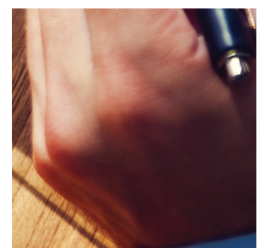
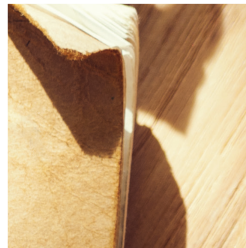




# Innovative Sourcing Strategies for Mastering the Talent Landscape

*It's a Marathon, Not a Sprint*



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**peoplescout**

a **TRUEBLUE** company

Hire Innovation, Higher Results



# Innovative Sourcing Strategies for Mastering the Talent Landscape

## *It's a Marathon, Not a Sprint*

In this renewed period of global economic growth, HR and talent management teams are engaged more actively than ever in the pursuit of sourcing the most valuable hires. As the overall talent pool shrinks, especially for highly specialized skill sets, organizations are beginning to adapt to these challenges by sourcing outside the box.

## *Industry Challenge*

The United States is currently facing a growing shortage of candidates with the skills necessary to fill roles being created by the private sector. Across all industry verticals, there is an urgent demand for skilled talent without enough qualified candidates to fill the need. In certain sectors, such as computer science, engineering and design, especially severe skill shortages prevail and finding top talent is more difficult than ever. A recent study forecasted that the American economy would annually create as many as 120,000 new computing jobs requiring a bachelor's degrees between 2010 and 2020. However, the American higher education system is currently only producing 40,000 bachelor's degrees in computer science annually.<sup>i</sup>

The current challenges in talent acquisition are of global concern; case in point is the Chinese recruitment climate. With more than one billion people, the most populated country in the world is a surprising contender in this talent struggle. According to the World Economic Forum, China's demand for talent will increase by 5 percent annually through 2020. Paradoxically, China's workforce is projected to shrink by 143 million workers by 2050.<sup>ii</sup> With a high demand from thousands of businesses worldwide to manufacture, sell and provide service, China and many other countries face obstacles in traversing the current recruitment space.

### **Why are there Difficulties Filling Key Vacancies?**



U.S. College Graduates per Year



New U.S. Jobs per Year

 = 10,000 people

Winning in this increasingly competitive recruitment environment requires the adaptation of fresh approaches to supplement traditional sourcing strategies. Please consider these innovative techniques in recruitment and strategic sourcing to master the current challenges existent in the talent landscape.

## Innovative Sourcing Strategies

### *Try Gamification*

A study found that 51 percent of American adults felt that adding an element of competition to an activity makes them more likely to focus on and return to that activity.<sup>iii</sup> Recruitment gamification is a growing technique, seeking to reach candidates on a more personal level. Merriam-Webster defines gamification as, “the process of adding games or game-like elements to something so as to encourage participation.”<sup>iv</sup> Gamification of recruitment efforts challenges candidates to showcase their value to the organization. Consider engaging social communities with trivia, contests and surveys to stimulate and challenge the audience. These efforts can also provide an indication of candidate knowledge, personality and strengths. For example, an organization seeking web designers could embed hidden job openings into the HTML code of the company

*Gamification of recruitment efforts challenges candidates to showcase their value to the organization.*

website. The employer might then post a hint on social media with an incentive. The users could then compete to find the hidden code, thereby demonstrating their skill through healthy competition.

Adding challenge-based elements to employee referral programs is another effective way to source through gamification. To encourage employees to refer members of their networks, try offering monetary, recreational or altruistic rewards for employees to choose from based on their number of referrals. Establish leader boards praising top referrers and award virtual badges to increase program engagement.

A great example of recruitment gamification at work is Accenture. Using Facebook as its prime social platform, Accenture has designed four unique games with which to engage candidates. The goal of these games is to entertain and educate candidates about Accenture’s employee value proposition. These candidate games

also communicate how to climb Accenture’s career ladder. In one of the four games, users begin as “intern gamers” and ascend the ladder as they answer questions correctly. Another of these games uses cards to help candidates get to know top employees and which skills allowed them to gather momentum in their careers at Accenture.v

## 2 Find Them in Class

For highly specialized or technical skill sets, sourcing candidates with specific degrees or certifications can be a steep challenge. Construct a schedule of skill aligned certification classes and university courses that are being held locally or in the nearest metropolitan area. Engage potential candidates with branded materials in communal study spaces or as they exit class. Engage a current employee in a similar role and, if possible, offer them as a possible speaker or career mentor to aligned classes or college career centers. These institutions are likely to welcome professionals with real life experience to help inspire the student body.

