

THE RESOURCE

VOL. VIII, ISSUE III

HR INSIGHTS

Magazine

from the eyes of industry leaders

HOW DO YOU MEASURE Quality OF HIRE IN A FULL EMPLOYMENT ECONOMY?



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First Impressions Set the Stage and Begin on Day One

5 Old School Recruiting Behaviors That Are Costing You Candidates

3 Ways Millennials Have Changed Candidate Engagement Strategy

As we celebrate the 40th Anniversary of our Company in 2019, I feel compelled to reflect back on the incredible journey that brings us to this milestone. - Kathy Hartung

THE RESOURCE

As we step into our Company's 40th year in 2019, we begin by digging into the current state of our marketplace, our customers' needs, and how we are doing meeting their needs.

What we see is uncharted waters - where the demand for people is much greater than the available supply, and we must provide new and innovative solutions instead of old solutions that no longer work.

Now we get to create that *NEXT FUTURE* for The Resource. We are still highly committed to hiring great employees for our Customers, but the way we do it has and continues to change at a pace that is hard to imagine. We also know that finding the people is only the first step towards matching them with a new career. We must have the tools and technology to match them to the right opportunity and be the bridge to set them up for success.

The Resource's CORE Assessment gives us the Power and Knowledge we need to be that bridge for those looking for a new career, or to find a better fit in their work. It also gives us insight about each person to understand how they operate, and to coach them to succeed and overcome the challenges they encounter. After all, our companies are made up of a bunch of human beings making decisions and taking action. Where else could we make a greater impact than optimizing our people into the right roles, and lifting and coaching them to great success and being their best self?!

The Resource 2019 and beyond offerings:

- Hiring Solutions
- Coaching Solutions
- Training & Development Solutions
- Human Resources (HR) Consulting Solutions
- Career Coaching & Placement Solutions

See the back cover of this issue for a full list of services within each offering!

In 2019, The Resource will be offering monthly **Learning Opportunity Sessions**, as a benefit to our clients and local businesses! These sessions will focus on various topics to aid in both Personal and Professional Development. If you'd like to be notified of upcoming sessions, email info@theresource.com!

“ Are you operating as your BEST SELF? How can we help you be your BEST SELF? Call me. In 10 minutes after taking the CORE, I can begin to help you understand how... ”



Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Hartung". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Kathy Hartung, CEO

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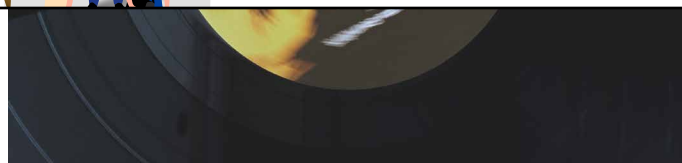
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HR INSIGHTS

from the eyes of industry leaders

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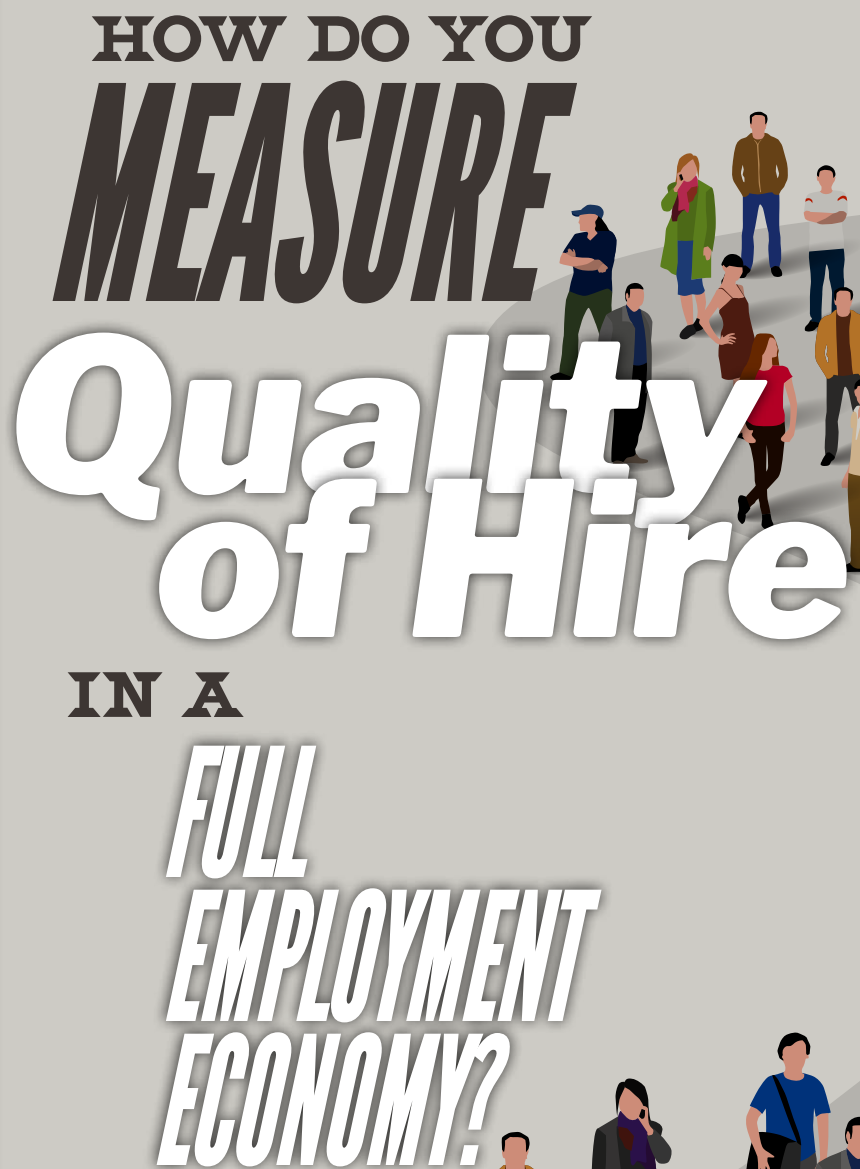
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HOW DO YOU MEASURE Quality of Hire IN A FULL EMPLOYMENT ECONOMY?



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BY TOM MCGUIRE

Hiring during the most competitive talent marketplace in the last three decades is not for the faint of heart. When key skills are at a premium, companies have limited opportunities to attract and win top talent. Hiring tactics that worked ten—or even two—years ago simply don't yield the results that business now demands.

When talent acquisition is this difficult, a focus on filling the top of the funnel to increase the chance that someone will get hired is understandable. And, while that might work in the short term, it's the wrong approach. More candidates may improve the odds of hiring someone, but it's not the best way to improve the odds of landing highly qualified candidates. The more time that hiring managers and talent acquisition professionals spend on managing candidate quantity, the less time they are able to spend on focusing on candidate quality from the top of the funnel down.

In these economic times, and in our knowledge economy, the focus of talent acquisition efforts must first be on quality of hire. This has become more than just a buzzword; it's a key driver of business results.

In order to effectively measure quality of hire and understand how it can be improved, it is important for companies to identify exactly what quality of hire is – and what it is not. Many consider it to be how the hiring manager feels about the recruiting process, the recruiter's performance, and the slate of candidates presented, rather than how the new hire actually performs on the job. This is flawed logic because, as anyone with recruiting experience knows, some hiring managers credit recruiters who play the role of an extra administrative assistant – while criticizing true “talent advisors” who attempt to guide the selection process.

Others believe quality of hire can be determined simply by calculating retention of new hires within a period of time (typically between 90 days and one year.) Regardless of the time frame, retention does not correlate uniquely with quality of hire. Some of the poorest performers, after all, are known to stay employed longer than star players.

The truth is that quality of hire is the level at which a new hire (whether an internal employee promoted to a new position or an external hire) produces value for the business over time. It cannot be detached from retention, as it assumes retention in the role (a new shift manager who leaves within one month or a systems engineer who leaves after one year – regardless of their reasons for doing so – can't be considered a quality hire in this context) and takes into account key performance metrics over a period of time.

True quality of hire is a reason for, rather than reflection of, hiring manager satisfaction with recruiting.

