

TOP



5

TALENT ACQUISITION TRENDS

THE FUTURE OF RECRUITING

Talent fuels every facet of business. A company can have the right technology, the right infrastructure, the right products and services—yet still fall short of expectations without the right people. Attracting, recruiting, hiring, and engaging the right talent for the right job is what makes your enterprise grow. And the landscape of talent acquisition is beginning to look very different from that of just five years ago.

In the midst of an ongoing economic recovery, the largest generation in history¹ is slowly but surely taking over the workforce. With 80 million individuals, millennials (also known as generation Y) are currently filling one out of every three positions in the United States,² and by 2025 they will comprise 75% of employees in the global marketplace.³ Simultaneously, business itself is evolving: becoming faster-paced, more globally connected, and more technologically advanced.

Therefore, making the best hire possible is both more difficult and more important than ever. Competition to claim top talent is fierce. A far more holistic view of talent acquisition is taking hold, encompassing everything from the candidate experience to the first weeks on the job. Instead of emphasizing automation and efficiency as in the past, the process is now about engaging new hires to form successful, long-term relationships between employee and employer. Businesses need to look to the future to implement the solutions and processes that will attract and retain the best talent while the competition is still playing catch-up.

In this paper, we'll examine the top five talent acquisition trends in the market, and demonstrate how embracing them now can future-proof recruiting at your organization.

Forward-thinking businesses will implement the solutions that will attract and retain the best talent while the competition is still playing catch-up.

1. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/25/millennials-overtake-baby-boomers/>

2. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/05/11/millennials-surpass-gen-xers-as-the-largest-generation-in-u-s-labor-force/>

3. <http://bpwfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/SnapshotGenY.pdf>



USER EXPERIENCE

“User experience” isn’t a term you typically hear associated with recruiting. Put simply, user experience is defined as the overall moment-to-moment experience an individual has while using a product, especially in terms of how easy or pleasing the product is to use. Recognizing a well-designed user experience is easy. An exemplary user experience creates a sensation of fun and enjoyment, whereas a poor user experience results in constant frustration and candidate drop-off. In the past few years, many companies have begun to focus on the candidate experience in talent acquisition, which is the notion of putting yourself in a job seeker’s shoes and treating them like a unique individual—or the “customer”—during the application process. However, emphasizing user experience in terms of designing or selecting a recruiting solution is a much more recent trend.

Traditionally, creating an outstanding user experience has been the domain of consumer-level software and products such as music players, smartphones, and social media applications. These products are designed to delight and surprise customers in the act of using them. Now, employees have come to expect the same level of usability from software in the workplace. Simplified, tile-based layouts—similar to what you might see on a social media profile—along with small touches like easily-readable fonts and navigation that highlights the most frequently-accessed functions have made their way into recruiting solutions. Candidates also expect complete mobile access to the process of searching and applying for a job, considering it a barrier when they cannot complete this process on a smartphone or tablet. These features can transform the application process from a necessary chore for candidates into a legitimately enjoyable experience.

Embracing a superlative user experience in a recruiting solution has several effects:

- Creates a positive impression of your brand identity on a candidate’s first interaction with your organization
- Streamlines the application process, ensuring a higher number of completed applications
- Appeals to a broader range of potential job seekers



2

PERSONALIZATION

In the context of talent acquisition, personalization is the fusion of a positive user experience with an emphasis on the individual. In other words, a candidate should feel as though they are being treated like an individual and a valued potential employee at your company rather than an entry on a spreadsheet—and he or she should get this sense from the recruiting process itself. Best-in-class talent solutions delivered in the cloud have already embraced this idea by converting the application process into one that more closely resembles configuring a user profile or a networking website such as LinkedIn.

When applying for a new position, most candidates get the sense that their resume will be long forgotten in an obscure database, never to be looked at again. However, through simple tweaks to the process, you can show candidates that their individual time and effort is valuable and appreciated. Asking “Are you more analytical or creative?” or “Do you prefer working on projects alone or with others?” instead of a simple box for “strengths” can lead to both more useful data and a more engaged candidate. Your talent solution could leverage an applicant’s responses to suggest open positions that are the best match for them, offering additional, personalized feedback during a job search. In fact, a focus on personalization is the best way to avoid the trap of the “candidate black hole,” the phenomenon by which more than 50% of job seekers receive literally no response after submitting an application. Solutions that offer a high degree of personalization in recruiting can provide positive feedback to job seekers as simply as visually confirming that a completed section has been saved to their profile and thanking them for the information. This feedback creates a better impression of your company overall even before the submission process is over.

Personalization can offer candidates instant feedback, creating a positive impression of your company even before the submission process is over.

