

best practices

Five ways recruiters can engage candidates and hire the best



Engaging candidates must be a priority from the beginning to the end of your hiring process. Developing relationships with candidates can be challenging — ever-shifting organizational needs and changing business conditions keep recruiting strategies in a constant state of flux. The talent you need tomorrow could be different from what you need today. And besides, the best candidates always have choices and aren't on the market very long. Responding rapidly can be the difference between hiring a great candidate and missing out.

→ 34 percent of job candidates strongly agreed that their experience during the application process — whether positive or negative — affected their decision to accept a position.

SOURCE: CareerBuilder

There's no debate that candidate engagement makes a difference. Although many companies recently emphasized relationships with so-called passive candidates — those candidates not actively searching for a new position — that strategy may be less effective than originally thought. Nearly three-quarters of workers are actively searching for a new job or are open to new opportunities.¹ Organizations are now realizing that different kinds of engagement are essential, depending on whether candidates are active, passive, or somewhere in between.

Candidates who have a good experience can make a big difference for your employer brand. Candidates share positive experiences 59 percent of the time, while negative experiences get shared nearly half the time.² That means organizations have an opportunity to get candidate engagement right, build their brand, and hire great people — but it also puts them at risk when candidates have a bad experience.

1 <http://careerbuildercommunications.com/candidatebehavior2012/2012/>
2 <http://www.slideshare.net/gerrycrispin/2013-candidate-experience-lessons-learned>

As you create your recruiting strategies, be sure to focus on candidate engagement to connect with top talent. To get candidate engagement right, follow these five best practices.

- 1. Have a great story — and tell it well.** Make the most of your early interactions to humanize your organization, whether it's with images on external job ads or videos on your company's career page. Your employees are often the best people to tell your story. And you may have more employee brand ambassadors than you think — 58 percent of employees are proud to tell your company's story.³

For the best results, you need to give up a little control. Employees need to feel free to share their authentic stories, pictures, and experiences at company events across their own social media channels in addition to your official talent site. Give them that freedom, but also help them tell your story — why your company's a great place to work, your organization's mission, and the type of talent you need. Give them the resources and training they need to answer these questions, as well as a clear social media policy.⁴

- 2. Interact with top candidates early and often.** Smart organizations develop talent pipelines so they have a ready pool of candidates when new opportunities arise. To do that, you need to interact with candidates regularly about what's going on in the organization and as new jobs become available.⁵ One way is to improve candidate engagement with tools such as job-alert triggers. But the best candidates won't be sitting around waiting for an email.

Talent communities can be a better approach to engaging people. For example, a branded talent community can showcase your employment value proposition and what it's like to be a member of the team. You may even want to create highly focused communities that offer members valuable insights. For example, instead of a community around software development, communities focused on Java or Apache Hadoop development might get better results. Most people aren't constantly on the lookout for job openings, but helping someone stay on top of their profession creates true engagement.⁶

- 3. Empower hiring managers to engage early in the process.** Traditionally, hiring managers are brought into the hiring process later to save time. There are advantages to bringing them in early, however, since they may know of talent from competitors or be able to provide early feedback on candidates already in the talent pipeline. This knowledge can help you ramp up efforts to find more candidates or more effectively target those already in your pipeline.

Speed is also important to maintain candidate engagement; you can't keep candidates in the lurch until you hear from hiring managers or interview teams. By integrating your recruiting solution with a collaboration solution such as SAP Jam, you can make it easier for everyone to initiate and capture discussions about candidates. And by making the process mobile, candidates can keep up on their end from their devices. Managers can also use mobile connections on the go to approve requisitions and keep the process moving.

3 <http://www.slideshare.net/linkedin-talent-solutions/4-tips-to-convert-your-employees-to-talent-brand-ambassadors>

4 Ibid.

5 <http://www.ere.net/2013/05/08/what-is-a-talent-community-in-2013/>

6 Ibid.

- 4. Turn your employees into candidate advocates.** Employee referrals are a top way to discover new talent, but many organizations overlook this approach. Even those that use referrals often fail to give employees details about current job openings and provide tools to share that information with their social networks to reach second- and third-degree connections. These tools can be the difference between an adequate employee referral program and a great one.

With social referral tools that ensure that every employee and potential candidate is connected back to you, you can extend your company's reach with viral job distribution through LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and email. But just as you need to provide training and resources when it comes to your employment brand, you need to make sure people know what to say and how they fit into the process. Also, don't forget to reward your employees for their help. Even something as simple as a gift card can help keep your people engaged with the program.⁷

- 5. Regularly measure how recruiting programs perform.** It's one thing to measure cost per hire, but it's another to understand if you're spending your budget wisely. SuccessFactors Recruiting Marketing helps you look at your talent acquisition process holistically and makes it easy to create metrics that measure process and channel effectiveness, from the first communication with a candidate throughout the entire hiring process. Based on this information, you can fully understand your process effectiveness and make adjustments when needed.

You'll always know what's working — and what isn't — with SuccessFactors' award-winning Recruiting Dashboard™. Based on the information it provides, you can maximize how you spend your recruiting budget and fill positions quickly, reducing everyone's workload and avoiding burnout. With built-in recruiting insights, you can answer questions such as these: Which area has the most unfilled positions, particularly in critical roles? Do employee referrals convert at a higher rate? Which recruiting channels produce the best results? With these insights, you'll always know exactly where you stand.

Employee engagement starts with candidate engagement during the recruitment process. Will candidates be compelled by the employment value proposition? Will it be easy for hiring managers to find, select, and hire great people? Will candidates have a great experience that makes them eager to accept an offer and come on board? With SuccessFactors Recruiting, your answer to these questions will be "yes" — and you'll be able to drive engagement throughout the entire hiring process. Talk to us today and find out more.

⁷ <http://www.slideshare.net/zalp03/top-5-employee-referral-best-practices>

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