When companies measure quality of hire in this way, particularly for those in critical roles, they can identify talent acquisition processes and methods that lead to the most successful hires. They can, for instance, identify sourcing and selection techniques which are most effective and then double-down on investment in those methods.

The need to improve quality of hire is a pressing one for many reasons, least of which is the estimated cost of replacing a bad hire (conservatively) at around 30 percent of an employee's first year earnings.¹ Most important is that the vast majority of companies build business value through intellectual capital – e.g., the output of knowledge workers creating brands, proprietary technology and databases, patents, strategic customer relationships, and so on – via the exponential productivity that comes with higher quality, particularly when the work is complex². This type of value is what our new economy is built on – and it's created and maintained only by talent. When critical talent leaves, the value of such a business can measurably decrease. Last, as the economy continues to improve and hiring is on the rise, turnover pressure will only increase as employees have the confidence and opportunity to look for more advantageous positions. This makes it more important than ever for companies to ensure they hire the right people, including right fit, when given the opportunity to do so, particularly into mission-critical roles.

The challenge for most organizations is determining which roles merit the tracking and measuring of quality of hire, how to measure it, and then how to prove the business value of their investments in the talent acquisition function.

WHY MEASURE QUALITY OF HIRE?

At a time when HR teams have greater access than ever to information, it can be overwhelming and difficult to arrive at meaningful conclusions about talent strategies and how talent investments affect business results. For example, without isolating clear-cut data to suggest which sources, techniques, and backgrounds lead to the best hires into critical roles, talent acquisition teams are left with anecdotal evidence. The variety of recruiting stakeholders – hiring managers, HR partners, senior leaders, and candidates themselves – presents another challenge, since all have different priorities and expectations. If talent acquisition efforts can't be adequately measured and assessed, it's impossible to explain or defend strategic priorities, trade-offs, outcomes, and return on investment to various stakeholder groups. For these reasons, the ability to measure quality of hire can provide the data talent acquisition teams need to not only continue hiring top candidates but also showcase the results to the rest of the organization. Yet, there is a definite lack of information on this critical metric within most organizations. Companies that have a solid strategy in place for measuring quality of hire have much to gain. Recent research shows that 85 percent of companies that measure quality of hire believe doing so has a positive impact on hiring quality – ergo, what gets measured gets managed. By focusing on quality of hire, organizations can better understand the strengths and future potential of their employees and identify the characteristics they should look for when hiring new talent.

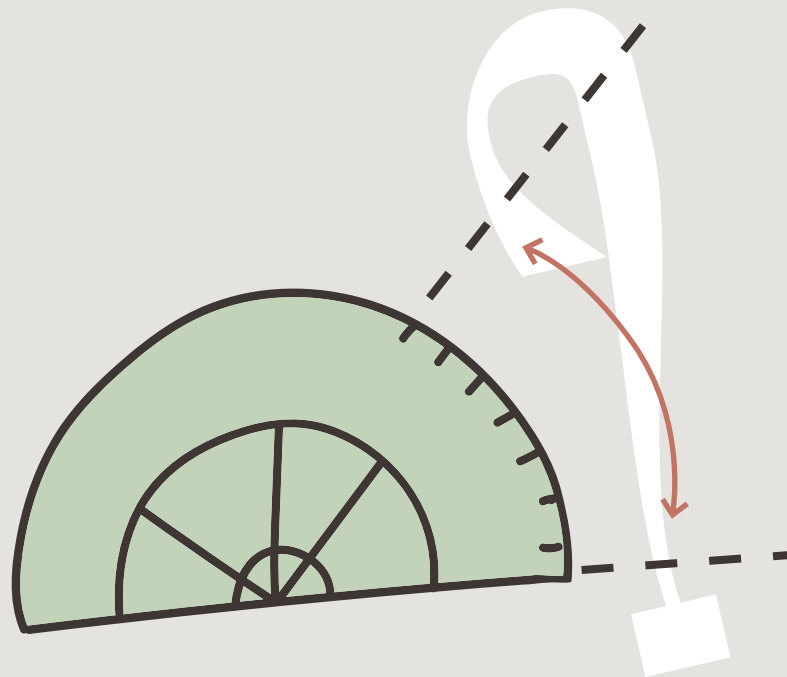


UNDERSTANDING HOW TALENT DRIVES BUSINESS VALUE

First, it's important to understand the formula for creating business value: markets set a company's business value based on reasonable projections of future cash flow driven by asset performance. There are two types of assets to consider: tangible assets (equipment, buildings, trucks, etc. – all of which companies report) and intangible assets (brands, customer relationships, IP, proprietary technology – none of which companies report in their financials unless they sell or acquire another company). Our research³ shows that over 90 percent of the value of leading companies is attributable to intangible assets, such as brands, proprietary data and software, IP, customer relations, etc. These assets that drive the vast majority of business value are created by nothing other than people. It is an organization's human capital that creates intellectual capital – the intangible assets, which can be thought of as the valuable accumulations of employees' intellectual output over time.

To measure the value of talent acquisition investments in a particular organization, one must first understand how value is created (and will be created) within that specific business. For public companies, a review of public documents such as investor presentations and 10-Ks provides a solid baseline understanding. It is easy to determine that for a company like Raytheon, a relatively small team of engineers creates the greatest amount of business value for the organization. For companies like Coca-Cola and Proctor & Gamble, it's brand managers and product innovation professionals. For Merck, it's the R&D team creating patentable new drugs. Great hires in these areas for these businesses will result in huge gains in business value. Poor hires, on the flipside, will create great risk. For this reason alone, talent acquisition should be much more strategic with the prioritization and handling of requisitions. Every req shouldn't be treated equally nor should more time be spent on the oldest requisitions or those of the loudest hiring managers. Instead, talent acquisition should focus on investing in the attraction and selection of the talent that is most valuable to the business.

Almost all companies project the cliché that “our people are our greatest assets,” but how many back that reality up and manage it with measurable data? Not many. In order to maximize human capital productivity – truly managing our “greatest assets” – one must look at the entire spectrum of talent practices – how people are hired, organized, managed, rewarded, engaged, and, as a consequence, the value they provide. In other words, measuring the total of how talent is managed. The very big picture is not just about the people, or simply hiring the right people. Intellectual capital is successfully created and sustained when a company acquires the right people and provides the right environment within which they can thrive - effectively organizing, leading, rewarding, and retaining teams of people. Without strong leadership and organizations, the most talented employees will be stymied in their efforts to produce value-added work.



CHALLENGES IN MEASURING QUALITY OF HIRE

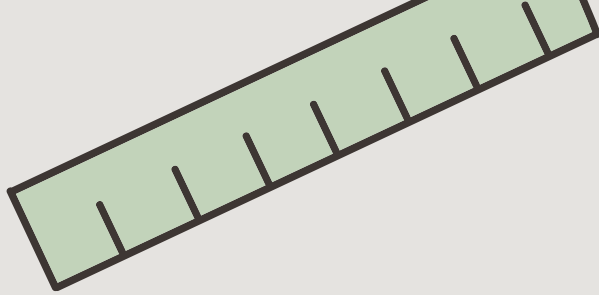
While maximizing business value depends on managing the entire spectrum of talent practices, it all begins with hiring – if quality of hire falls short, all people investments after that fact are sub-optimized. So, why don't more companies measure quality of hire in the way we've discussed – or at all? These are the obstacles and objections we've heard from HR and talent leaders over the years:

- We can't get leaders to agree on which jobs for which we should measure quality
- We can't get leaders to agree on how to measure quality
- The data is in different systems so it is hard to get
- We can report on it – but then it will appear that poor quality of hire is our (TA / TM / HR) fault – when it's really the managers'

Ultimately, the issue comes down to accountability; many organizations are simply unsure of who should bear the responsibility of measuring and acting on this. Should it be HR or talent acquisition? It's a fair question since, after all, they are the ones who identify, engage, and evaluate the talent put forward. On the other hand, few would suggest they are accountable for what happens after the hiring stage when the ongoing management of those employees is clearly the responsibility of the manager.

