

Thriving Through Downturn: The Mid-Market's Talent Acquisition Playbook



OVER THE PAST CENTURY, THE WORLD HAS ENDURED SEVERAL CYCLICAL ECONOMIC FLOWS OF PROSPERITY AND RECESSION. The Great Depression of the 1920s and 30s, the economic boom throughout the 90s, and the Great Recession of 2007 are examples of an ever-changing economy that shows that booms and busts are part of the journey. Even during downtimes, however, businesses – especially at the mid-market level – continued to thrive by being resourceful, agile, and innovative.

As the economy ebbs and flows, mid-market organizations – typically those with annual revenues between \$10 million and \$1 billion – have been successful by being opportunistic in multiple areas of their businesses, from product innovation to process efficiencies, and specifically by strategically investing in talent.

For example, as VHS and DVD rentals became a nostalgic pastime, Netflix had to shift its strategy from shipping DVDs to something that aligned more with what consumers wanted – immediate access to entertainment – during a recession no less. They expanded their team and hired the talent required to successfully launch the Netflix we know today, a real-time media streaming service.

Netflix's Recession Innovation

From mid-market to corporate giant

Netflix not only released its new product at the height of the recession, but it also innovated beyond that, working with partners like gaming giant Microsoft's Xbox to allow users to stream content through its devices. It was innovations like this, hiring the right people, and a focus on appealing to what their audience wanted that helped [Netflix survive the recession and grow into the conglomerate it is today.](#)

Are you prepared for changes in the economy? Thinking about hiring talent but unsure where to start or how to combat the lack of resources?

Discover why working with a Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO) firm like [Resource Solutions](#) can help you power through economic changes to find the absolute best talent to grow your business.

A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO RECRUITING

When organizations look to grow their businesses, innovate new products, and position their companies as industry leaders, not just any talent will do. Particularly when trying to find top candidates during an economic downturn, the quality of talent is paramount – to justify the investment.

If companies have a lean team and don't have the resources to thoroughly vet, interview, and hire new employees, they could miss out on talent that could help them remain stable and even prosper during a down cycle. To ensure that the talent brought on during these times matches the investment, organizations are hiring RPO providers to do the heavy lifting for them, relieving them of this responsibility, which allows more time to invest back into their core businesses.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT RPO MODEL

RPO is how organizations find the best candidates without spending company time and resources that arise from a fully staffed internal recruiting team. Businesses transfer part or all of their recruiting needs to a firm that can meet their staffing requirements, such as processes for sourcing a hearty talent pool, onboarding, and screening talent. Or they can opt to outsource the entire recruiting process.

While many companies choose to implement a full RPO model, some modified RPO models act as an extension of a company's human resources team, delivering the staff they need by augmenting existing internal recruiting processes. When there is an immediate need for talent in a compressed timeframe, deploying project RPO to address talent shortages is another viable option.

With project RPO, the team can implement an agile hiring process in a matter of weeks, so organizations can continue to innovate and expand – both of which are necessary to be successful in any economic state.

A RECRUITING SOLUTION FOR THE MID-MARKET

According to Harvard Business Review, the middle market represents only 3% of all U.S. businesses but is responsible for *a third* of private sector GDP and employment. Yet, despite being the economic growth engine, traditional RPO has historically neglected the mid-market in favor of enterprise corporations that need to fill thousands of roles.

Mid-market businesses that may only need to hire for several hundred roles have likely felt ignored by RPO firms that prioritized the enterprise. But given its historical resolve to buoy the market, the mid-market company deserves a viable recruiting solution.

For example, when large companies eliminated just over 3.5 million jobs during the 2007-2008 recession, [the middle market added over two million roles](#). How?

Perhaps it's because mid-market companies – like White Castle and Patagonia – have focused on building enduring brands. Or maybe it's because the mid-market has positioned itself as a vital part of the supply chain for other organizations – a necessary cog in the wheel.

Both point to a company position that is attractive to potential candidates: a recognizable, stable

employer brand and a foothold in niche markets for the foreseeable future.

Another potential reason? Between 2012 and 2019, mid-sized companies consistently outpaced the enterprise for revenue and employment growth. Data from the National Center for the Middle Market (NCMM) shows that the mid-market experienced an average of 6.5% revenue growth and 4.3% employment growth. That's nearly double the results for the enterprise on both fronts.

The data supports that mid-market businesses contributed to workforce stabilization and recovery during the 2007 recession and thrived when their larger counterparts struggled – proving resiliency over time – consistently.

Mid-market organizations will continue to grow in the coming years and RPO providers will help with the human side of business expansions. There's no better feeling than *finally* building a healthy pipeline. But if you don't have the staff to keep it up, you can put that pipeline at risk.

Outsourcing your hiring needs helps you put money and productivity back into your business, ensuring you can innovate products, deliver more services, and implement innovations – rather than giving money to costly recruitment agencies and screening applicants who might ghost you.

Founding a company at the height of a recession might not seem like a smart idea, but it is exactly this kind of risk that helped propel Warby Parker into a household name. They realized how hard it was to find affordable glasses online and filled a gap, even during a recession. And their socially conscious business platform resonated with customers and the people who wanted to work for them.

