

## TALENT ACQUISITION

Putting the “Human” Back in Human Resources

BY CHRIS CARMON

I believe that every CEO, hiring manager and search consultant wishes that there was a defined formula for talent acquisition that could be replicated across all hiring initiatives. Talent acquisition would be so much simpler if we could develop that “special ingredient” that could be sprinkled into every search initiative to guarantee a great outcome. Unfortunately, at the core of hiring is still a human being with unique motivations, goals and challenges.

Systems, methodologies and metrics are all critically important to a business’s success – including those utilized within talent acquisition. This sets the framework for how talent should be identified, attracted, gained and grown. However, as long as the word “human” is in Human Resources, companies need to realize that flexibility, agility and sensitivity are paramount to their ongoing success in talent acquisition. Not only will this help a company’s ability to attract the best talent, but it will also contribute to the company’s overall branding to the talent pool as people hear more and more about their “human” approach to onboarding talent.

When you are conducting a search effort, it is important that every person on the hiring team is on the same page. Your corporate values can’t just be something hanging on the wall; they need to be cemented into your culture. As much as hiring managers are interviewing talent for a role, they also need to have their selling caps on to showcase why their company is truly a



special place to work. Once again, this is something that has to be real, not scripted – a “human” touch. Selling needs to include honesty, and hiring managers must be willing to discuss any potential weaknesses. Candidates appreciate this much more than just being sold. They are fully aware that no company is perfect and would like the opportunity to help in the growth of the company.

Be prepared to break protocol based upon the talent you identify for a given role. Having a more senior-level person initially speak with a candidate could be beneficial to the process. Recruiters should have the flexibility and empowerment to quickly turn great talent over to a more senior-level hiring manager who is better suited to talk with the talent – even if the talent has not been fully qualified by the recruiter.

Also keep in mind that the spouse or significant other is a big part of the decision-making process. Taking time offline to meet with the candidate and their spouse can be a nice “human” touch and could assist them in their decision-making process. I have seen instances where candidates reject a more highly compensated position to go with the company that paid them less but was a better cultural fit. This investment of the senior hiring manager’s personal time makes a bold statement to talent looking to come onboard with the company.

The recession caused people to become cautious in their decision-making

process. Years of dedicated service, in many cases, were overlooked by employers as the economy spiraled downward and layoffs became prevalent. As a result, candidates now look at the culture of a company and how the company’s values align with their own. Talent looks at balance as much as career advancement and an upside in compensation. They want to enjoy working for their employer and be a part of a team that both challenges them and makes their day enjoyable.

Take time to understand how your company is being perceived by the talent pool. Surveys to candidates who have applied for positions could produce very valuable information to help you improve your corporate cultural branding. Top leadership needs to ensure that corporate values are more than words in a mission statement. They need to live those values and then permeate the culture with these values. Further training with staff will then cement how to better articulate these values within the hiring process – and put the “human” back into Human Resources. <<

**HOW TO REACH:** This article was brought to you by Chris Carmon, president of The Carmon Group. You can find out more about The Carmon Group at [www.carmongroup.com](http://www.carmongroup.com)