

Recruiters Acknowledge Need for Better Practices



HRO Today Flash Reports are a series of ongoing research initiatives that address today's topics of interest in the HR community. *HRO Today* Flash Reports are focused briefs that can be used to support business decisions and further discussion among industry practitioners and thought leaders.

This report addresses the North American market and examines recruiters' perceptions of the effectiveness of their recruiting efforts, the extent of their recruitment marketing challenges, and how they measure recruitment marketing success.

This study was sponsored by **Endevis**, though the sponsor was not revealed to study participants.

Methodology

Between August 25, 2021, and October 20, 2021, a series of email invitations were sent to subscribers of *HRO Today* magazine and *HRO Today* newsletters to take part in an online study. Study respondents included 50 senior human resources executives in North America.

Executive Summary



Recruiters don't consider their efforts particularly effective.

Recruitment efforts are rated modestly, with an average score of 3.72/5.00, with very few HR leaders characterizing their efforts as very effective. Given the current labor market and forecasts for its continued long-term challenges, greater emphasis on strategy and data analytics is essential.



Finding enough workers to fill vacancies is the greatest challenge recruiters face.

Three areas were indicated as challenges by at least 50% of respondents, and they all center on obtaining the needed volume of workers. The biggest challenge for nearly two-thirds of recruiters (63.2%) was finding enough candidates to fill vacancies. Closely related to that is finding qualified candidates with in-demand skills (60.5%) and maintaining the talent pool (50%). A deep talent pool can speed up time to hire, lower recruiting costs, and improve quality of hire.



Recruiters lack systems for monitoring and responding to social media posts.

Nearly one-half of recruiters (42.1%) have little or no systems in place, while very few (13.2%) have robust social media monitoring systems. Without listening to what is

being said online, recruiters run the risk of negative feedback on social media that could potentially discourage qualified candidates from applying.



Employee well-being has emerged as the most common employer brand positioning.

The focus on employee well-being comes as no surprise in wake of the worldwide pandemic that characterized 2020 and 2021. How a company positions itself as a great place to work is among the most important recruiting strategies they can undertake. Specifically, sharing how organizations protected their employees during the pandemic is the most direct way employers can highlight how they cared about their employees. This will remain a legacy of employer branding for years.



Nearly every recruiter uses both job boards and LinkedIn for recruitment marketing, but many have limited awareness of their effectiveness.

The use of both job boards and LinkedIn approached 100%, which is more than double any other digital service such as search ads or Facebook. Yet despite the widespread use, few recruiters use advanced metrics to measure recruiting success on these platforms beyond standard recruiting measures such as number of acquisitions or time-to-fill.

DETAILED FINDINGS:

Effectiveness of Recruiting Efforts

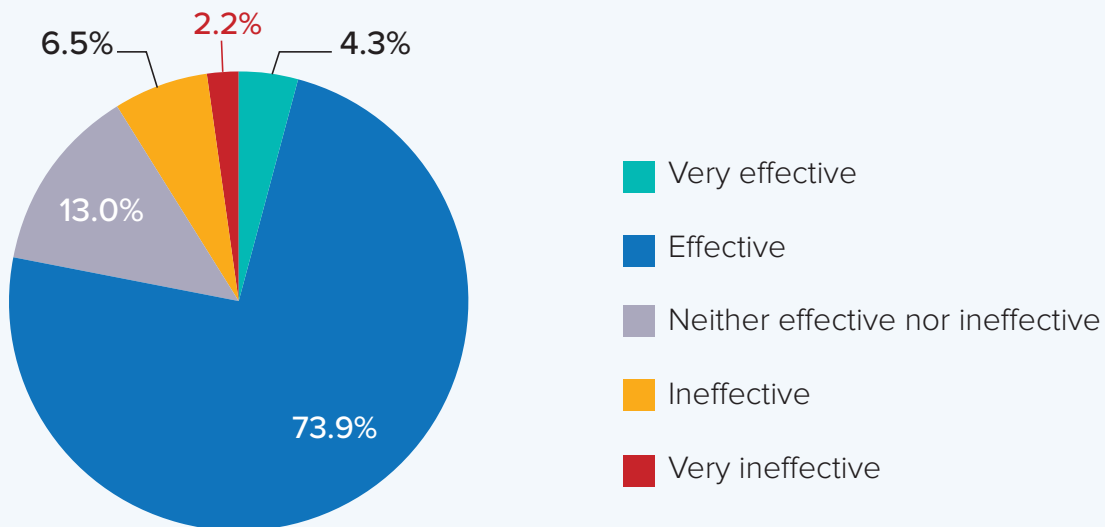
Overall, how would you rate the effectiveness of your recruiting efforts?

