

Rejuvenate to Captivate: Modernize to Recruit & Retain Top Talent

by Stacey McCreery

As leaders, we all know how tough it is to recruit and retain top talent. Strong recruitment is more than just throwing an ad out on a job board and waiting for the resumes to start pouring in. And then making sure the new hire gets the cushy corner office. In this first of a series on retention, we're exploring how taking a modern approach to how you recruit employees can help you build and sustain a deep bench.

Yes, finding the perfect fit for both employee and employer *is* possible when you maintain a commitment to the process of discovery. And communication is key to this. Following a well-defined plan based on open lines of communication will allow you to successfully recruit and retain top talent for your organization.



Strong recruitment begins with a plan

So where should you start? Establishing a strategic recruiting plan is a crucial first step. Intentionality is key to finding the right people. As leaders we have many pressing priorities. And we can struggle with making the time to develop our bench strength. Oftentimes, talent management is unintentionally near the end of our agenda. Yet, we all know finding the right people will lead to better outcomes. The challenge is balancing hiring with all the responsibilities of our position.

Finding the right employee-employer fit the first time is important. Especially to your company's bottom line. [Forbes](#) agrees saying, "Hiring and employing unfit talent often drives undesirable hardship on a company's books and turnover rate, leaving operations and culture to suffer the consequences." We believe you can avoid this hardship by establishing a specific plan and following four simple guidelines: recruit with purpose, define the requirements, know the candidate and be transparent.

Step 1: Recruit with Purpose

One calculated way you can find great leaders is to recruit with purpose. Find those who are best-suited to your company's goals by developing a list of intentional questions. The added insight allows for a fresh and unique perspective. This makes all the difference between a successful placement and an irregular fit. We're able to obtain a deeper understanding of a candidate by delving in and asking specifically:

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- What kind of culture do you create for employees?
- How do you describe your management style?
- What are your thoughts on long-term planning?
- What are your personal goals?

While this may seem like a nontraditional approach, these questions are inherently important to any organization. In our line of work, we often find fantastic, high-performing leaders who are exceptional, but they're with the wrong organization. It's disheartening to see these individuals accept an opportunity that's clearly not a good fit. Instead, be intentional in this process to find suitably accomplished individuals who are ideal to move through your company's recruitment process.

Step 2: Define the Requirements

For the recruitment process to be successful, you need to define the requirements of the position. What does that mean? It's best to communicate more than just the job description, responsibilities and educational requirements. In outlining the prerequisites of any position, think about:

- Your own company culture
- The type of candidate that would fit very well in the organization
- The type of management style that will fit best
- The long-term goals of the person in the position
- Find stronger roots to your company's mission, purpose and vision and communicate that to your potential leader through the interview process. Ask and answer:
- Who you are
- What's important to the company and its people now
- Where you're going in the future
- Now, it's important to note that who you are, how you want to portray yourself and the role you see the candidate playing in your culture is more than just checking off a series of boxes.
- Defining the requirements allows you to hire the best candidate for the position and can ultimately lead to better retention.

Step 3: Know the Candidate

In addition to defining the requirements, we believe it's valuable to get to know the candidate during the recruitment process. Relationships really matter in the hiring process. And getting to know the candidates well will lead to better outcomes. When you really understand the personal goals of an individual, you can ensure a more purposeful exchange that will allow you to elicit valuable information. Where do they see themselves in five or ten years? What are their desires? What **motivates** them? By culling the right information to decide what's most important to them, you understand what drives them beyond their skillset.

Step 4: Be Transparent

We see high turnover in organizations who show a lack of transparency during the hiring process. It typically isn't intentional, but it's like airing your dirty laundry. Communicating where you are currently is critical in any relationship. Oftentimes, people end up communicating where the organization is

going versus where it is now. And while that approach is valid and important, it's also critical that you share where you sit today.

Some might say the recruitment and hiring process is like that of dating, where the candidate and organization are getting to know one another. The two must mutually agree that they have all the information they need to successfully move forward. It's about compatibility. If the candidate doesn't have a clear understanding of the organization's culture, strategic vision and challenges, then he or she may make the wrong decision. The individual may say "yes" when the answer should really be "no."

If it's not a good fit, getting to that "no" is just as important, if not more important, than hearing "yes." No one wants to bring on a leader who stays only for a short period. A company can create a win/win situation with effective communication during the recruitment process. This includes setting clear expectations, being transparent, and talking about short- and long-term goals of both the candidate and the organization. An open line of communication leads to a great fit and can result in dynamic leader retention.

Why is this all-important? Because we've always believed that when you have turnover in your senior leadership, it affects all levels of management and staff. This, in turn, can negatively affect your ability to meet your short- and long-term goals.

Summary

A stronger recruitment process and long-term retention of high-performing candidates is possible with the right mix of transparency, good planning and consistent communications. And this can lead to lower turnover and higher productivity, which is what every organization strives for. When there's a commitment to this process, it creates an intentional successful outcome for employee and employer.

About the Author



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