A PeopleScout client and global leader in the distribution of food products, regularly leverages truck driving school partnerships to build their candidate pipeline. This company makes use of strategically placed flyers and referral cards that offer step-by-step application help and personal contacts. The team also works directly with teachers to ensure they understand the qualifications necessary for a successful driver. “This company’s time-to-fill for driver roles has been greatly reduced by our sourcing efforts focused on Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) schools. Our team has developed a cycle of pipelining new drivers straight from graduation day,” says David Ludolph, Senior Vice President of Client Delivery at PeopleScout.

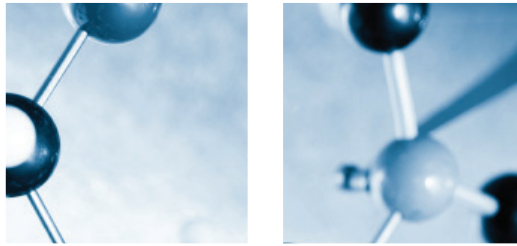


## 3 Share Their Interests

Demonstrating attentiveness to candidate interests instantly validates these individuals and draws their attention to the employer. Investigate the probable hobbies or interests of the requisition demographic. Perform a deep search of blogs, vlogs and social pages surrounding these extracurricular topics. When appropriate, respond to the user comments of potential candidates to engage them and peak their interest. For instance, an employer actively seeking mechanics might approach prospectives through popular NASCAR blogs or consider tabling at local auto shows.

Also consider reaching each out to interest-based organizations or MeetUps that align with requisitions. Send email blasts regarding job openings to HR and talent management executives within the chapters of a trade association. Sponsoring an association event also demonstrates the employer as a stakeholder in these organizations.





*Both positive and negative employer reviews can be leveraged as opportunities to promote openness, improve the organization through constructive criticism and share additional elements of the employee value proposition.*



*A 2014 survey found that 96 percent of candidates feel it is very important to work for a company that demonstrates transparency.<sup>vi</sup>*



## Practice Transparency

Transparency is a magic word in the recruitment landscape of today. A 2014 survey found that 96 percent of candidates feel it is very important to work for a company that demonstrates transparency.<sup>vi</sup> Leveraging social media to provide an unguarded window into the culture and personality of a business communicates a sense of hospitality and credibility to candidates. Encouraging dialogue and expression through photos and videos implies that the employer fosters a similar environment in the physical workplace.

A 2013 study showed that 46 percent of Glassdoor users read employer reviews in the beginning of their job search without having spoken with a recruiter or hiring manager.<sup>vi</sup> It is important to develop a strategy for responding to both positive and negative reviews on Glassdoor or various job boards to show transparency. For instance, in the occasion of a negative review, apologize for his or her experience, offer up an alleviation plan for the issue (if applicable) and provide a form of contact for the user to further address the concern. Alternatively, in the occasion of a positive review, respond by thanking the user and offering more positive news relevant to his or her review. For example, if the user praised the employer's work life balance, respond by sharing news about the new employee wellness program that was recently implemented. Both positive and negative employer reviews can be leveraged as opportunities to promote openness, improve the organization through constructive criticism and share additional elements of the employee value proposition.

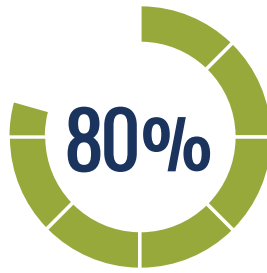
Dell is a strong representation of transparency in recruitment. With over 500,000 likes on Dell's Facebook-based career page, Dell has more likes and followers than Facebook's own career page. The widely successful technology solutions company proactively manages its page by posting and sharing videos and photos of its workplace environment and encouraging open dialogue. Dell emphasizes



### The Cost of a Bad Hiring Decision

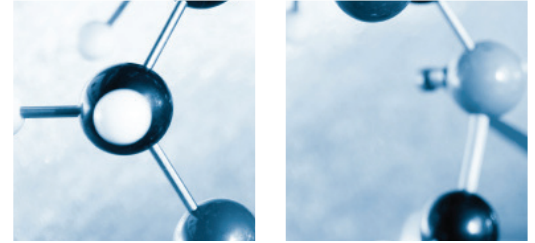


30% of the hired employee's first-year income



Bad Hiring Decisions account for nearly 80% worker turnover problems

*Job posts get 36% more applications if accompanied by a recruiting video.<sup>ix</sup>*



employee achievements of individual employees, offers candidates the chance to apply to jobs directly through the Facebook page and illustrates the company culture through employee quotes and pictures of events. Dell engages candidates by asking direct questions to its audience and garners information about users through polls. Dell also provides career tips and professional planning advice to lend potential candidates a hand in their search.<sup>vii</sup>