When asked to rate the effectiveness of their recruiting efforts, study participants rated their efforts modestly, with an average score of 3.7 out of 5. Further, only 4.3% considered their efforts to be very effective, suggesting the vast majority feel their effectiveness can improve.

There are many ways an organization can improve its recruiting efforts, and a recent article in *Forbes* provides some valuable feedback. Given the current labor market shortages, recruiters must not only find good talent but also compel passive job seekers to change jobs. To do this effectively, it is important to reflect on a company's external and internal brand and deliver a reward and recognition system that is in alignment with what is currently on the market.

Recruiters also need to expand their requirements for open positions; rather than listing the skill set of the "perfect" employee in the job description, list only the non-negotiables. This broadens the field of applicants and provides flexibility to hire good talent and build toward the ideal employee.¹

Effectiveness of Recruiting Efforts

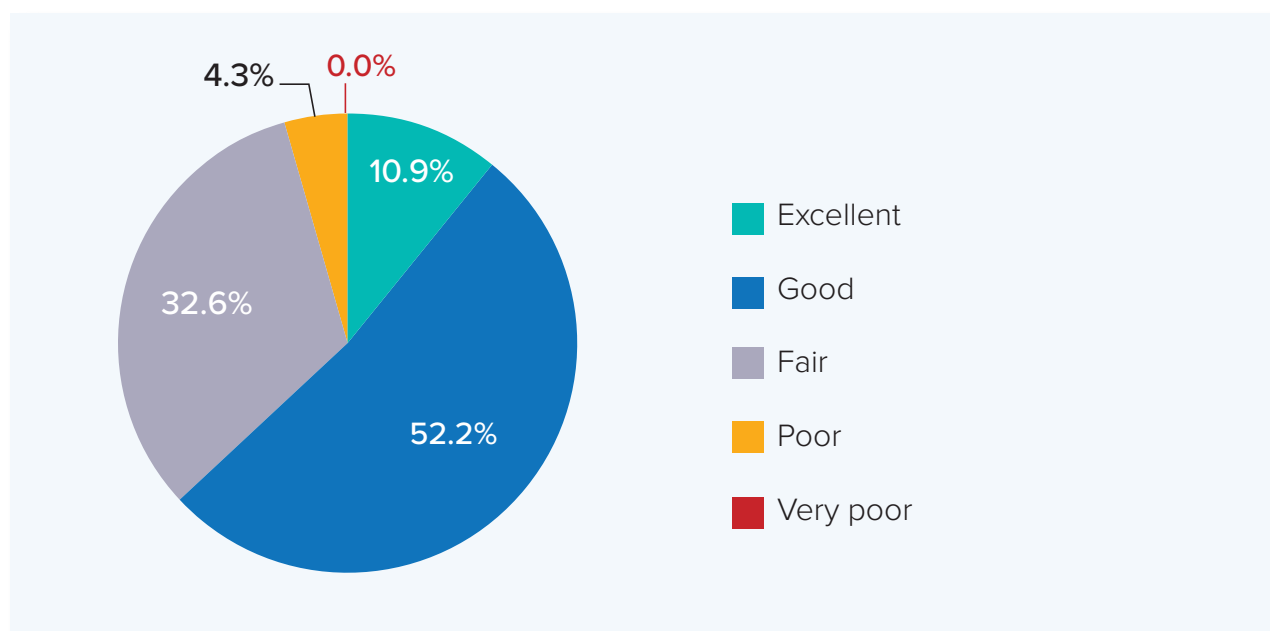


Rating of Recruitment Marketing Knowledge

How would you rate your own knowledge of recruitment marketing?