When it comes to hiring managers, they often view quality of hire as whether or not they're pleased with the candidates presented to them. When pressed, they will often state that they felt pressured to hire the best candidate presented by talent acquisition – not the best candidate. Many managers consider turnover rates, performance and cultural fit as a reflection of hiring quality.⁴ This is ironic considering that many employees quit specifically because of their manager.

Measuring quality of hire involves much more than just the hiring process or how long the employee stays in their new role. As previously mentioned, it should be seen as a measure of how the individual performs over time. The question of accountability – who should be recognized or penalized when quality of hire is poor – is moot. Rather than deciding on which group to “assign” such a metric to (and potentially punish for), the first step is to begin tracking it.



Quality of hire data can be hard to identify. That's why it's important to begin with a few roles that are clearly most critical to building future business value.

So, what can organizations do to start the process? Instead of trying to measure quality of hire for all employees across the organization, a reasonable first step is to begin measuring a segment of the organization that drives the greatest business value, like engineers in our Raytheon example. Also crucial is understanding that quality of hire should never be subjective – the fact that a manager is happy with the recruiter assigned to him or satisfied when his employees don't quit doesn't correlate with the creation of business value over time. Instead, it should be based on specific data points that indicate current and projected productivity among those employees. In many companies, these would be:

1. **Retention**– The length of time an employee has been with the company is a ticket to measuring quality of hire, as the employee should be in place at least two years to begin to understand the value they bring. If an employee quits (for any reason), there is nothing more to measure.
2. **Performance ratings**– Performance ratings are a critical data point for measuring employees. Even when such processes and ratings are imperfect, they are likely imperfect throughout the organization, thus creating a generally fair apples-to-apples calibration of talent.
3. **Potential ratings**– Assessments of potential success in advanced positions is another valuable data point when striving to measure quality of talent over time.
4. **Promotion history** – Understanding how an employee has progressed in terms of promotion and salary history within the organization will provide yet another data point about the value they contribute to the organization.

The power in these factors is their combined value as an “index” rather than their stand-alone relevance as an individual indicator.⁵

There may be additional business-based data points available for particular roles that would be valuable to consider – such as P&L results, new product launch metrics, net promoter scores, etc. For greatest success, the right few talent metrics most indicative of quality of hire in a particular role, and how to measure them, should be identified and agreed upon by senior leaders.

By analyzing numerous metrics and involving multiple parties, the organization can have a fuller picture and better understanding of their quality of hire. Many companies still struggle to get to this state and may rely too heavily on one metric – such as sales revenue. This only tells one side of the story; additional objective data points are needed. Without doing this, a company won't fully understand what defines success and leverage this information to hire more high-performing talent in the future.

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR QUALITY OF HIRE?

To create an effective strategy for measuring quality of hire, measurement should come before discussions about accountability. Debating who should be responsible, how they should be held accountable, and consequences for good or bad results can derail the more important conversation. Most critical is:

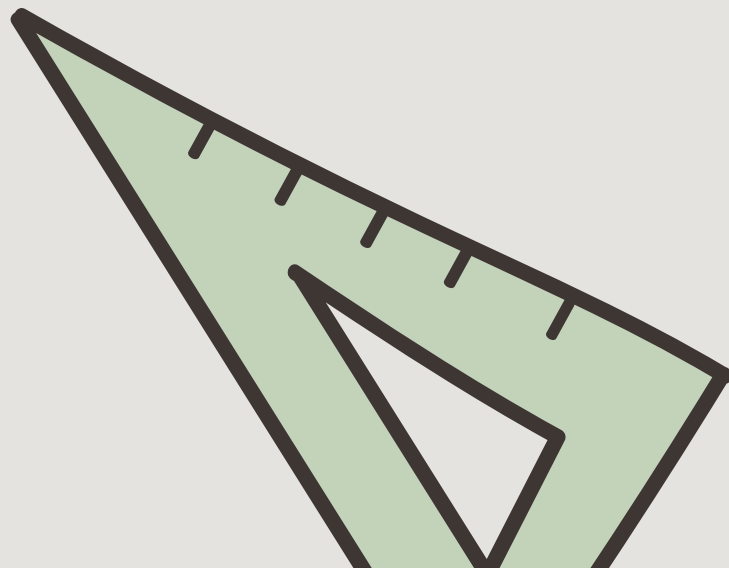
- How can quality of hire be measured in our organization?
- What is the value this measurement can bring?
- How can the measurement be sustained over time?
- What actions will we take based on the data?
- In what areas of the organization should we begin tracking quality of hire?

In many companies, efforts to track quality of hire derail at the beginning – with talent acquisition – for whom it is assumed is “most responsible” for such a metric (the “hire” in “quality of hire” is probably a misnomer). Understandably, talent acquisition is often reluctant to focus on this metric because they can't be responsible for other factors outside their control or things that happen after the onboarding stage. This isn't the place that such discussions should begin – given how much is at stake for the business if the results are good versus poor. Therefore, support must come from the top, ideally prompted by a team from both HR and Finance.

Don't let questions about who's “responsible” for quality of hire derail efforts to begin measuring it for a few critical roles.

Only after these discussions take place, agreement is gained, and the measurement method is defined, implemented, and evaluated, should the aspect of accountability enter the conversation. Once in place and results are reviewed over a period of quarters, then accountability for different aspects of quality can be assessed and assigned. Of course, the best measures are those of importance to senior leaders in the company, so we begin there. Following that, aspects of quality accountability should be assigned to hiring managers, HR (specifically talent acquisition, talent management, and HR generalists), and other stakeholders in the process.

An example of an essential slice of quality of hire that talent acquisition should be held accountable for is source of hire. Based on quality results, an assessment should be made by talent acquisition relative to what are the most effective sources and which are the least effective. Over-investing in the best sources, for the right hires, and reporting on the results, is the responsibility of talent acquisition.





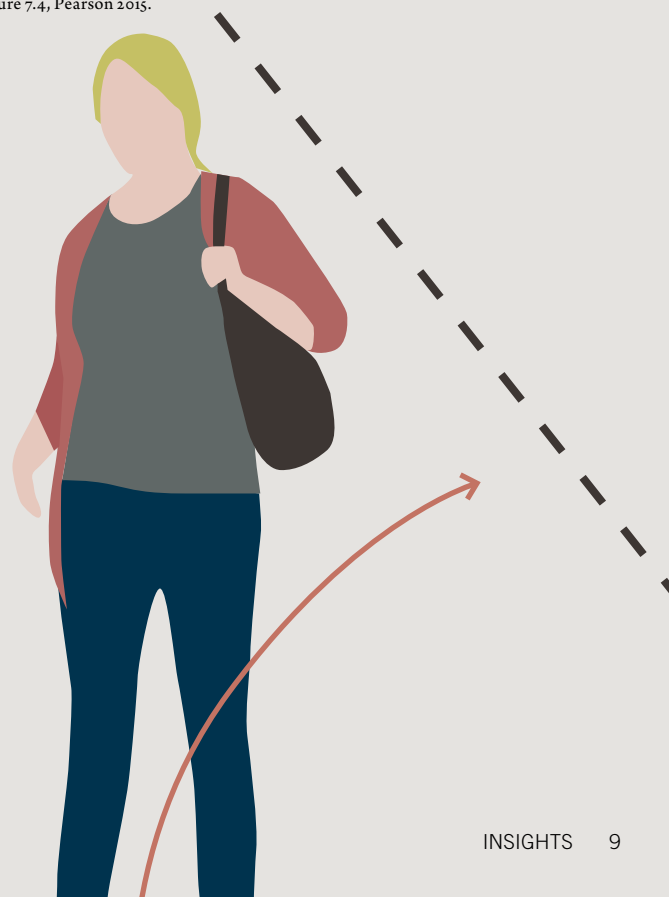
TYING QUALITY OF HIRE TO BUSINESS SUCCESS

When companies understand the components of a good hire, they can continue hiring to that same (or better) level and work to ensure their best talent is retained. The challenge lies in measuring quality of hire and determining who is responsible for it. Rather than just being considered a metric that indicates the success of talent acquisition, quality of hire should be based on business value delivered through intellectual capital and instead of being relegated to one team, senior leaders, HR, talent management, talent acquisition, and front-line leaders should all play a part in measuring, managing, and improving quality of hire.