Warby Parker: Born in the Great Recession

Seizing an opportunity

Because Warby Parker focused on solving a pain point for millions of Americans, customers steadily flowed in, requiring a stable workforce to manage the increased workload. Masters of marketing, Warby Parker positioned themselves as an affordable option during tight economic times and as a compassionate business with their “Buy a pair, give a pair” program.

By hiring the right talent who focused on customer service and living by the company mission, Warby Parker is yet another example of a mid-market business succeeding thanks to smart and instinctual business decisions, including knowing when to expand to meet a consumer need.

MODULAR RPO FOR ULTIMATE FLEXIBILITY

With impressive growth across the board, the mid-market deserves flexible, scalable solutions for talent. Resource Solutions delivers this, creating tailored solutions for SMBs, the enterprise, *and* the mid-market, from single needs to supporting the entire recruiting lifecycle. This includes:

- Administrative tasks and schedule coordination
- Interview scheduling
- Sourcing
- Others

Their RPO services help businesses hire the top talent that makes them competitive – in both boom *and* bust economic cycles.

Businesses that need a robust pipeline of quality candidates fast and ones that require a dedicated team to source, screen, onboard, and manage the administrative tasks associated with hiring a new employee use Resource Solutions. Their modular services let companies select which RPO components they need most, so they get exactly what they need without wasted resources, time, and costs.

AN AFFORDABLE AND COMPLIANT SOLUTION WHEN BUSINESSES NEED THEM

Sometimes organizations need to hire immediately for a few dozen roles. And sometimes they need to fill jobs throughout the year at a slower pace. Why should anyone be locked into a long-term contract when they don't have long-term needs?

Resource Solutions offers flexible contracts so companies can get what they need and nothing more. They're here to support their companies where and when they need it, and part of that is creating flexible contracts that work with them, not against them.

Going global can overwhelm even the best human resources teams with changing hiring laws, regulations, and customs structures. With the widespread adoption of global and remote work comes revised legislation and workers' rights. It can be a lot. But when you work with an RPO, they can ease that pressure.

Resource Solutions has a global in-house legal and compliance center of excellence that navigates the legal minefield daily. They have the know-how to ensure organizations spend less time and money assembling the workforce they need to grow without risking being non-compliant.

A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FOR THE SHORT AND LONG-TERM

We know that mid-market businesses are resilient and can often prosper during downtimes for many reasons, including planning resources for present and future success, but allowing for flexibility to pivot when necessary.

That's why Resource Solutions and their companies strategize workforce growth based on definitive data through robust engines like RS Intelligence, accounting for both historical and present-day trends and expert market projections.

RS Intelligence provides role heat maps, market mapping, attrition, and retention rates on your competitors so you can see the movers and shakers in your potential talent pool. When you combine this market intelligence with a client's projections, you give senior leaders the information they need to make, data-driven decisions on how to deliver on their growth plan. It is a fluid process – not a set-it-and-forget-it, canned approach – easily adaptable to course changes and outside economic influences.

WHAT BUSINESSES CAN EXPECT FROM RESOURCE SOLUTIONS

While they customize solutions to best suit their companies' needs, there are some gold standards organizations can always expect from Resource Solutions.

1. **They work fast.** To stay competitive, businesses need to be agile. Resource Solutions RPO experts work quickly to fill positions, while still giving companies the oversight they need to make a smart hire. They can implement a custom solution in as little as six weeks and fill positions as soon as client accounts go live. Companies set the time-to-hire expectations, and Resource Solutions delivers.

2. **Support, when and where businesses need it.** Whether a client needs Resource Solutions to act as a full lifecycle recruiting team or requires them to only screen candidates, Resource Solutions supports their companies in any area where they need help. If they need Project RPO or longer-term RPO, Resource Solutions will devise a solution fit for them.
3. **Customers come first.** Resource Solutions doesn't choose which companies to work with based on how many roles a business needs to fill. Instead, they focus on their companies' needs, how they can help, and the best way to deliver on expectations.
4. **Solutions as unique as their companies' businesses.** No two companies are alike, so Resource Solutions doesn't create a one-size-fits-all solution. They design and deliver customized RPO services to meet each company's specific needs. And their modular RPO lets companies tailor what they need even further.

SET UP FOR SUCCESS

As the economy experiences its ups and downs and uncertainty grows, companies must prepare for success with a growth mindset. Sometimes that means investing in product innovations, while other times, it means hiring the best talent to propel business further, regardless of the state of the economy.

When focusing on the right things, organizations can not only survive a downturn, but can also thrive. If expanding the employee base is part of this preparation or growth plan, Resource Solutions can help by offering the right size RPO for your organization, regardless of where you are in your growth cycle and business journey.

Let Resource Solutions act as an extension of your recruiting team to take any or all parts of the recruiting process off your plate. Their experienced team will work with you to find top talent, meet your needs, and do it all as quickly as you require at a cost that works for you.

[Contact Resource Solutions](#) to build your custom RPO solution and find the talent to get you through the booms and busts of the economy.

