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Employment: A Technology Roadmap for Smarter Sourcing

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The Employment section did not involve the reporting or the editorial staff of The Moscow Times.



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In today's environment, uncertainty is the only certainty. Market volatility makes it difficult to forecast hiring. Rapid response to changing dynamics requires efficient processes. Sourcing technologies that are more attuned to your business can speed response to hiring demands.

Every day we hear about hot trends in sourcing technology. Tools evolve continuously, so how can employers make good long-term technology investments when both requirements and technical capabilities constantly change?

Ultimately, HR professionals need sourcing technology that connects them to candidates. Rather than making a long-term, point-in-time decision, we recommend an approach that maximizes existing resources while leaving room to explore new technologies. In other words, the strategy for sourcing technology must be agile to adapt to rapid changes in both the talent marketplace and in recruiting innovations.

Establish objectives

Start by identifying your company's business objectives and assessing the talent required to achieve them. What do you need from a talent sourcing standpoint? Where are the gaps and what needs to change? With these answers you can evaluate new technology against one important question: does the technology help generate the right candidates to meet your talent sourcing objectives?

Get the right sourcing talent

The best technology tools are only effective in the hands of recruiters who know how to use them. Companies with highly successful sourcing efforts report that the best recruiters are

innately curious and passionate about finding great people and matching them to the right positions. Recruiters use technology, but they don't need to be tech experts. What matters is that they have the skill set and aptitude to embrace new opportunities, think creatively and be early adopters of new technology.

No matter the technical comfort level, the good news is that a lot of the learning is at low or no cost (such as free or low-cost webinars, "how-to" blogs or product demonstrations). The key is to find and support recruiters who are passionate about applying new learning to their work. These are the qualities that cannot necessarily be taught.

Budget for a well-rounded effort

Some of the most effective sourcing platforms can be inexpensive. The key is to plan for an appropriate mix of technology. Consider conservative approaches—whether they are software-based, subscription models, or any number of offerings—as well as experimental efforts. Some leading employers recommend an 80/20 budget mix of the tried-and-true versus innovative opportunities. This allows HR leaders to have some freedom to try new approaches. As an added bonus, it sends the message that the company is comfortable with experimentation.

Don't be afraid to fail

When it comes to technology, serial dating may be better than marriage. Technology changes constantly. Some of the best innovations are short lived. Be comfortable with that.

The most innovative companies are not afraid to fail. They believe trial and error are part of an effective plan. Willingness to try new things also says something important about company culture. You won't be able to attract talent if you're constantly afraid to try new things.

Get creative

Your sourcing technology strategy can provide recruiters with freedom to think differently and leverage technology in innovative ways. For example, one company encouraged employees to use their own sourcing channels to refer friends. The process was essentially delivered as a competition with bonuses and even candy for referrals. Recruiters received referral messages via Twitter and Facebook and each referring employee became a potential source of ready-to-be-leveraged leads.

This is an example of a simple, but effective tactic. The message is clear: lose the stereotypes. The notion that the only good ideas are those that have succeeded in the past does not apply. The age of technology and innovation calls for thinking outside the box.

Stay away from the hype. Challenge your own assumptions.

It is easy to get caught up in the latest trend and assume it will be great for your company. But this may not be true. Whether or not a certain technology is the right fit will depend on the specific job roles and skills required, along with the nature of your business. The key is to consider the potential return carefully, while also opening up the possibility of new ways of operating.

Look at the type of presence your candidates have on a particular platform—e.g., are they more likely to be on LinkedIn or Vkontakte? Consider using technologies that offer free tools that may prove to be sufficient. Some technology that is considered dated might continue to be effective for your purposes. For example, job boards, which are often mistaken as losing importance, continue to be far more impactful than many people believe. In fact, job boards are responsible for six times as many hires as social media recruiting.

In today's uncertain environment, you must act swiftly and creatively to engage the most sought-after talent. A strategic framework for identifying sourcing technology is a business imperative. When executed effectively, this framework aligns technology with business objectives, enabling organizational agility and, ultimately, the successful targeting of candidates.

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