Only about one-in-ten (10.9%) respondents considered their knowledge of recruitment marketing to be “excellent,” while 36.9% considered it only “fair” or even “poor.” The study sample consists of mostly senior HR leaders, so their direct knowledge of one component of HR may not be as comprehensive as it should be. But given the mediocre rating respondents gave the effectiveness of their recruiting efforts, how the deficiencies will be addressed when there is an admitted lack of knowledge about the process is concerning.

Rating of Recruitment Marketing Knowledge



Challenges with Recruitment Marketing

Please rank your challenges with recruitment marketing

Study participants were asked to rank their challenges with recruitment marketing. Overall, three of the seven areas examined were indicated by at least 50% of respondents.

The most prevalent challenge was finding enough candidates to fill vacancies, as indicated by nearly two-thirds (63.2%) of respondents. Finding enough workers to fill vacancies will continue to be a major issue in 2022, as employers will need to fill nearly 10 million job openings in an available talent pool of only about 9 million workers.

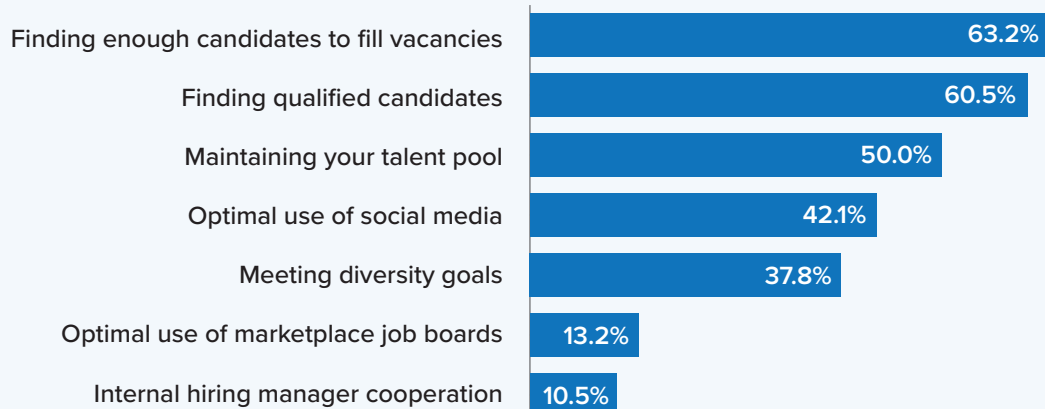
Companies have been using a variety of techniques, including signing bonuses, higher salaries, and flexible working arrangements, to entice people. These benefits will likely have to continue as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to change the job market, perhaps permanently.²

Closely related to finding candidates to fill vacancies is finding qualified candidates, as indicated by 60.5% of respondents. In the face of worker shortages, recruiters should ask themselves if they are defining “qualified” in the best way. Companies tend to add to job descriptions rather than subtract from them, meaning job requirements have ballooned beyond people’s ability to actually meet them.³

Maintaining the talent pool was another issue selected by one half (50.0%) of respondents, making it third most prevalent recruitment challenge. Talent pool sources include candidates obtained through social media, career pages and job boards, previous employees, previous candidates (known as “silver medalists”), and referrals.

Optimal use of social media to bolster recruitment efforts was a challenge for 42.1% of respondents, ranking it fourth.

