm in Asia!

Revitalizing corporate jobs page.

Recruiting managers are beginning to understand that pitifully dull and dated websites drive away innovators. Focus areas include providing personalized information to the visitor, Flash video integration, blogs, podcasts, and virtual Q&As.

Firms to watch: Microsoft, Google, and Deloitte.

Using a CRM model for hiring.

We’ve been touting the values of the CRM (customer relationship management) model for years. More firms are beginning to understand the value of improving the experience at each “touch point” with the candidate. Key focus areas include relationship recruiting, automated applicant profiling, automated event calendaring, and robust lifecycle metrics.

Firms to watch: U.S. Army, GlaxoSmithKline, and E&Y.

Hiring innovators.

Rapid product copying and the high visibility of innovative firms like Apple and Google are forcing recruiting managers to modify recruiting processes in order to successfully recruit innovators and game changers. Key focus areas include relationship recruiting, pre-need hiring, and tolerant/inclusive screening and interviewing processes.

Firms to watch: IBM and Google.

Recruiting globally

Recruiting managers are beginning to learn how to differentiate multi-national recruiting from true global recruiting. Key focus areas include global sourcing, globalized websites, and globalized employer referral programs.

Firms to watch: Infosys and IBM.

Most of the above trends will slip into 2010 and become a mainstream. Apart from these few other trends in recruitment to keep watch next year will be

- Virtual-reality recruiting on Second Life which is an online virtual reality game in which you can use real money to conduct Monopoly-style business with other players. At least 10 million people pay \$15 and up a month to play these games, and maybe 20 million more log in once in a while. Real life companies are using it for demos of their products and that it will replace Webex as a place for online meetings.
- Video games as recruiting tools
- Online assessment tools
- Using contests to identify internal and external prospects for candidate assessment
- Inclusive recruiting (replacing diversity recruiting)
- Remote interviewing

- Remote college recruiting
- A renewed focus on internal redeployment
- Boomerangs (bringing back key ex-employees)
- Recruiting at professional events
- Using credit card/sales leads to find prospects
- Using analytics and modeling to predict future workforce needs
- A new focus on the use of contingent workers in the weak economy
- A focus on contingent hiring
- Improving on-boarding to build the employment brand
- Reality TV shows as a recruiting and branding mechanism
- Search engines to find candidates.

References: CNN money.com and Dr. John Sullivan, Human Resource strategist and thought leader, author, advisor, and educator

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