



Building a talent acquisition team

The expertise you need to succeed.

Technology has been and will continue to be the driving force of change in the recruitment space and talent acquisition teams need to evolve in response if they are to capitalize on the opportunities technological advancements present to engage candidates and support the overall goals of the business.

The most evolved talent acquisition teams have sought the talent that can unlock the possibilities of technology while training talent in more traditional roles on how to incorporate it into their routine processes. Those teams possess the following skill-sets and capabilities.

1. Data crunching

Big data is changing everything from online shopping to wearable devices and its impact in the recruitment sphere is no less pervasive. Many talent acquisition teams focus on metrics like time-to-hire and cost-per-hire, which provide valuable data but typically fall short of offering the kind of information that will impact a business in the long run. Much more data can be captured, though it's not the quantity to data captured that's most important, but the quality of it and the ability to analyze it.

For instance tracking source of hire may yield information about where to find the best candidates which in turn informs how the sourcing budget should be spent. As employees are unlikely to recommend working for a company where they themselves are not happy working, tracking employee referrals can provide insight into how positively a company's employer brand is viewed.

Today's talent acquisition teams need the talent that can both identify meaningful metrics to track and translate that data into information that will help to drive better decision making. For

THE EXPERTISE YOU NEED

- Data crunching
- Functional expertise
- Proactive proclivities
- Branding experience
- Business savvy



larger organizations using retained and contingency recruitment services is common, but costly if the process and agency relationships are not managed closely. Having a dedicated team member tracking metrics like candidate quality and retention, while managing relationships with recruitment partners, will allow for greater controls and smarter decisions.

2. Functional expertise

Spurred by the talent shortages felt acutely across every industry, top candidates are in the driver's seat for the first time in a long time. This is a drastic departure from even 10 years ago when it was employers who set the tone for contract negotiations and had their pick of qualified candidates. The roles have reversed and now the best candidates have multiple job offers and companies must compete with one other to win them.

Talent acquisition teams need to put their best foot forward by employing recruiters with functional expertise. The one-size-fits-all approach to recruitment professionals may work for smaller companies, but for organizations hiring more than 400 people a year, specialized recruiters are a must. If a recruiter normally hires sales professionals, they shouldn't be looking to fill R&D positions. Likewise recruiters with a background in finance or substantial experience in financial services recruitment are best-suited to fill finance and accounting roles.

Considering recruiters are a candidate's first point of contact with an organization, they need to be able to speak the same language when talking about the open position, the skills it requires, and responsibilities it entails. Using the jargon of a functional unit will help recruiters and candidates find common ground, adding a layer of familiarity to what can be, at least initially, an impersonal process. Recruiters with functional expertise are also better equipped to find potential candidates. They understand how to leverage targeted job boards and groups, niche networks and associations, search aggregators and extensions, Boolean and Dark Matter search strings, and various other tools and technologies to identify and communicate with functional professionals. Ultimately, with recruiters aligned to

functional units the recruitment process will be both more effective and more efficient.

3. Proactive proclivities

Top talent, for the most part, will always be employed and those individuals rarely change jobs after one interaction with a potential employer. It usually takes multiple touchpoints before they consider moving to a new company so it is of the utmost importance to employ resources dedicated to the identification and attraction of passive candidates. Whether there is an opening or not, building a talent pipeline and maintaining continuous dialogue with candidates in the pipeline will drive a successful talent acquisition function. If a top candidate decides to look for a new job, the organization will be top of mind and when positions become available, recruiters will have a ready list of quality candidates with whom they are already acquainted.

Talent communities are becoming increasingly popular as companies find candidates they think would be a good fit within their organization. The talent community "lives" online, often with a dedicated microsite that allows passive candidates to join and receive company news and insights on industry trends. It is a place where potential candidates can also interact with the talent community manager via live blog or chat to learn more about the organization and its specific functional units. Technology is the backbone of a talent community and those more mature talent acquisition functions have integrated these initiatives with their applicant tracking systems to facilitate the recruitment process and candidate experience should the candidate apply for a position with the company.

4. Branding experience

An organization's employer brand and accompanying Employer Value Proposition (EVP) are essential in the attraction of active and passive candidates to the business. It starts with understanding the talent landscape, knowing who are the talent competitors (not necessarily those competitors within the same sector), and understanding how to differentiate your business



from the pack. Candidates now more than ever are interested in the company as a whole, what they offer as an employer, what they do for the community at large, and what the work environment is like. As work-life balance becomes increasingly harder to achieve – largely thanks to technology – job seekers want to know about the possibility of flexible work schedules and other aspects of working with a particular company that will directly impact their personal lives. Companies need to find a way to communicate these aspects of their business and keep the information relevant and fresh.

To build a best-in-class talent acquisition team, you need someone with branding experience who can train other members of the team – from sourcers and recruiters to graphic designers and IT resources – on the organization’s brand and EVP. These are important conversations as the each interaction a candidate has with an employer, everything from a LinkedIn job posting to the Hiring Manger interview, will reflect that brand and EVP. The messaging needs to be consistent for it to be credible and authentic to the true nature of the business.

5. Business savvy

Believe it or not, talent acquisition should be designed to support the business and should not operate as a stand-alone entity. The function needs to be in tune with business demands, wants and needs and be responsive to cyclical trends within the industry as well as overall trends within the talent marketplace. Talent acquisition leaders need to understand the broader business initiatives and how his or her team plays a role in driving the business forward and helping to solve complex challenges. They should not be order-takers or people who have moved from one functional unit to another in search of a home, but individuals with strategic vision who recognize the value of talent acquisition to the business and can make other business leaders recognize it too.

All too often, companies make the mistake of selecting the wrong talent acquisition leader which can have devastating effects. This is the person responsible for the team that will attract and engage with an

organization’s future employees – with its next generation of leaders among them – and this is no trivial task. Organizations need talent acquisition leaders who live and breathe the company, who understand how to leverage both resources and technology to find resources that will solve your complex (or not so complex) business problems.

More than the sum of its parts

Talent acquisition has been transformed by technology, both looking outward to the candidates and looking inward to the talent acquisition team itself. If teams are going to leverage an ever-increasing array of tools and technologies to drive recruitment success they need resources possessing the expertise outlined here. Only then, will talent acquisition be seen as a strategic partner to the business and one that is vital to its success.



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