Challenges with Recruitment Marketing



Extent of Systems in Place for Monitoring Social Media

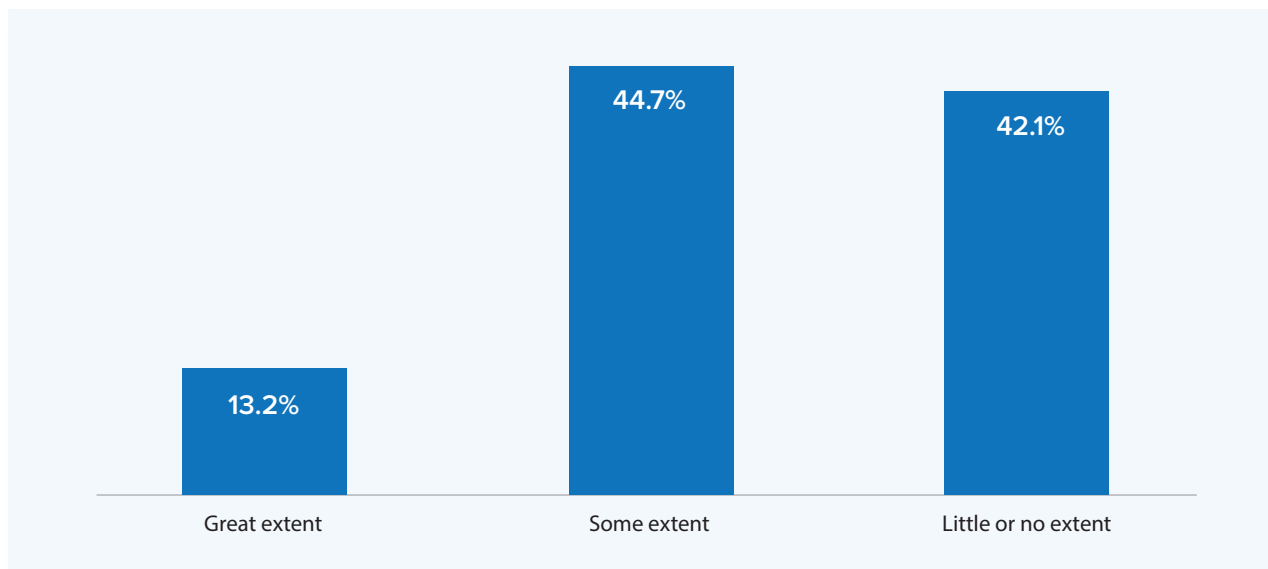
To what extent do you have systems in place for monitoring and responding to social media posts about your recruiting?

When asked to indicate the extent to which they have systems in place for monitoring and responding to social media, nearly one-half (42.1%) of respondents said they have little or no systems in place, while very few (13.2%) have them to a great extent.

Organizations that do not have a systematic approach to monitoring and responding to social media are putting themselves at a competitive recruiting disadvantage. Social media can be a powerful way to build the talent pool. Further, social monitoring gives recruiters insight into the minds of potential candidates. This information can be used to craft relevant and engaging content. The more consistently social monitoring is used, the more insight can be gleaned to entice candidates to connect with the recruiter.

Another reason for monitoring and responding to social media is that any issues in brand perception can be immediately addressed. This helps establish trust in the employer brand. Participating in active conversation shows that a business cares enough to address a candidate's needs, which could easily translate into caring about employee's needs.⁴