As talent increasingly serves as the biggest differentiator, the ability to understand how people contribute to organizational success is essential to maintaining competitive advantage. By identifying what makes them successful on the job, a company can continue hiring individuals who have the greatest likelihood of succeeding. This insight is essential to creating – and sustaining – a high-performing organization. ■

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5. ¹ “The Unexpectedly High Cost of a Bad Hire” LinkedIn, Ryan Holmes, July 16, 2013. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20130716151946-2967511-the-high-costs-of-a-bad-hire-and-how-to-avoid-them/>
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7. ³ Intellectual Capital Index, Talent Growth Advisors, 2017. <https://talentgrowthadvisors.com/our-big-idea/ici>
8. ⁴ “The Holy Grail of Recruiting: How to Measure Quality of Hire,” SHRM, 2015. <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/how-to-measure-quality-of-hire.aspx>
9. ⁵ Talent Valuation: Accelerate Market Capitalization Through Your Most Important Asset, Figure 7.4, Pearson 2015.



STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING QUALITY OF HIRE

Once the company determines which metrics are most important for quality of hire and who is responsible for what, the next step is to put those plans into action. During our discussion, our group of talent acquisition leaders opened up about the methods they have used to not only measure quality of hire, but also actively work to improve it. Some of these strategies include:

- **Recognize the competencies of top employees to hire candidates with similar traits:**

“We don’t just do competency-based interviews alone, but we also examine ‘attributes’ on how employees are hard-wired. We had a consultant come in and figure out why people stayed and identified those items to roll into interview questions. So, we can use this insight as a predictive tool for new hires.”

- **Get everyone on the same page:**

“Everyone needs to understand what good looks like – or we’re all coming from different perspectives, and we’ll never get there together.”

- **Take a closer look at the way talent is evaluated within the organization:**

“To perform effective talent management, we rely on performance ratings and potential ratings, and we gain insight into the preferences of the individual and understand when they will be ready to advance internally. We are constantly trying to get better at this.”

- **Figure out how to prioritize the work and over-invest in the right talent:**

“Years ago, the most critical jobs would be tied to revenue. But our thinking has evolved – and we’re connecting those jobs to intellectual capital, not just revenue. There is a nuance on figuring out where to invest.”

- **Understand that quality of hire varies for different groups:**

“Quality measures and time horizons are very different, so measuring quality is hard, because we have new hires that won’t be with us for longer than two years. Measuring quality of hire for retail versus engineers is very different. The approach has to be different for different populations. You have to address each appropriately and then provide that data to leadership in the right way. You have to adapt based on your industry but also the specifics of your company. We can all learn from each other, but likely don’t want to replicate the same processes.”

HOW TO SCALE A TEAM

VISION, VALUES, CULTURE

BY BRIAN ANDERSON



It's one thing to recognize that your organization needs to do more—get more clients, spend more advertising dollars, fix more software bugs, create more ad campaigns. It's another thing to organize the teams that make it possible to achieve these goals. If this seems like a lot for one person to figure out with a single Google search, well, you're right. It takes a concerted effort from everyone in the leadership team to decide on a direction and hash out the details. Without this advanced preparation, however, your team expansion can become a serious long-term liability.

In the Startup Genome Report, researchers from UC Berkeley and Stanford found that 70 percent of the startups they surveyed tried to scale too early, before other fundamentals of their business were in place. The report also concluded that premature scaling played a part in 90 percent of failed startups.¹

Why is this such a prevalent problem? It comes down to the fact that these decisions don't happen in a vacuum. When there's pressure to improve performance, it can be tempting to use hiring numbers as a façade of success. For example, the pressure could be on a startup founder to provide favorable indicators for the next investor briefing or a mid-sized software company to respond to countless requests for an additional feature and deliver before their competitors.

Hiring isn't like flipping a switch and starting full-scale production. "Depending on the position, it can take up to nine months to

really start getting ROI," says Morgan Lyman, Talent Acquisition Partner at BambooHR. This hiring investment includes the cost of hiring, which SHRM estimates to be an average of \$4,129 per employee, as well as the working hours current employees spend training new employees. "Unhealthy and premature turnover means a huge loss of company assets and resources," Lyman explains.²

Instead of covering long-term uncertainty with a quick win, spend time determining how your organization's vision, values, and culture will operate on a new team.

VISION—SCALING TEAMS WITH PURPOSE

Scaling a team isn't a one-size-fits-all process. Before you can succeed at scaling up a team, you need to identify the reason you need additional people on that team. Do you have a fully functioning department with excellent leadership and need more people to

increase the capacity? Are you expanding into unfamiliar territory, and you need someone with skills and insights that your organization doesn't have? In many cases, it's a little of both.

You need to define the nature of your team's growth well before you start crafting job descriptions for new team members. Rushing the job description is a common mistake when organizations are hiring under pressure, but nailing down the details can lead to important savings in the long term. "Sometimes, making sure to be as thorough as you can with a job description can result in realizing you might not need to hire for that position, period," says Lyman.

One example of this situation comes with tasks that can be automated. If the single HR person in your organization can't keep up with the time-off requests now that you have too many people to track on a single Google calendar, it may be more efficient to find software to streamline the process than it would be to hire additional HR assistants and train them in a tedious and complicated spreadsheet process.

VALUES—SCALING TEAMS WITH INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

If your organization's vision is what you want to accomplish, then your organization's values describe how you want to accomplish your vision. Long-term success in scaling a team requires an alignment between what employees value and what the organization values. Without this alignment, you'll have a hard time finding and keeping employees on your new or expanding teams.

You don't need to put your values into words on a poster for employees to understand what they are. Their experience at your organization will prove what you value more clearly than any list or mantra. If your organization values profit above all else, that will show in how it treats employees and customers. If your organization values the employee experience from the hiring phase onward and acts accordingly, it will reflect in the reviews that current and former employees leave on Glassdoor and other review sites.

While employer values and employee values are two sides of the same coin, they still have important differences in how they're expressed. This is where trouble may arise. For example, a small organization may come to value employee autonomy, a culture in which employees work together, speak their minds, and come up with great solutions without waiting for someone else to go first. As this organization begins to scale their team, they plan on keeping a flat structure, where everyone works autonomously without layers of bureaucracy to slow things down.

As they put this plan into practice, they may discover that it's harder to provide oversight for such a large group, making it difficult for everyone to understand the vision and for leadership to make corrections. They discover the difference between autonomy and independence—just because employees can keep working without being monitored doesn't mean they can make any choice they want without affecting the trajectory of the group.

Autonomy, communication, and many other individual values require different strategies to fully express themselves in a group setting. As you scale your teams, it's important to recognize the limits of these individual values and support them with effective management structures. While optimal team size will vary from position to position, try to keep management to a series of small- to moderate-sized teams. Every employee should have a team where their efforts can be recognized, and every team should have a clear connection to the organization's leadership and values.

CULTURE—SCALING TEAMS FOR FUTURE GROWTH

Articulating your vision and living your values helps create the final ingredient of successfully scaling a team: an effective culture. While there are many definitions of culture, we prefer this one:

Organizational culture is the summation of how people within an organization interact with each other and work together.

Like vision and values, the most effective cultures have a purpose and a direction. Ask yourself this: what kind of workplace do you want to create for your new team? How will this new team impact how current employees communicate and collaborate?

Some organizations try to create a culture by basing job descriptions on successful team members. A more successful method of recruiting is searching for complements to your team members, not clones of your team members.

Whether you're hiring a software engineer or a support hero, the position will have a wide variety of qualifications that make for a successful candidate. Instead of basing a job description on a person, take a careful look at the skills and attributes that make the person successful. How do the new hire's attributes compare and contrast with the other members of the team? Do they shore up their teammates' weaknesses, or do they magnify them?

As you grow, it's important to be careful with your referrals program. While asking employees for referrals is one of the quickest ways to hire, people tend to be friends with people who have similar backgrounds, attitudes, and characteristics. Overemphasizing referrals can lead to multiplying weaknesses instead of mitigating them and can reduce diversity in your organization.

