

Determine which recruitment tools work best for you



Remember the days when putting up a “Help Wanted” sign in the window or posting jobs in the local newspaper were the main recruitment tools? Thanks mostly to technology, attracting qualified candidates nowadays has become a much different process.

Employers face a variety of decisions about where to advertise their job openings — job boards, social media, and company websites, to name a few. They need to figure out which methods yield the greatest possibilities of being seen by the top talent they desire.

What a company chooses to say and how they say it is equally important. Employers must create an inviting candidate experience that generates interest, enables potential candidates to envision themselves in the role, and presents company culture. Job seekers rarely waste their time on confusing instructions or poor technology, so employers also need to ensure the application process itself operates smoothly.

Upon receiving resumes, businesses need solid talent management systems to keep track of their applicant pool. While staying organized always has been a priority for HR departments, it is especially important in light of the pandemic. Many HR teams still contain remote staff all or part of the time. They need ways to work together seamlessly to keep the recruitment process efficient and effective despite the distance.

Likewise, as the jobs for which they are hiring also can be remote, HR departments are dealing with candidates

from a wider geographical region. HR professionals must watch time zones and figure out the logistics of virtual or on-site interviews. And remember, recruitment is only one of the activities going on in HR. From onboarding and legal compliance to safety measures and employee mental health, most HR departments are incredibly busy.

The challenge for an organization becomes deciding which recruitment tools best suit its goals and budget. To help in this process, here's a look at some common options.

Job postings

Job ads do two things. First, they alert potential candidates to an open position, what that role involves, and what qualifications the employer desires. Second, job listings inspire readers to apply. While this may sound rather straightforward, modern recruitment marketing is far from simple. Employers need to stand out in the crowded job marketplace.

To even be found by job seekers, job descriptions need to include Search Engine Optimization (SEO)-friendly terms. These are words, phrases, or job titles targeted job applicants typically type in when conducting their job search.

Then, successful job ads paint a welcoming picture of what the open position involves and what qualifications are essential for new hires to possess. They talk about company culture so that readers know why this is a great place to work and get excited about the contributions they can make. Job listings also frequently tout “what’s in it for the candidate” — salary range, benefits, and desirable perks.

While HR professionals may write such job postings themselves, technological recruitment tools exist to aid the process. Artificial intelligence (AI)-driven writing tools such as Boost Linguistics can assist in producing engaging content, strengthening verb choice, and removing business jargon that confuses or alienates readers. Concerned about diversity hiring? Employ software such as Textio that reduces unconscious bias and analyzes language for its impact on women and minorities.

Job boards and job aggregators

Once you have created a well-written job description, the question becomes where to place it. Employers frequently opt for one or more online job boards. Job boards vary considerably in size and scope. Major ones such as CareerBuilder cover a wealth of industries and reach a huge audience. Others are tailored to a particular niche. FlexJobs, for instance, attracts job seekers looking for remote employment, alternate hours, freelance work, and other flexible opportunities. K12JobSpot focuses on employment in the education sector.

Functioning in a manner very similar to job boards are job aggregators. These are websites such as Indeed and SimplyHired. They operate as job search engines — aggregating listings from thousands of job boards, career sites, and staffing agencies — as well as posting directly from individual employers.

Costs associated with job boards and job aggregators vary considerably. A job board operated by a local chamber of commerce, for instance, may allow members to put up job ads for free. Larger job boards sometimes offer a limited number of job postings at no cost but then charge a fee beyond that point. Employers who hire frequently may opt for package deals that set a base price for services. Prices also differ based on factors such as priority placement of your job ad and how long it runs.

Company website

Job seekers often do more online than scour job boards. Those already aware of your company may look directly at your organization’s website. Reward their interest with a solid “career” section. What is it like to work there?

What is your mission? What perks do employees enjoy? What is unique about your company culture? What are the current job openings, and how does one apply?

You may even want to provide a recruitment chatbot, a software application that mimics human conversational abilities. Potential candidates value the ability to ask questions and get real-time answers, and you benefit from a great way to collect info and screen individuals showing interest.



Social media

Social recruiting has become a popular method to engage both active and passive candidates. Employers use social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter for multiple purposes. Sometimes, methods are direct, such as posting job ads. Other efforts build connections over time through posting interesting content and developing a favorable perception of the employer brand. In addition to official company channels, leaders may choose to turn to their own social network of acquaintances and groups to make them aware of career opportunities.

