

8.15: Candidate Sourcing

Learning Outcomes

- Discuss candidate sourcing

Sourcing is the process of identifying, pre-screening and cultivating qualified candidates in order to meet current and anticipated future job openings. As is true of the recruiting process in general, having a clear understanding of who your ideal candidate is—a “specific person in mind”—will inform your choice of sourcing channels and improve sourcing effectiveness. That is, your choice of sourcing channels or methods will depend on who you want to reach.

? External vs Internal Sourcing

While this page focuses on finding external candidates, the best person for a job may already be working at your company. Too often companies ignore the talent pool already at their finger tips in pursuit of something new. Internal recruitment requires training and development (which we’ll talk about in Module 7: Onboarding, Training, and Development), but allows you to pull known talent, as well as build loyalty among existing employees. To learn more about internal candidates, check out the following articles:

- “[Why Companies Overlook Great Internal Candidates](#),” from *Harvard Business Review* by Wade Burgess
- “Why the Best Internal Candidate Might Be from an Unlikely Part of the Company,” from *Harvard Business Review* by Rebecca Zucker



Tapping into social media is essential, with Pew Research Center reporting that 72% of Americans are using social media for information, entertainment and to make and maintain connections.^[1] Pew’s Social Media Fact Sheet also notes that social media use has become more representative of the broader population; however, the use of specific social media platforms varies by age, gender and educational attainment. For example, college graduates are power users of YouTube (80% vs 73% total), Facebook (74% vs. 69% total), LinkedIn (51% vs. 27% total) and Twitter (32% vs. 22%). To highlight a few gender differences, a higher percentage of men than women use YouTube (78% vs. 68%) and LinkedIn (29% vs. 24%), with percentages similar on Twitter (24% vs 21%) and women’s use of Facebook higher (75% vs. 63%). One of the largest differences based on race is on LinkedIn, used by 28% of whites and 24% of blacks, but only 16% of Hispanics.

Employees should be an essential part of social recruiting. In *Fundamentals of Human Resource Management*, the authors state that “employee referrals tend to be more acceptable applicants, who are more likely to accept an offer and, once employed, have a higher job survival rate.”

Three caveats to be aware of with regards to employee referrals:

1. an employee might mistakenly assume job performance competence based on friendship;
2. employee referrals may lead to nepotism or hiring individuals who are related to persons already employed by the company
3. employee referrals may reinforce the status quo rather than advance a diversification objective.

For perspective on the social point, here are a few social recruiting statistics compiled by Todd Kunsman^[2]:

- 79% of job applicants use social media in their job search
- Job seekers rank social media and professional networks as the most useful job search resource compared to job boards, job ads, recruiting agencies, and recruiting events
- 73% of millennials found their last position through a social media platform

- 80% of employers say social recruiting helps them find passive candidates
- 91% of employers are currently using social media to hire talent
- Employers believe that social media marketing will be the most in-demand HR skills by 2020, followed by Data Analysis and Predictive Modeling

Old-school—face-to-face methods—work as well, serving to build the employer brand as well as a candidate pool. Participating in, partnering with or sponsoring college groups, community organizations and professional associations is an effective way to identify individuals with high-values skills or demographic profiles.



You can also work the interest angle online, joining relevant LinkedIn groups or identifying and following thought leaders or groups on Twitter. This has the added benefit of serving as continuous learning for the organization. For example, to identify Human Resource thought leaders, use that as a search phrase and you'll see articles like HRDive's "[10 Must-Follow HR Twitter Accounts \(and Chats\)](#)."^[3] Using the search engine of your choice, you can also find tutorials on how to use Twitter for sourcing, including Workable's "[Sourcing on Twitter: Advanced Search Strategies for Recruiting](#)."^[4] Developing relationships with educators is another way to identify high-potential candidates; internships provide both the student and organization an opportunity to test fit.

A final opportunity is to identify niche sites that specialize in a specific industry, area of expertise or speak to a specific demographic group. For a variation on that approach, consider TripAdvisor: the travel site pitched an SEO job from a source code page on their website that would only be viewed by SEO practitioners. To quote Google Hire's write-up on the campaign: "Hidden amid the strings of code was an invitation to 'run—don't crawl' (a play on automated website crawling—a common SEO technique) to join the company's SEO team, complete with contact email address and a link to a job posting. For more creative sourcing ideas, read the article: [10 creative candidate sourcing strategies from IKEA, Spotify, Deloitte and more](#)."^[5]

? PRactice Question

<https://assessments.lumenlearning.co...essments/18155>

1. "[Social Media Fact Sheet](#)." Pew Research Center. June 12, 2019. Accessed July 25, 2019. ↵
2. Kunsman, Todd. "[17 Social Recruiting Statistics and the Impact On Hiring Top Talent](#)." Everyone Social. February 19, 2019. Accessed July 26, 2019. ↵
3. Kathryn, Moody. "[10 Must-Follow HR Twitter Accounts \(and Chats\)](#)." HR Dive. November 25, 2015. Accessed July 26, 2019. ↵
4. Pavlou, Christina. "[Sourcing on Twitter: Advanced Search Strategies for Recruiting](#)." Workable. Accessed July 26, 2019. ↵
5. The Hire Team. "[10 Creative Candidate-Sourcing Strategies from IKEA, Spotify, Deloitte, and More](#)." Hire by Google. February 2, 2019. Accessed July 26, 2019. ↵

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