Every new hire will have strengths and weaknesses. It's important to recognize that, as your organization grows, you need a plan for how your employees can grow with it. This doesn't mean that every employee needs to be on the management track to be worth hiring; employees should have opportunities to develop their professional and institutional knowledge. Then as your team continues to grow, they can help develop their new coworkers' capacity in the same way as your team grows from good to great.

Clear vision, lived values, and authentic culture. Whether you're considering how to scale a startup or how to expand a single team, these essential principles make all the difference.

Building a team takes more than making deals to get people to sign up. It takes planning out how that team will grow together, not just from HR's perspective, but in your organization's larger financial and strategic narrative. To succeed in scaling your team, you need to understand these principles well enough to make them clear to everyone involved, including leadership and management. ■

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1. Max Marmer, Bjoern Lasse Herrmann, Ertan Dogrultan, and Ron Berman, *Startup Genome Report Extra on Premature Scaling*, Startup Genome, 2011, <http://innovation-footprints.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/startup-genome-report-extra-on-premature-scaling.pdf>
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First Impressions Set the Stage and Begin on Day One

BY ERIC MAGNUSSEN

Imagine your first day on a new job. You arrive and no one is waiting to greet you, or your HR representative is running late. When you do get started, you are asked to fill out some forms for taxes and benefits, but you don't receive guidance on your 401k distributions until you prompt your representative. After this, a two-minute "welcome" video is played describing the basics of the company, and you are then whisked away to meet your team only to find out that half of them are at lunch and you have no desk and you can't login to your laptop. The final icing on the cake is that it is only half past noon.

Simply put, the initial impression of your company to new employees can mean the difference between their long-term commitment and their willingness to leave for the next best offer. Making a good first impression for a new employee sets the tone for your relationship and it all begins with proper onboarding.

Known by various terms, the concept of onboarding is not particularly new. The classic name for onboarding might be "orientation" which speaks to the original concept: pointing a new employee in the right direction to complete core forms and cover basic company information. Unfortunately, this level of engagement ends up being more about covering the requirements for a new hire than about welcoming a new member of the team/company and it can easily leave employees feeling lost amidst the whirl of their first day on the job.

The ramifications of a poor first day can resonate for years with employees feeling that "from Day 1" they weren't taken seriously, or that the company wasn't concerned about their wellbeing. These attitudes left unaltered can turn into poor performance, potentially negative views expressed inside and outside of the workplace, and disloyalty.

Let's review some of the basics that successful onboarding processes cover and then discuss how you can tailor your options to fit your organization's needs and culture.

THE BASICS

When onboarding a new hire, you should always have a structured plan that outlines the first day in conjunction with the new hire's manager. For most companies, the HR professional will use the first portion of the day to discuss corporate policies, benefits, and the basics of the environment after which the manager will take over.

At a minimum, you should consider the following elements for your new hire to help the first day go smoothly:





- **Welcome Email/Call** – as the HR representative, be sure to include the following in your “welcome” outreach: location details, where to park, which entrance to use, and where/when you will meet them. Don’t forget to talk about dress code for the first day so that the new hire will know what to wear to feel at home.
- **Agenda** – include the time, location, and names/titles of the people who are going to be meeting with the new hire throughout the day.
- **Forms/Benefits** – tax information, 401k distribution/matching, benefits/bonuses and a new hire’s eligibility for such, beneficiary forms, and healthcare policies will need to be reviewed. Call out places for signatures to make it easier for the employee and provide key points up front for each section to act as a thought starter.
- **Corporate Information** – the level of detail you will need here is up to you and your company policy, but if the amount of information is lengthy, consider dividing this information into easily understandable groups with breaks built in allowing the employee to digest what is being learned. Always cover how employees can access this information in the future at their own leisure.
- **Technology/Access** – work with IT to ensure that hardware (computer, mobile phone, tablet, etc.) is available from the moment the employee arrives and that a first-time login/walk-through is scheduled. Access to email, team folders, and intranet sites on their first day will also give options for employee training in the first few weeks as they begin to transition into their roles. Building/parking access, ID photos, and employee profiles should also be covered.
- **Seating Arrangements** – work with your organization or facility management to make sure that the employee will have their permanent location available. While most new hires will travel light on their first day, acclimation to their location (including directing them how to get to and from their desk) helps transition them to feeling like they are a part of the company.
- **Manager/Team Introduction** – this should be a soft handoff with you remaining for a little while through introductions and making sure that the employee is comfortable. Since you will have spent the most time with them so far in the onboarding, you will be a familiar face that they may not want to suddenly be without. Consider planning an activity, such as lunch, where you can be included while the employee gets to know the other team members.

At CTCA®, for example, we have a 3-day new employee orientation called Hope Joy Pride that provides onboarding for all new hires within the same time period. This is a mandatory orientation process that all new hires must complete before their “official” first day on the job. During these three days, department leaders present key information about their roles within the organization. We provide all benefits and retirement information during this time as well. All new hires receive a “buddy” who works in a different department than the new hire and with whom they meet for the first time during Hope Joy Pride. At the end of Hope Joy Pride, the new hires’ managers and other team members are invited to join us to celebrate together – usually with refreshments. These are little details that make a big difference.

THE PERSONAL TOUCHES

To add even more value to the onboarding experience, think about the personal touches that you would want to see if you were being onboarded today:

- Something as simple as including your picture in the “Welcome Email” will go a long way to let the new employee know you want them to know with whom they are going to be interacting when they arrive.
- Having coffee and/or tea with light pastries and fruit during your morning session can be a nice surprise.
- Providing a tour of the location including how to get in and out of the building.
- Recommending good places to get lunch in the area if an employee had to relocate or has a long commute.
- Circling back at the end of the day to either check in with the employee or walk out with them can be a great way to bookend the onboarding experience.

JUST THE BEGINNING

The ability to tailor an onboarding for a specific employee can seem time consuming, but with a little practice, it can become routine and make a world of difference to someone who is joining your company. Don’t hesitate to solicit feedback in company surveys, as this can be an invaluable guide for what your employees did or did not like. Remember, this is just the beginning: succession planning and a well thought out career path will go a long way to continue the good work that starts with a great first impression. ■

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WAYS YOUR EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE NEEDS TO CHANGE

BY LILITH CHRISTIANSEN

Nearly half of employers say it's taking them longer to fill jobs today than any other period in the post-industrial era, and 60 percent of employers' attribute that directly to a tough hiring environment, according to a 2018 survey by Harris Poll, SilkRoad Technology, and CareerBuilder. In a competitive market—where 51 percent of employees continue to apply to positions even when they've received an offer, and 67 percent of employers report almost a quarter of new hires not showing up after accepting a position¹—adjusting the first introduction of your company to a candidate is pivotal. If they aren't impressed, they may not finish applying, accept an offer, or even show up. Doing what you can to show how you value employees as you recruit them will be a key differentiator for top talent.

EMPLOYEES ARE IN HIGH-DEMAND IN A TIGHT LABOR MARKET

In a tight labor market that's increasingly job seeker-centric, employers need to hire from the candidate's perspective—understand what they want in a recruitment and new employee experience—or risk losing prospective candidates and current employees.

Employees are the backbone of every company, regardless of industry. With the workforce being the sole driver behind product creation, client, and customer service, it's imperative organizations demonstrate the understanding that its employees are the core of its business. When a company doesn't embrace an employee-centered approach, it often leads to issues with productivity, engagement, and retention.

For the past few years, the unemployment rate in the United States has been dropping steadily. In October 2018, the unemployment rate was at its lowest in 50 years, and unemployment stayed low through the end of 2018 at its lowest rates (3.9 percent) since December 1969, with projections for the economy and job growth to remain strong. A tight labor market impacts all companies and

industries in a variety of ways. The current job market is shifting the leverage in the job search process to the candidate — with more job opportunities and a strong economy, a job seeker has more options for evaluating their prospective employer than when jobs are scarce.