Extent of Systems in Place for Monitoring social media



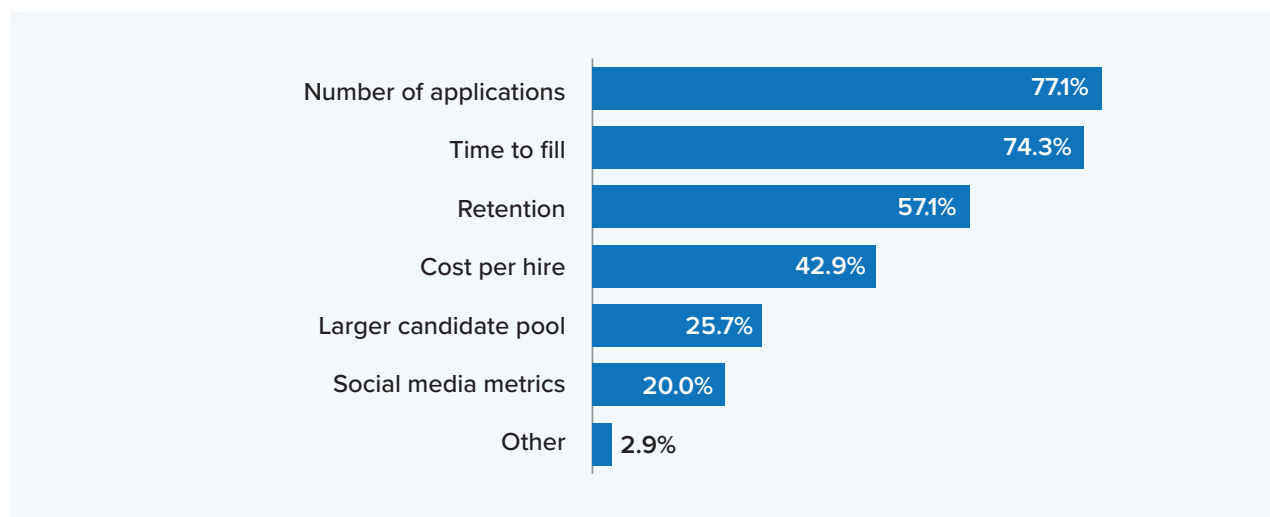
Metrics Used to Measure Recruitment Marketing Success

Which metrics do you use to measure your recruitment marketing success? Please select all that apply.

Recruiters selected the metrics they use to measure their marketing success from a list of seven items. Perhaps not surprisingly, the number of applications was indicated by over three-quarters (77.1%) of respondents. The rationale is that the more that goes into the top of the funnel, the more can be filtered and produced at the bottom of the funnel.

The next three areas are also standard recruiting metrics: time-to-fill (74.3%), retention (57.1%), and cost-per-hire (42.9%). Building the candidate pool was selected by over one-quarter (25.7%). Given the lack of systems for monitoring social recruiting, the low percentage (20.0%) of those using social media metrics to measure recruiting marketing success is not surprising.

Metrics Used to Measure Recruitment Marketing Success



Positioning Company to Candidates

How do you primarily position your company to candidates? (i.e., your Employer Brand)

Study participants were asked to indicate how they define their employer brand to candidates.

“The company cares about its employees’ welfare” was selected by 41.7% of respondents, the most of any area. How organizations protected their employees during the pandemic is the biggest way to demonstrate how much they cared about their employees.

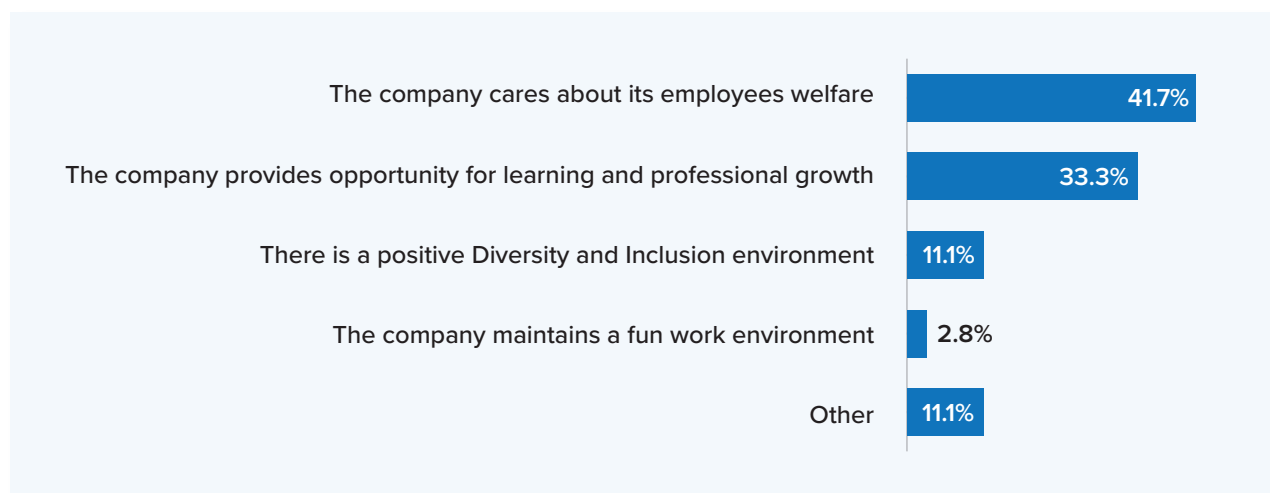
According to Gartner, there are three areas that an employer brand should address to communicate an emphasis on employee well-being:⁵

