

31.8: Recruitment

Learning Objectives

- Describe common recruitment strategies



Recruitment of talented employees is an essential part of any company's ability to achieve success and maintain standards within an organization. Recruiting workers consists of actively compiling a diverse pool of potential candidates who can be considered for employment. A good recruitment policy will do this in a timely, cost-efficient manner.

The ultimate goal of any human resources recruitment policy is to develop relationships with potential employees before they may actually be needed while keeping an eye on the costs of doing so. In different industries, the constant need for talent creates a highly competitive marketplace for individuals, and it is important for any manager to be aware of these factors as they develop recruitment programs and policies. As retirement among baby boomers becomes increasingly prevalent, victory in the "war for talent" will depend greatly on recruitment policies.

Methods of Recruitment

There are two principal ways to recruit workers: internally and externally. Most companies will actively use both methods, ensuring opportunities for existing employees to move up in the organization while at the same time finding new talent. Depending on the time frame and the specialization of the position to fill, some methods will be more effective than others. In either case, the establishment of a comprehensive job description for every position the company seeks to fill will help to narrow the scope of the search and attract more qualified candidates—which contributes to search efficiency.

Internal recruitment is often the most cost-effective method of recruiting potential employees, as it uses existing company resources and talent pool to fill needs and therefore may not incur any extra costs. This is done in two principal ways:

- **Advertising job openings internally:** This is a method of using existing employees as a talent pool for open positions. It carries the advantage of reallocating individuals who are qualified and familiar with the company's practices and culture while at the same time empowering employees within the organization. It also shows the company's commitment to, and trust in, its current employees taking on new tasks.
- **Using networking:** This method can be used in a variety of different ways. First, this recruitment technique involves simply posting the question to existing employees about whether anyone knows of qualified candidates who could fill a particular position. Known as employee referrals, this method often includes giving bonuses to the existing employee if the recommended applicant is hired. Another method uses industry contacts and membership in professional organizations to help create a talent pool via word-of-mouth information regarding the needs of the organization.

External recruitment focuses on searching outside the organization for potential candidates and expanding the available talent pool. The primary goal of external recruitment is to create diversity and expand the candidate pool. Although external recruitment methods can be costly to managers in terms of dollars, the addition of a new perspective within the organization can bring many benefits that outweigh the costs. External recruitment can be done in a variety of ways:

- **Online recruitment:** The use of the Internet to find a talent pool is quickly becoming the preferred way of recruiting, due to its ability to reach such a wide array of applicants quickly and cheaply. First, the use of the company Web site can enable a business to compile a list of potential applicants who are very interested in the company while at the same time giving them exposure to the company's values and mission. In order to be successful using this recruitment method, a company must ensure

that postings and the process for submitting résumés are as transparent and simple as possible. Another popular use of online recruiting is through career Web sites (e.g., Monster.com or Careerbuilder.com). These sites charge employers a set fee for a job posting, which can remain on the Web site for specified period of time. These sites also carry a large database of applicants and allow clients to search their database to find potential employees.

- **Traditional advertising:** This often incorporates one or many forms of advertising, ranging from newspaper classifieds to radio announcements. It is estimated that companies spend USD 2.18 billion annually on these types of ads.^[1] Before the emergence of the Internet, this was the most popular form of recruitment for organizations, but the decline of newspaper readership has made it considerably less effective.^[2]
- **Job fairs and campus visits:** Job fairs are designed to bring together a comprehensive set of employers in one location so that they may gather and meet with potential employees. The costs of conducting a job fair are distributed across the various participants and can attract an extremely diverse set of applicants. Depending on the proximity to a college or university, campus visits help to find candidates who are looking for the opportunity to prove themselves and have the minimum qualifications, such as a college education, that a firm seeks.
- **Headhunters and recruitment services:** These outside services are designed to compile a talent pool for a company; however they can be extremely expensive. Although these service can be extremely efficient in providing qualified applicants for specialized or highly demanded job positions, the rate for the services provided by headhunters can range from 20 percent to 35 percent of the new recruit's annual salary if the individual is hired.^[3]

? Practice Question

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No matter how a company decides to recruit, the ultimate test is the ability of a recruitment strategy to produce viable applicants. Each manager will face different obstacles in doing this. It is important to remember that recruiting is not simply undertaken at a time of need for an organization but rather is an ongoing process that involves maintaining a talent pool and frequent contact with candidates.

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1. Kulik, 2004 ↵
 2. Heathfield, Use the Web for Recruiting: Recruiting Online ↵
 3. Heathfield, Recruiting Stars: Top Ten Ideas for Recruiting Great Candidates ↵

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