Struggling to recruit and retain employees has a significant impact on productivity and speed-to-market. The fight for talent is only going to intensify as candidates have more choices in employment. U.S. employers need to deliver on job seekers' continuously evolving expectations to attract and retain the right candidates.

Recruiting for retention starts with streamlining and customizing the hiring process. Sixty-eight percent of employees believe their experience as a job candidate reflects how the company treats its people, and 43 percent of employees say they have higher expectations for how employers treat them as a candidate given the current hiring environment¹.

It's quickly become an evolve or die moment when it comes to managing talent pools.

6 WAYS TO CHANGE YOUR RECRUITING PROCESS TO ATTRACT, RETAIN TALENT

1. Make the job application fast, easy and convenient. It may seem straightforward, but the experience a candidate has completing an application on your website or career portal can drastically shift how they view you as an employer and whether they will finish applying, accept an offer, or show up on day one. Employees today are easily frustrated and turned away when an application is cumbersome and repetitive. Thirty-five percent of employees cite applications that take too long to complete as a top five frustration when looking for a job, followed closely by uploading a resume and still needing to manually complete fields (33 percent). One-in-five candidates give less than 10 minutes to a job application (20 percent), or two to three pages on a mobile device (21 percent), otherwise, they don't finish.¹

2. Communicate early and often with applicants. When much of our lives is internet and technology-enabled, candidates know that it's possible for a company to send confirmation notices with a click of the button. Candidates want transparency in their process — 82 percent of employees expect the employer to provide a clear timeline for the hiring process and to keep them updated throughout¹. They receive enough emails, confirmations, and notices from other industries as a consumer, they anticipate a similar stream of communication as a candidate.

3. Go mobile and automate. The number of candidates applying to jobs via a mobile device is growing (43 percent of employees), so having a mobile-friendly application will help you stand out as a prospective employer¹. Similarly, automating touchpoints of the recruitment process so that candidates know their resume and application was received, when they may hear from a hiring manager, or how long the process may take, will make your HR and hiring manager's job easier, and keep good graces with a candidate. Stepping up the frequency of communication with a candidate is key to keeping them interested as well.

4. Speed is key; don't leave candidates hanging. When applying to a job, more than half of employees (55 percent) will give up and move on if they haven't heard from an employer within two weeks of applying¹. While the standards of recruiting have always been to only let candidates know they are out of the process when an offer has been accepted, employees are used to speedy communication from brands like Amazon, Uber, and Netflix — and expect the same in the hiring process. Employees aren't used to waiting and may not accept a screening call or interview, leaving you to lower tiers of talent pools. In fact, many seasonal hires are made with one phone call, never meeting in person until the employee's first day.

5. Start onboarding before day one and think of logistics. Many employers start an employee's first day or first week with paperwork, but this can all be done before the employee sets foot in the office. Providing material ahead of time gives an employee a chance to review on their own terms, ask their loved ones for advice, and make decisions on insurance and other benefits. Also, open communication prior to a start date with a hiring manager gives an employee a chance to ask logistical questions about their first day—travel tips, where to park, whom they'll meet, and where they'll eat lunch. Small things can make a big difference for an employee to turn their first day jitters into excitement and hope rather than anxiety and frustration.

6. Purposefully integrate new hires into their roles and company culture for long-term engagement. The missing link for many companies is fostering engagement from day one with strategic onboarding. The value a company places on its employees is communicated through its employee experience—how it orientates and acculturates employees through onboarding and whether that process was meaningful. Tackling transaction elements ahead of day one allows an employee to focus on what will truly make them a strong contributor to their role, their department, and the company's growth overall. Nearly one in ten employees (nine percent) have left a company because of a poor onboarding experience, and 37 percent of employees didn't think their manager played a critical role in supporting their onboarding experience¹. Truly strategic onboarding needs to be honed by executives and company leadership. Making the onboarding relevant to the company is important too — NCSOFT, a video game developer, customized a new employee portal using characters and language from its games, which enveloped new hires in the culture from the start.

As companies leverage digital assets and capabilities to learn more about their customers' preferred experience, as well as collect and analyze data to anticipate their needs, wants, and desires, many organizations have come to realize how their internal experience correlates to their external one. In layman's terms, there's a strong relationship between engaged employees and satisfied customers. ■

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5 Old School Recruiting Behaviors That Are Costing You Candidates

SIDE 1

BY
THOMAS BOYLE

STEREO
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MADE IN ENGLAND

Today's job seekers are more tech-savvy than ever before. This applies to virtually every candidate and role. Gone are days of walking in and applying in person – this approach has been replaced with the expectation of a personalized online experience that can be delivered entirely on mobile devices.

As organizations look to leverage technology to help manage the candidate experience and the overall hiring process, it's paramount that they understand that technology alone will never be enough. Technology is only part of the solution. Real success comes when organizations realize the importance of change management and challenging the way they have always done things.

All too often organizations take the same old school behaviors they've relied on before technology was in place and then try to replicate them with technology. It's time to eliminate or replace these practices. Having consulted with organizations across a wide range of industries and sizes, I have compiled a list of old school behaviors that impede the ability to attract and convert candidates in today's market.

- **So What'cha Want:** When it comes to candidates, and more importantly career sites, one size doesn't fit all. Today's candidates expect targeted personalized content. It's no longer enough to have a single career page in the hopes that visitors will find the right job, understand why they should work for you, and ultimately apply. Organizations looking to stand out should create multiple branded career pages targeting the most important types of roles and audiences.
- **Get It Together:** In today's technology driven world it has become increasingly common to hear about data breaches with some of the largest most recognizable organizations. As a result, candidates and consumers alike have become reluctant to supply personal information without a strong sense of purpose and security. All too often organizations are collecting personal

information that puts both the organization and candidate at risk. Review the candidate journey to ensure that you're collecting only what you need and when you need it.

- **Poor Communication:** Above everything else candidates are looking for transparency and the perception of fairness throughout the application process. One of the most common mistakes I see is waiting too long to disqualify applicants. If your average time to fill is 30 days and you have a shortlist of candidates being interviewed, there is no need to wait to disqualify the other applicants until the end of the process. Be respectful of their time and communicate as much information as possible as often as you can.
- **Hold It Now, Hit It:** Change management is paramount when leveraging technology for your hiring process. Stop dipping your toes into automation. Simply automating your old paper process is not enough—don't be afraid to double down on automation and leverage technology that makes your work more efficient. This is your time to challenge the status quo. Partner with your technology provider, review best practices, and continuously review your hiring process and technology adoption.
- **Sabotage:** A majority of organizations leveraging technology have a one and done consideration and placement strategy. This means that candidates are considered solely for the position to which they apply. Once disqualified they are notified and the record sits in the Applicant Tracking System with no activity or consideration. Increase operational readiness and reduce your time to fill by leveraging technology to tag high potential candidates and create shared talent pools. ■

Thomas Boyle is a seasoned product executive who has spent the past 20+ years building innovative technologies that change the way people work. His expertise spans all areas of talent management, with a focus on talent acquisition in support of large enterprise organizations. In his current role at Cornerstone, he provides advice to clients to help fully leverage and optimize the Cornerstone application and create business strategies to align with business goals and objectives.