Both HR departments and marketing teams often get involved in a company's social recruiting efforts. They may strategize about sourcing and engaging potential candidates. To improve results and track social listening, they may turn to social recruiting management tools such as Agorapulse or Sprout Social.

Applicant tracking system

An effective applicant tracking system (ATS) can be a busy HR department's best friend by improving metrics such as time, cost, and candidate quality. Instead of looking at every resume received, an HR professional can use this recruiting software to bring the most qualified candidates to the forefront. Set keywords and predetermined criteria to have the ATS screen candidate resumes for the background, experience, and skills you want most in a potential candidate for an open position. Your talent pool quickly becomes a ranked list suggesting where to direct your attention.

Applicant tracking systems also keep your hiring process organized and streamlined. Whether in the office or working from home, HR team members can check who has evaluated a potential candidate and if any actions have been taken. Such ability has taken on added significance in recent months as many HR departments

operate on hybrid arrangements with both remote and on-site staff.

An ATS also can improve the candidate experience through actions such as an immediate email notification that the resume was received and what steps happen next. When a hiring manager wants to schedule an interview, she can input dates and times available into the applicant tracking system. The ATS sends an email message with the interview request and allows the job applicant to claim a spot from what is available.

Material collected by an ATS remains useful after a company fills an open position. When other job openings occur, the applicant tracking system has a database of potential candidates who exhibited enough interest in your company to complete an application. While the organization ultimately may decide to run new job ads, it first can screen candidates already on file using new criteria tailored to the openings at hand. Qualified candidates may be right at your fingertips.

While any size company may use an ATS, companies that hire regularly and receive a large number of applications especially benefit from this recruitment tool. HR departments can obtain some basic ATS software for free. Obtaining greater capabilities, though, requires purchasing recruiting software and service plans. A few of the most popular companies for applicant tracking systems are Breezy HR, Jobvite, and Workable.

CRM

The technology known as CRM (Candidate Recruitment Management) focuses on talent pipeline development and oftentimes gets bundled with an ATS. The CRM system keeps track of active candidates, passive candidates, former candidates, independent contractors who've worked for the company, job fair attendees, and anyone else who might make a great hire at some point. Nurturing relationships with them through personalized marketing provides quality leads when job openings arise, potentially filling positions quickly and with less effort. A CRM also can provide a wealth of information, such as identifying where you lose talent, analyzing the diversity of your talent pool, and rating the performance of your different sourcing channels.

Employee referrals

Effective recruitment tools need not always involve technology! Happy workers make great brand ambassadors, so enlist the help of your team in the recruitment process. Encourage them to talk about the company and its job openings with people in their network or get the word out via their personal social media accounts.

Potential benefits of employee referrals include:

- Better quality candidates since people generally do not want to recommend someone who reflects poorly on them.
- Greater chance of reaching passive candidates who aren't actively looking to change jobs but might be intrigued by what they hear from a friend or acquaintance.
- Candidates arriving for interviews with a greater understanding of company culture because they've likely asked the person who recommended them many questions about what it's like to work there.

To spur your staff to generate employee referrals, consider offering a monetary award or other incentive. Be certain to lay out the conditions in detail to avoid misunderstandings and hard feelings. For instance, does someone receive a reward if his suggested job applicant goes through the interview process but declines the job or only if that person joins the company?

Recruitment agencies

Businesses sometimes decide it is in their best interest to hire a third party to handle the recruitment process. Their own HR department may be small, overwhelmed, or busy with other projects such as retraining current employees or initiating diversity measures. Leaving talent acquisition to an outside source may prove worth the money.

When time is of the essence, enlisting a talent agency may accumulate a pool of top talent at a faster rate. Not only do recruiters maintain ongoing relationships with active candidates, they know the best recruitment methods for your particular situation. Niche agencies, in particular, may prove quite valuable at filling job openings involving hard-to-find skillsets.

As with all recruitment tools, companies must conduct a cost-benefit analysis to determine whether the services of a recruitment agency are worth the price. Spending money to quickly locate a qualified candidate who can begin the onboarding process and start contributing to your company's productivity can make more sense overall than handling the recruitment process yourself at a slower pace. Remember, there is no single perfect recruitment tool; the best recruitment tool is the one that works for you.