

Build a Process to Successfully Recruit Talent to Your Institution

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Agenda

- Introductions & welcome
- Current state of recruitment:
any challenges you can think of?
- The beginning: good job/role design
- Advertising and visibility for roles
- Knowing the job/role markets in higher ed
- The value and necessity of a deep and diverse pool of candidates
- What elements are in an effective and successful search process?



Course objectives

- Identify the current challenges to building an effective recruitment process.
- Identify the elements of a successful talent recruitment process.
- Identify the tools and processes of an effective talent acquisition approach.
- Identify the value of a focus on building deeper pools of candidates during recruitment.
- Demonstrate the necessity of a strong partnership between human resources and hiring departments.

Activity:

Recruiting It is not that hard, right?

Answer the following by yourself first – then compare with a partner.

- What is the most effective way to find the “best” person for a job?
- If you were ever “recruited” for a job – how did the organization convince you to join them?
- Describe your “best” interview – AND your “worst” interview – what made you pick those experiences?



Start with the design of the job/role

- Job descriptions and position descriptions are different – use AI for drafting positions!
- Titles: yep higher ed has got a million of 'em!!
 - Key to fit into your organizational structure – both for faculty and staff
 - “Working” title vs. official title
 - Determination of classifications and market
 - Comparisons can be challenging in external markets – specifics often can hurt in recruitment!
Can you think of any examples?

Start with the design of the job/role (cont.)

- The importance for all roles:
 - “Scope and context”
 - Decision-making responsibilities
 - Reporting relationships
 - Skills, capabilities expected, abilities to be demonstrated
 - **Education requirements** – BE THOUGHTFUL ON THESE!!!
- Think about “job families”:
 - Support/transactional/operational
 - Administrative, “professional”
 - Executive/leadership

Faculty roles/positions

- Know the ranks of your faculty – and the differences between them
- Titles can also be a little “wonky” on the faculty side:
 - Tenure and non-tenure tracks and the importance of “terminal degrees”
 - Professor
 - Associate Professor
 - Assistant Professor
 - Instructor
 - Clinical
 - Adjunct
 - Visiting, Researchers, Professors of Practice, Post Docs, etc.

Faculty roles/positions (cont.)

- Finding markets for all of these is key – importance of identifying the discipline and rank
- Start-up packages
- The question of workload – what models exist on your campus?
- Department Chair role
- Faculty with administrative roles and responsibilities
- The appointment of deans, provosts – include a tenured faculty role

Activity:

What should be in a plan to get a job?

What should be a in a plan to find the “best” person for a job?

Be the person looking for a job – what should I plan to be doing to find my next role?

Be the institution looking for new talent – what should I plan to be doing?

Are the lists different/same? Why?



Building a recruitment plan

- **BEFORE** any role gets posted, a plan should be made – a “recruitment project plan”:
 - Build a timeline with the key milestones – “back your way into it”:
 - Tools utilized: applicant tracking systems (ATS), budget system approvals, etc.
 - Job description, salary, budgets, other key information, etc.
 - Who should be involved? What about their schedules? Search committee expectations? Hiring decision? Offer approvals?
 - Discuss visibility of the post – include advertising and outreach plan by all involved!

Building a recruitment plan (cont.)

- Applicant review schedule – include when folks should complete reviews – also set up interview schedules as soon as possible – pick the dates/times that work and lock them in – including anticipated start date!
- Try to connect with as many people as possible in the pool – not just a chance to screen
- Look into how generative AI can assist with the review process!

Building a recruitment plan (cont.)

- Candidate/pool reviews:
 - Suggestion: **DO NOT** rank order them
 - Don't use the term "fit" – how about identifying candidates that would "complement" a current group/team/unit/institution
 - Put candidates into "buckets": "A", "B", "C":
 - "A" – for sure you want to talk with them – meet all or most of the posting criteria (previously discussed)
 - "B" – have some of what you are looking for – you want to learn more
 - "C" – do not meet the criteria and would not consider them to move forward in the process.
 - Use the ATS to share thoughts, lists, questions – or other ways of communicating before the candidate review meeting

Ideas for before, during, and after the post

- It is ok to reach out to people before the post – increase their interest and let them know that you would consider them to be a great candidate:
 - Key action at professional conferences
 - Less formal networks
 - Professional association connections
- Work with departments:
 - Identify groups, institutions, departments that they think are the “best” at the kind of work in the posting
 - Ask the department leaders what kind of background/skills/capabilities/etc. would complement the team – not “fit in best”
 - Identify if the group can best be served by a “ready” candidate

Ideas for before, during, and after the post (cont.)