- How were furloughed or temporarily laid off employees supported, and how were employees who were brought back into the workplace treated?
- How were employees’ financial well-being and the financial status of the organization protected?
- How were remote employees supported and kept engaged and productive?

Within this framework, discussions around work-life balance, remote working, and mental health can be incorporated.

The opportunity for learning and growth is another primary employer brand position for one-third (33.3%) of respondents. Once the impact of the pandemic subsides, this area will likely grow in importance. A robust learning and development program improves employee retention. In fact, 93% of employees say they will stay longer at a company when that employer invests in their career development.⁶

Positioning Company to Candidates



Digital Services Used for Recruitment Marketing

Which digital services are you using for recruitment marketing?

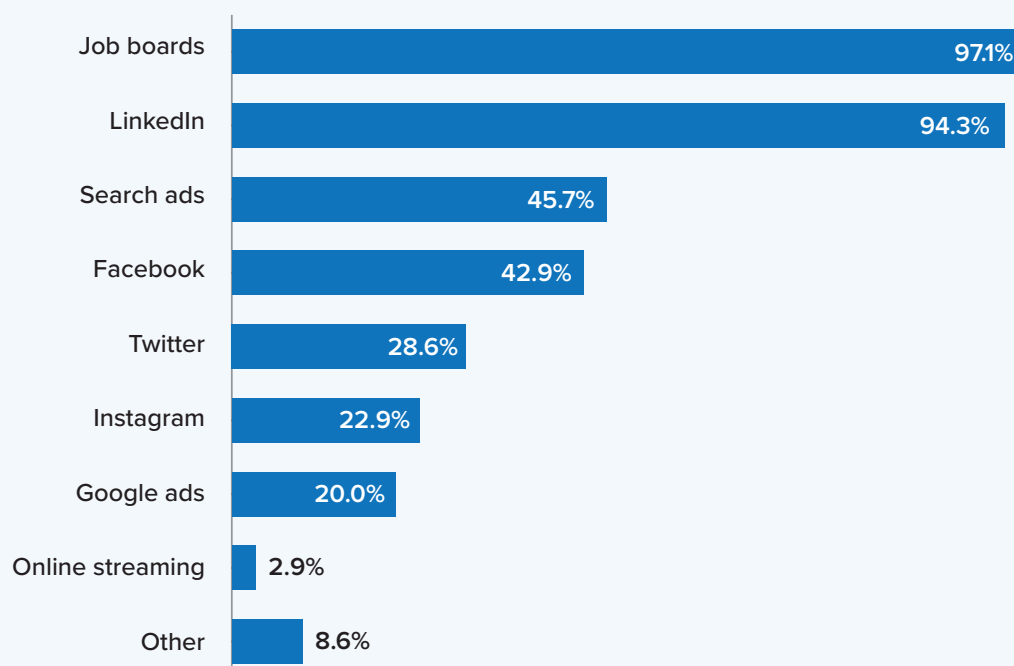
Respondents were asked to identify the digital services they are using for recruitment marketing. Use of both job boards and LinkedIn was nearly ubiquitous, as 97.1% and 94.3% of recruiters use them, respectively.

LinkedIn boasts well over 760 million users on its platform, suggesting unparalleled reach to nearly anyone when recruiting. The platform has two main options: LinkedIn Recruiter, which is a hiring platform that helps find, connect with, and manage candidates, and LinkedIn Talent Hub, its applicant tracking system.⁷

Financial investment in job boards by talent acquisition service providers continues to climb. In just the third quarter of 2021, *HRO Today* estimates that investment funding in this area will exceed \$2 billion in 2021. Job boards continue to become more niche, and more resources are being devoted to finding contingent labor.