## 5 *Seek Them in Their Element*

Upon examining the requisition demographic, research and attend industry events at which potential hires might be attending or speaking. The subject matter of the event is an ideal icebreaker in which to engage candidates. Create a calendar of anticipated events that align with the skill vertical. Subsequently, place advertisements for open positions on the website of organizations that are hosting the selected events.

Create custom business cards that contain a link to specific job descriptions on the career site. Presenting the opportunity to the candidate personally, paired with a direct path to information concerning the role provides the individual with an impression of both sincerity and convenience.

Grainger, North America's leading broad line supplier of maintenance, repair and operating products, sources many of its candidates by expanding upon

its partnerships with organizations aligned with requisitions. For instance, the Grainger team targets events hosted by community organizations as a way to reach candidates. This PeopleScout client also ensures a physical presence at extracurricular and alumni events to reach new graduates for entry-level roles. "There is a great deal of value in attending requisition aligned events, these efforts offer candidates an in-person interaction with employer representatives. Being able speak with potential candidates personally helps to create a more effective pipeline by allowing candidates to be evaluated immediately," says Jessie McGowan, Vice President of Account Operations at PeopleScout.

## 6 *Renovate the Job Description*

According to the US Department of Labor, the average cost of a bad hiring decision can equal 30 percent of the hired employee's first-year income. Inferior hiring decisions are also at the root of nearly 80 percent of worker turnover problems; the longer substandard employees stay on the job, the more it will cost to replace them.<sup>viii</sup> To improve the match between job candidates and recruitment needs, start by revisiting the job description. Ensure the job descriptions are thorough and accurate, more clearly defining the tasks the new hire will perform, the hard skills they will need to carry out to these responsibilities and the individualized traits and soft skills that will be essential to success in the role.

67% of active and passive job seekers say it is important to them that the potential employer prioritizes a diverse workforce.<sup>vi</sup>

Consider incorporating more than just verbiage. A recent study determined that job posts get 36 percent more applications if accompanied by a recruiting video.<sup>ix</sup> Recruiting videos featuring pertinent job types will resonate further when paired with a strong description. Providing a detailed illustration of the role will increase transparency and establish further trust with the prospective candidate. Examples of tangible projects, specific challenges and quantitative expectations (if applicable) allow a candidate to more closely understand the role they may be stepping into. While developing the description of the role, it is advantageous to emphasize, as accurately as possible, what will make a new hire successful in this particular position.

It has been found that roughly 40 percent of individuals respond better to visual information than plain text.<sup>ix</sup> Adding an element of design to create a more branded, stylized description communicates professionalism and shows that candidate experience is a high priority. Sodexo is a great example of this, providing some of its job descriptions in the form of an infographic describing the role.

## 7 *Be Simple, Direct and Personal*

Make the candidate experience as direct and simple as possible. An employer might, for example, print flyers or cards with direct social links or abridged website links that make it easy for busy individuals to access job information on the go. These items should be strategically placed in requisition-aligned locales. Providing potential hires with a simple and direct route to the job can encourage passive candidates.

Consider sending highly personalized messages to prospectives noting specifically why they are being contacted. This message could also include how the candidate was found and why he or she would be perfect for the role. With particularly sought after candidates, try sending them an e-gift card to a local coffee shop and suggest meeting to discuss opportunities.

## 8 *Appeal to Diverse Candidates*

A 2014 survey by Glassdoor found that 67 percent of active and passive job seekers say is important to them that the potential employer prioritizes a diverse workforce.<sup>vi</sup> Diversity hiring refers not only to ethnic variation, but also to gender, ability and age diversity. When seeking diverse employees, show current diversity by using images of real employees, not stock photographs. Employee testimonials and success stories featuring diverse individuals help candidates see themselves in the workplace environment.