Features like these ensure that a candidate feels like a person rather than a number:

- Enabling users to attach a photo to their online application
- Encouraging the submission of nontraditional information such as hobbies or interests via special sections
- Assuring users that their data will be there waiting for them even if they leave the site

The high-level advantages you can expect through implementing this type of personalization include:

- Continuously positive impression throughout the application process
- Higher likelihood of accurate and complete data
- Brand association—job seekers who feel they were treated well as candidates will retain positive feelings about your organization even if they are not hired
- Persistence—upon return, applicants get the sense that your company remembers them, even when applying for other positions



SOCIAL CONNECTIONS & COLLABORATION

The workforce of today and tomorrow is a social one—89% of job seekers use social media or social networking sites, and almost half of them are active on these sites every day.⁴ Platforms such as Facebook, Google+, and LinkedIn provide extensive information that is useful to both candidates and recruiters when attempting to determine a good fit. Today, talent acquisition solutions leverage integration with social media in order to harness this valuable resource more effectively.

Best-in-class talent solutions allow candidates to apply using their LinkedIn profile, automatically populating dynamic fields with the relevant data, which in turn makes these submissions easier to process. Recruiters can unlock new talent pools via connections to applicants' reference networks, and interesting open positions can be shared instantly on Twitter. A solution that embraces social collaboration will also benefit new hires during the onboarding process. Employees can view existing social connections within the company they may have been unaware of, and identify ways to connect immediately with their new coworkers.

4. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jacquelynsmith/2013/04/16/how-social-media-can-help-or-hurt-your-job-search/>



GLOBAL RECRUITING

More than 20 years ago, the Internet was beginning to transform our regional world of work into a larger global community. Today, businesses around the world are more connected than ever. Forward-thinking organizations have not tried to fight this—instead, they've embraced the many advantages of cultivating a global workforce. In fact, a recent KPMG survey reported that 71% of HR executives feel that collaborating across international borders is more prevalent today than just five years ago, and more than 50% are considering or have added new international offices.⁵ Widespread adoption of cloud applications and advances in mobile technology have made telecommuting from almost anywhere a viable option, and the modern workforce is less likely to be confined to one country or even one continent.

At the same time, people management solutions that embrace a global future are making it easier than ever to hire the best person for the job no matter where in the world they're applying from. Whereas the traditional application process may have been too daunting and convoluted for many international employees to attempt, a cloud-based recruiting solution can offer a nearly identical candidate experience to applicants across the globe.

Best-in-class solutions also provide a high degree of platform configurability to recruiters, allowing them to maintain this consistent experience while ensuring that all required country- or region-specific data is collected during an application. What's more, advances in payroll technology have simultaneously simplified the management of international new hires—the typical hassle of foreign currency conversion and tax compliance can now be handled almost entirely through automation.

5. <https://home.kpmg.com/content/dam/kpmg/pdf/2016/06/pl-rethinking-human-resources-in-a-changing-world.pdf>



5

RECRUITING MILLENNIALS

Our final talent acquisition trend specifically addresses millennial or Gen Y candidates applying for jobs at your organization. By 2020 millennials will make up over a third of the global workforce.⁶ They are a generation that thrives on a constant stream of new challenges, the use of technology, creativity, a flexible work-life balance, collaboration, and feedback. Making a few small tweaks to your recruiting practices now can help ensure you attract and retain the best millennial talent for your organization.

For starters, stay attuned to trends 1 and 2: an outstanding user experience and personalization will appeal to anyone, but are of particular interest to millennials, who expect the same features found in everyday applications to appear in business applications as well. The best user experiences for millennials embrace “gamification,” the concept that traditional form design should be thrown out in favor of fun, simple, and enticing progression through the process.

Here are some other aspects of talent acquisition you can leverage in recruiting millennials:

- Keep mobile in mind—a full 90% of millennials say their phones never leave their sides, and 78% spend more than two hours per day on them for texting, surfing, shopping, and much more.⁷
 - o Offer a nearly identical experience across devices, even empowering candidates to begin an application on one and finish on another
- Social integration, such as applying with data from your LinkedIn profile, or allowing job information to be shared on Twitter for friends to see
- Use the recruiting process to share a little bit of your corporate culture with job applicants and offer a clear statement of purpose

6. http://www.manpowergroup.com/wps/wcm/connect/660ebf65-144c-489e-975c-9f838294c237/MillennialsPaper1_2020Vision_lo.pdf?MOD=AJPERES

7. <http://www.usatoday.com/story/money/personalfinance/2014/09/27/millennials-love-smartphones-mobile-study/16192777/>



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