Other digital services, such as search ads and Facebook, are currently used by just under one-half of HR leaders (45.7% and 42.9%, respectively) for recruitment marketing.

Digital Services Used for Recruitment Marketing



How Recruitment Marketing Will Change in 12 months

How will recruitment marketing change at your organization 12 months from now?

Study participants were asked to comment on how recruitment marketing will change at their organization 12 months from now. One of the key themes that emerged from the responses is the need for recruitment marketing to be more strategic. Three comments that address that are below.

"Fine tune it to be more strategic in leveraging the success stories at our company."

"More focus on campaigns at a strategic level, as well as metrics and tying back specific results to activities. Our team doesn't care much about impressions or clicks, unless those can be tied to applications and then through to hires, so we are focusing on ensuring that we can get to ROI."

"We are overhauling our careers website. Using social media to post hot jobs (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn). We are re-evaluating our advertising strategy. Updating our internal employee referral process and bonus options."

Other comments included addressing workforce demands for remote work options and coping with the increased costs resulting from the tight labor market.

"Move more towards hiring remote employees, which will broaden recruitment marketing."

"The tight labor market is driving up costs. We will need to assess and determine what resources we may need to cut or increase (budget increase dependent). Exploring methods to enhance delivering our value proposition to larger audiences."



Notes:

1. "15 Effective Ways To Improve Recruiting And Find Good Talent," *Forbes*, June 13, 2021. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbes-coachescouncil/2021/07/13/15-effective-ways-to-improve-recruiting-and-find-good-talent/?sh=4baee7052fe4>
2. Cox, Jeff. "There are about 1 million more job openings than people looking for work," *CNBC*, August 7, 2021. <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/08/07/there-are-about-1-million-more-job-openings-than-people-looking-for-work.html>
3. Molla, Rani and Stewart, Emily. "Why everybody's hiring but nobody's getting hired," *Vox*, September 20, 2021. <https://www.vox.com/recode/22673353/unemployment-job-search-linkedin-indeed-algorithm>
4. "Social Media Monitoring Solutions for Recruiting," *Social Industries Blog*, accessed 11/22/2021. <https://social.industries/2019/02/18/social-media-monitoring-solutions-for-recruiting/>
5. "HR's COVID-19 Response Defines Employer Brand," *Gartner*, June 15, 2021. <https://www.gartner.com/smarterwithgartner/hrs-covid-19-response-defines-employer-brand>
6. Biro, Meghan. "Developing Your Employees Is the Key to Retention -- Here Are 4 Smart Ways to Start." *Forbes*, July 23, 2018. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/meghanbiro/2018/07/23/developing-your-employees-is-the-key-to-retention-here-are-4-smart-ways-to-start/?sh=1da1c8653734>
7. Smulders, Stefan. "Using LinkedIn for Recruitment – Top 5 Tips for Hiring the Best Employee." *expandi.io*, August 30, 2021. <https://expandi.io/blog/linkedin-for-recruitment/>

**About *HRO Today***

HRO Today is the property of SharedXpertise Media and offers the broadest and deepest reach available anywhere into the HR industry. Our magazines, web portals, research, e-newsletters, events and social networks reach over 180,000 senior-level HR decision-makers globally with rich, objective, game-changing content. Our No. 1 strength is our reach. HR leaders rely heavily on the *HRO Today's* Baker's Dozen rankings across six different categories when selecting an HR service provider.

**About Endavis**

endavis, powered by job.com, is a national talent & workforce solutions provider in North America. With expertise across healthcare, manufacturing, supply chain, technology, and professional services, the organization has won numerous awards in Direct Contingent and Retained Search, Professional Contract Staffing, and Recruitment Process Outsourcing Solutions. For more information, please email ROI@endavis.com.