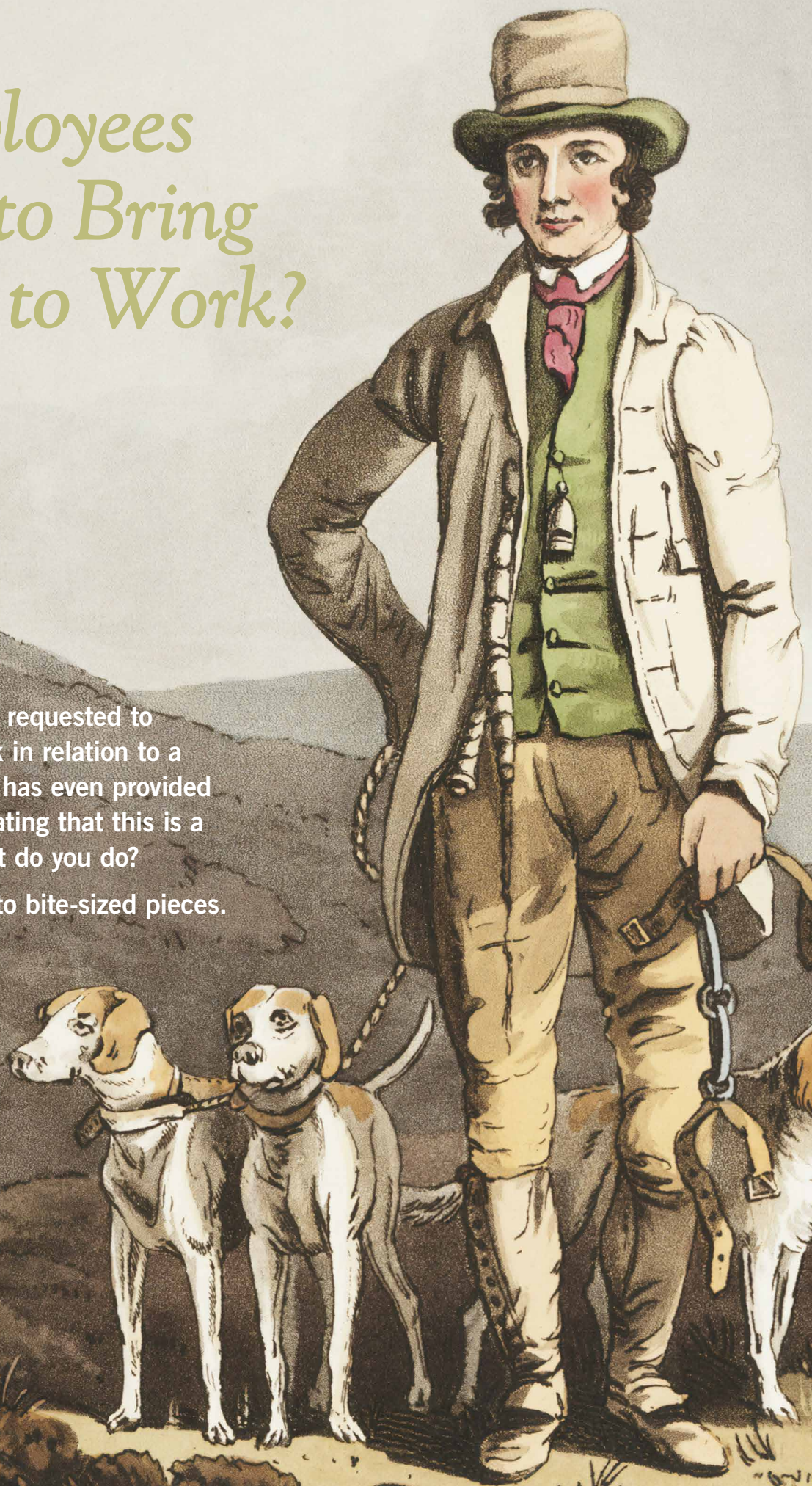
This article originally appeared on ReWork, an online magazine sponsored by Cornerstone OnDemand featuring news and ideas on the future of work. Visit ReWork at www.cornerstoneondemand.com/rework.

Are Employees Entitled to Bring Animals to Work?

BY HANNAH WOOLSEY

Your employee has requested to bring her dog to work in relation to a medical condition. She has even provided you a certificate illustrating that this is a service dog. What do you do?

Let's break this down into bite-sized pieces.



WHAT LEGAL PROTECTIONS ARE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH SERVICE DOGS?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits employers from discriminating against individuals with disabilities. As such, employers need to consider the organization's obligations under the ADA when deciding if there is a legal duty to allow a service dog to accompany an individual, even if the standard practice is to prohibit animals on premises. There are three separate parts of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) addressing different areas in which qualified individuals with disabilities could be discriminated:

- **Title I** prohibits employers from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities in all aspects of employment.
- **Title II** applies to state and local government entities and protects qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination in services, programs, and activities provided by state and local government entities.
- **Title III** prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in places of public accommodation such as restaurants, schools, and medical offices.

Where Title II and Title III cover service animals in public spaces, Title I covers service and other animals in the employment context.

Consider this scenario: an individual requests to bring a dog into your restaurant — do you have a legal obligation to grant this request? If this request is made by a customer with a service animal as defined by the ADA, then you do have a legal obligation under Title III to allow it. If the request is made by one of your servers, however, then you need to determine whether you are obligated under Title I of the ADA to allow an employee to bring a service animal to work.

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF THIS IS ACTUALLY A SERVICE ANIMAL PROTECTED BY THE ADA?

A service animal is defined by the ADA as a dog that has been individually trained to perform tasks or do work for an individual with a disability. It might come as a surprise that the ADA does not require that service animals be professionally trained. In fact, it would be sufficient for an individual to train her own dog to do work or perform tasks related to her disability. It's important to note that an individual does not have to provide any "proof" that their animal has been certified or trained as a service animal. Also noteworthy, service animal certification or registration documents, which can be purchased online, do not convey any legal rights under the ADA.

So how do you know for certain whether or not an animal qualifies under the ADA? For purposes of considering your obligations as an employer, it really doesn't matter whether it's a service animal as defined by the ADA or some other type of animal like an emotional support animal (i.e. an animal that provides comfort to an individual just by being with the person). This is because Title I doesn't distinguish between service animals and other types of animals, but rather, it requires an employer to provide any reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities to remove workplace barriers unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the employer.

HOW WILL YOU KNOW IF YOU NEED TO ALLOW AN ANIMAL AS A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION?

To determine whether you have an obligation to grant an employee's request for accommodation, including the request to bring an animal to work, you must engage in the interactive process required by the ADA. Failing to engage in the interactive process can result in legal liability for your organization.

If medical documentation supports the need for a service or emotional support animal at work, then you need to determine whether you can reasonably make this accommodation without it imposing an undue hardship on the organization. As part of the interactive process, you are allowed to gather information to help you determine the nature of the medical condition and what accommodations are medically necessary. You may consider asking the employee's medical provider to explain how the employee's disability and the service animal's function are related, and how the service animal will improve the employee's ability to perform their job (you will want to attach a copy of the employee's job description). Although you cannot require the animal to have professional training, the animal must demonstrate it has been sufficiently trained to not disrupt the workplace in order for this to be considered a reasonable accommodation.

Once you've engaged in the interactive process, you need to determine whether you can grant the accommodation without imposing an undue hardship on the organization. The existence of an "undue hardship" is a question of fact and depends on the specific circumstances of each situation. Check out this guide from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for additional information about the interactive process.

www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/accommodation.html ■

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3 Ways Millennials Have Changed Candidate Engagement Strategy

BY ALLIE KELLY

When the oldest millennials entered the workforce at the turn of the century, they found an environment dominated by baby boomers and Gen Xers. In the succeeding two decades, millennials have made a significant impact on American work culture. What we're seeing now is a broader impact that has impacted the way employers engage with candidates that are coming into their recruitment funnel. Understanding the following three ways engagement has evolved will allow your team to raise the bar and stay one step ahead of the competition.

1. JOB HOPPING HABITS

Millennials are more likely to leave a job within two years of getting hired than any previous generation. One of the primary drivers behind this habit is the ability to increase earning potential between jobs. In fact, a report from Legal Technology Solutions revealed that job hoppers can expect a pay increase of at least 8 to 10 percent, with some able to achieve as much as a 20 percent increase.¹

Because many millennials are constantly on the hunt for their next opportunity, they're never really done job hunting. For recruiters, this means it's more important than ever to keep candidates engaged. Failure to communicate adequately with candidates could lead to them accepting another offer before recruiters have time to address every candidate in

their talent pools. For hiring managers, this dynamic means they need to keep new hires engaged during their first year on the job. Improving satisfaction rates could lower the likelihood of early attrition.

2. THE DESIRE FOR MORE CONSISTENT COMMUNICATION

The younger half of the millennial generation grew up alongside the internet. Many people in this group had cell phones from a relatively young age, compared to previous generations. As a result, millennials communicate differently. A clear example of this is the text message. In 2008, you might have texted someone for a specific purpose. Like a phone call, the conversation would have a beginning, middle, and end. Flash forward to today, and text chains are one long, ongoing conversation. There are pauses and sometimes long breaks, but no one says "goodbye" in a text chain.