- “Ready” candidates are a great strategy!
 - Probe the value of experience in the role – why or why not?
 - If possible, make sure the description and post do not rely or emphasize experience
 - The questions/screening/interview should be framed/shaped differently for a “ready candidate”
 - Look on a web site to find the #2 folks – reach out to them to gauge interest
 - They will **cost less** in terms of starting salary!

Job markets in higher ed

- Be confident in your market standing:
 - Salary competitiveness
 - Brand, signature programs, other factors for name recognition
 - Know how your students are recruited – consistencies? Things to build off?
- Peer and aspirant lists – know enough to be “dangerous” in the academic space
- Discuss the impact of “transferability” of experiences outside of higher education

Job markets in higher ed (cont.)

- Know the strengths/challenges to recruiting to your area – if you venture outside of your region
- Can you address a dual career (training partner) situation?
 - Higher Education Recruitment Consortia (HERCs) across the country
- Be aware of the impact of current events on the perception of academic freedom for faculty roles

Visibility, advertising, posting – not the only thing!

- Higher ed needs to move away from the “post and pray” practice
- Your institution’s brand and name recognition is not enough to attract talented folks
- Identify key platforms that can be identified as a “standard” post for your institution:
 - Where is the greatest traffic/visibility?
 - More cost effective to have institutional accounts for all positions rather than one position that gets charged back to a department.
 - Run a budget report to see what was spent across all units on position advertising for the past 3 years – I bet you could have a central budget with half of that!

Visibility, advertising, posting – not the only thing! (cont.)

- The “indeed” factor:
 - They scrape all jobs from your site – but have now moved into accounts
 - When they post/scrape – they take the “first 3 lines” of the posting – what is in your first 3 lines!!
 - Be wary of the title you use – will it make sense in the market to a candidate?
- Start interactions with candidates as soon as you are ready and as soon as they apply – you don’t have to wait until a pre-determined date
- Internal only posts vs. external vs. “straight up” promotion – what do you think?



Improving recruitment efforts to create a deep pool

- A “deep” pool has talent, different perspective, and would “complement” your current workforce
- Audit your job postings/ads to analyze the language (could use AI) to identify potential bias
- Target sources where many different candidates connect and congregate
 - Specific affiliated web sites/organizations
 - Key events, conferences
- Encourage your community and current employees to refer their connections

Improving recruitment efforts to create a deep pool (cont.)

- Offer internships/fellowships:
 - Based on disciplines
 - Year appointments – key in on a positive experience for future faculty openings – or create them!
- Explore how your institutional brand can showcase your value of a welcoming community – one that includes all
- Ask and listen: what might appeal to candidates regarding your community?

Reviewing, screening, interviewing

- How can your applicant tracking/talent management tools help?
- Is there a role for AI in this part of the process?
 - Screening and ranking
 - Video interviewing
- Pros and cons of AI in recruitment:
 - Pros: speed, consistency, accessibility
 - Cons: bias reinforcement, lack of transparency, impersonal experience



Reviewing, screening, interviewing (cont.)

- What are good questions that can help “filter” candidates – how do they feel from the applicant point of view? For the institution?
- How many folks should you “interact” with during the process? (“A”, “B”, “C”, process)
- What are “effective/good/etc.” interview questions?
 - “Best” one anyone ever asked you?
 - “Worst” one?

Search process guidelines, documentation, education

- Human resources has an integral role:
 - Manages the technology – the applicant tracking system (ATS)
 - Manages the overall workflow – visibility and approvals between steps and actions
 - Provides education
 - Provides data and information
 - Expertise on recruitment strategies
 - Guidance on legal and policies focused on fairness, equity, and compliance
- Search committee training – some moving to “certification” before their work starts

Search process guidelines, documentation, education (cont.)

- Simplify when possible – share accountability between departments and HR
- Search committees need a charge – **should not** be to select the successful candidate – that is a leadership responsibility!
 - Does the “faculty hire the faculty”?
 - Rank ordering is not the best way to gain committee/participant insight
 - All candidates that make it to an in-person interview are qualified – they would all just perform the role differently

Getting started on your campus

- Assess your current tools, policies, practices:
 - Successful? Perception by all involved?
 - How are the timelines? What is the “ideal” period of time for a search?
 - Any feedback from recent hires – or folks who declined an offer?
- Are resources needed to be able to perform recruitment activities beyond posting?
This is an investment – are you ready to invest?
- Are your job descriptions up to date and collected in a central place?
- Have you analyzed your place in the market?
- Have you analyzed the anticipated recruitment efforts that will be needed in the upcoming year? 3 years? 5 years?
 - Know your employee demographics (retirement eligibility?)
 - Are your recruitment efforts linked to your workforce plan?
Do you have a workforce plan?

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