The Toms' "One for One" motto is a well-known contributor to the brand's success as a philanthropic retail company. Toms seeks like-minded employees to build the success of the brand. To achieve this, Toms specifically invites candidates who "want to change lives and be a part of a movement." Toms also promotes its Annual Employee Shoe Drop for disadvantaged children globally on its career page and social platforms.<sup>xii</sup>

## 10 *Prioritize Employee Engagement to Build a Compelling Employer Brand*

In today's perpetually plugged-in culture, there is nowhere to hide for companies with unhappy employees, making it more important than ever to take steps toward increasing workplace satisfaction. Businesses that differentiate by branding themselves with an engaging company culture are making a strategic business decision to broaden their appeal. A recent research study by Inc. Magazine found that 18 percent of 2012 college graduates deem 'company culture and the perks' as their number one priority in choosing between employers.<sup>xiii</sup> Correspondingly, a study by Monster said college students presented with a position at a business with a great culture would accept an average of 7 percent less in starting salary.<sup>xiv</sup>

Effective employee engagement initiatives thrive upon the nurturance of a workplace culture that encourages open communication, recognizes and rewards quality work, enables workplace health and wellness and encourages both teamwork and solidarity among colleagues. Consider organizing internal committees and activity groups with various focuses. For instance, some employees might feel more inspired at work when taking part in a corporate social responsibility initiative. Others might experience a strong sense of community in joining a company kick-ball team. Additionally, offering an anonymous survey or feedback inbox allows employees to feel like their voices are being heard. This type of effort could also potentially dissuade disgruntled employees from posting negative remarks on social platforms.

Wegman's Food Markets is known for its reputation as a great employer, having appeared on the annual list of the 100 Best Companies to Work For in the US, published by Fortune. Wegman's places high priority on work-life balance, development and employee camaraderie. To achieve this, the company offers flexible scheduling, career enhancement opportunities and a fun, family-like work environment. These factors have increased employee satisfaction and engagement without heavy monetary expenses.<sup>xv</sup>

## 11 *Flaunt the Employer Brand to Candidates*

According to a recent study by Glassdoor, 94 percent of candidates are likely to apply to a job if the employer actively manages their employer brand.<sup>vi</sup>

“The brand should create buzz about the company’s employer appeal through the website, social media platforms, the career center, and direct candidate communication. These efforts all set the stage for building a pipeline of top talent,” says Taryn Owen, President of PeopleScout. PeopleScout’s dedicated delivery teams focus on building a strong employer brand to source candidates. Case in point is Danfoss, a leading global manufacturer. Danfoss’ team uses social media, its company website and its career site to illustrate facets of the employee value proposition like diversity, internal culture and corporate responsibility. Danfoss leverages tactics such as – offering testimonial videos, employee photos and infographics demonstrate corporate success.

There is a wide array of innovative ways to elevate the brand without a dramatic monetary impact. Consider communicating the brand in the form of video testimonials from top performing or tenured employees who present distinct views of the employee experience. Socially sharing photos from workplace activities such as charity events, teambuilding exercises, or celebrations of personal and professional milestones will inspire and excite prospective candidates. Open blogs and surveys will demonstrate that the organization is interested in two-way communication, while social media participation of employee advocates will illustrate employee satisfaction and loyalty to potential hires. Creating a buzz about cultural differentiators adds to the business’ employee value proposition. A business boasting an attractive, contemporary physical space, might try featuring a virtual tour of the office on the website, career site, and social platforms. Businesses that are mobile optimized, leveraging applications that enhance productivity should consider sharing videos of tech savvy employees mastering these tools. Bonuses such as these are especially attractive to millennials who are notorious for being difficult to source as well as retain.

Square has made it a priority to communicate its employer brand through all aspects of its recruiting process. For instance, Square’s career page greets

potential candidates with a clear look into employee life at the company. The page features photos, videos and descriptions touting its family-like culture, state of the art offices, career development programs and unparalleled benefits. Square’s career sites and social platforms are all carefully designed and branded to highlight the employer brand from the beginning to the end of the recruiting process.<sup>xvi</sup>

The rewards of achieving quality hires are indisputably worth the effort; companies with superior talent management practices have been proven to achieve considerably higher sales per employee, market value per employee and profits per employee.<sup>xvii</sup> Whether the objective is the hiring of niche talent or high-volume short-term positions, creativity is essential in successfully tackling and mastering the talent landscape.

### *About the Sponsor*

PeopleScout, a TrueBlue company, is one of the world’s largest recruitment process outsourcing (RPO) providers, offering services aimed at helping companies improve quality of hire for their exempt and non-exempt hiring needs. PeopleScout’s suite of services includes RPO, employment branding, onboarding, career counseling, and employee retention. Facilitating over 250,000 annual hires worldwide,

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