This is the level of communication millennials want and expect from recruiters. According to the Society for Human Resource Management, millennial job seekers crave personal, consistent communication from recruiters.² If you leave millennials in the dark for too long, they're likely to carry on their job search without you.

3. SHARING JOB HUNTING EXPERIENCES WITH OTHERS

Before making a purchase, trying a new restaurant, or applying to a new job, many millennials do the same thing: Check for reviews. Millennials want social proof that the product, service, or opportunity they are interested in is legitimate and matches their desires. Therefore, it is essential for recruiters to track candidate satisfaction metrics.

Understanding where candidates are getting stuck or becoming disengaged in the talent pipeline will help recruiters solve these issues before they become a problem. If a candidate has a bad experience, he or she is likely to tell someone about it – and negative reviews online could hurt your company's ability to attract top talent.

Takeaways

To summarize, millennials have changed the way recruiters engage with candidates by:

- Job hopping more frequently than previous generations.
- Desiring more frequent communication with recruiters and hiring managers.
- Sharing their job hunt experiences with others online and in person. ■

Allie Kelly is the vice president of marketing at JazzHR (www.jazzhr.com), where they're on a mission to make recruiting and hiring easy, effective, and scalable no matter what growth looks like at your company. The Jazz Performer Platform doesn't just help your company grow, it can help your recruiting process grow up, putting you on the path to hiring "Performers Only."

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Emphasizing Empathy for a Successful Candidate Experience

BY STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCES INC.

QUESTION:

We're in the process of improving our candidate experience, and we just don't know where to start. What should we consider as we re-vamp this process?

ANSWER:

In an industry that contains a high percentage of rejection, talent acquisition can often times become somewhat demoralizing, both for the job seeker and the recruiter. One of the rising focuses within the recruitment industry is prioritizing the candidate experience. Companies are beginning to assess how they communicate with potential employees and the impressions they leave behind with those that aren't a fit. As employers break down the components that make a strong candidate experience, there's one key that comes out on top: empathy.

Before we dive further into how empathy fits into the recruiting machine, what is candidate experience? In her article "Candidate Experience: How Small Tweaks Can Make a Huge Impact", Melinda Canino describes candidate experience as "the collective whole of a job seeker's interactions with and perception of a company during the recruitment and hiring process".¹ This means that there is so much more than just the voice behind the phone – candidate experience covers everything from the job ad to the application process to the final communication as you wrap up the requisition.

So how does empathy find its way into the process? When recruiters have that ability to understand and share in the feelings of their potential candidates, it allows them to craft their messages and actions towards them, including them in the process rather than leaving them out on an island. Empathy can be demonstrated in several different ways throughout the recruiting process:

- **Let candidates know when you've received an application:** many candidates are sending their resumes into unresponsive black holes. Even an automated message alerting them to the receipt of their resume is enough to recognize the hard work they've already put in.
- **Don't leave them out in the cold:** If the process is taking a while, let your candidates know where you are in the process. It doesn't have to be incredibly specific (i.e. "the hiring manager is reviewing your resume, but you're sixth in line to interview"), but enough to let them know that the process is ongoing. Keep your candidates warm, and recognize the agony that the wait can produce.
- **Communicate early, often, and clearly:** In a candidate's market, talent acquisition professionals no longer have the luxury of working on their own timeline. Sometimes candidates have multiple potential positions in the works, and many are juggling different combinations of benefits, salary, and PTO to find their best fit. By connecting with them early, and creating an empathetic connection, they may be more willing to continue down the path that you're trying to lay.

- **Train your memory:** Don't you love it when someone remembers a small, but personal detail? If you're balancing several requisitions at one time, or if you've had an overwhelming response to a posting, it would be near impossible to remember every candidate's name and each line of their resume. However, taking notes and remembering personal details will help candidates feel significant, cared for, and give the impression that they matter to your organization. Make sure you're taking note of questions or concerns during your conversations, and file them away in connection with each candidate. You don't have to remember their childhood pet's name, but it will benefit you in the future if you remember their prowess in a difficult-to-master skill set.

Not every candidate will receive the position they're vying for, and many of them will be disappointed. In order to keep candidates interested and engaged with your company, even after they've received the rejection notice, consider emphasizing empathy within each step of your recruitment process. ■

Strategic Human Resources Inc. is a national full-service HR management firm based in Cincinnati, Ohio. Its president and founder, Robin Throckmorton, can be reached at Robin@strategichrinc.com.

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WITH JOB TITLES – PERCEPTION IS REALITY

BY MIKE MCKERNS

Not too long ago my daughter asked what my job title is. When I told her that, since I own the company, I don't really have one, she was completely perplexed. I'm a founder, CEO, editor-in-chief, and director of marketing all rolled into one with a few other jobs mixed in. She then asked if I'm Rob's boss. Rob is our president and my co-founder. When I said "no" I could tell she was struggling with making sense of it all.

We live in a world where everyone is assigned a job title that helps us understand what their role is in the company. My wife is a teacher. Pretty simple, right? Rob's wife is a data scientist for a pharmaceutical company. That title may not be as crystal clear as "teacher" or "carpenter," but most would have somewhat of an understanding of what she does based on her title.

Rob and I are perfectly fine with not having a specific title beyond president & CEO that tells the world exactly what we do with Mamu Media on a day to day basis. However, according to an article on Quartz at Wvwork, some millennials will forgo up to \$10,000 in annual salary for a job that has a more appealing job title.¹ We are now seeing companies revamp their job titles into what is perceived as new and more appealing to up their image with potential employees.

Financial services firm, OneAmerica, which has been around since 1877 recently changed the title of their data analysts to "data wrangler." Sounds like a futuristic wild-west data nerd to me but I think it really helps to accomplish their goal. According to Todd Shock, their vice president of data and analytics, the company had a reputation of being "old and crotchety," and they set out on a mission to change that perception.²

The message here is fairly simple. If you never thought about tweaking your job titles to make them sound more appealing to potential employees, it's time to get on board. The largest generation in the workforce today has grown up in a world where the lines of their social and professional lives are blurred, and they put a tremendous amount of value on their personal brands. More and more, perception is reality. For some "people operations generalist" sounds so much better than "HR assistant" and they could accept a job offer for the former over the latter even if it paid less money. ■

Mike McKerns is the editor in chief of *HR Insights* and cofounder of Mamu Media LLC. He can be reached at editor@mamumediallc.com.

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GARLIC SCAPE SOUP

Thanks to the global supermarket supply chain, it's possible to find nearly every fruit and vegetable imaginable at any time of the year. (True, if you really want to have a fresh pomegranate in mid-July, you'll probably pay through the nose for it—but at least you can still find it.) But one produce item is in season for only two or three short weeks in late spring and usually can't be found in stores: scapes, the immature flower stalks of garlic plants. In appearance, scapes look a bit like very thick chives; in taste, their unique and bold flavor brings to mind garlic-infused asparagus. You'll probably have to hunt for them at a local farmer's market (or grow them yourselves), but it's well worth the effort to procure some. This simple yet delicious soup is sure to make you a scape convert, and after just one taste you'll already be looking forward to next year's scape season!

YIELD: 4 servings

TIME: about 30 minutes

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 3 Tb unsalted butter
- 2 lbs garlic scapes, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 ½ tsp fresh thyme
- 1 large Yukon Gold (aka "butter") potato, peeled and diced
- 1 qt vegetable broth
- 1 cup half and half
- 1 tsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
- salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Melt the butter in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the scapes and thyme and saute until the scapes soften a bit, about 5 minutes.
2. Add the potato and broth, then simmer over low heat for 20 minutes.
3. Stir in the half and half, then puree everything (with an immersion blender or a regular blender).
4. Stir in the lemon juice, then season with salt and pepper to taste. ■

Nutrition Facts

Amount per Serving

Calories: 292 cal

Fat: 17 g

Dietary fiber: 8 g

Sugars: 5 g

Protein: 11 g



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