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THE 8 SECRETS TO STRATEGIC SOURCING

Have you ever worked at an organization that employs the Post and Pray strategy? Perhaps this sounds familiar: Company leaders have an urgent need for new talent, purchase postings on the big job boards and cross their fingers that the right candidate will stumble across the listing and apply. Not getting enough candidates? Companies shell out more money for a premium posting in an attempt to stand out in the vast sea of job listings out there. Post and Pray is more of a gamble than a strategy. Organizations feed their money into the slot machine, hoping to hit the jackpot with a qualified candidate. As you can imagine, the ROI isn't great.

Fortunately, there's a better method: Strategic Sourcing. The concept is simple - source your candidates with a deliberate and scientific application of strategy. I've worked with hundreds of brilliant recruiters across a broad range of industries and identified 8 key elements to Strategic Sourcing.

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1

QUALITY OVER QUANTITY



Hiring managers don't care how many candidates apply to a job — they care how many of them are qualified. Recruiters can save a lot of time and money by applying the same metrics to their sources. We frequently see recruiters post to a popular board and then spend hours weeding through unqualified applicants. Even if you pay nothing for that posting, you're wasting money in the time spent reviewing unqualified, unserious applicants. A source that delivers a handful of great candidates is worth so much more than a source that delivers hundreds of people who aren't good fits.

2

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS



Which sources scored big for you in the past? This is where source tracking pays off — after a few months of analyzing where your candidates come from, you can go back and sift through that data for trends. If you're already using our Applicant Tracking module, the automatic source tracking combined with the dynamic reporting of the pipeline tab will give you more than enough information to identify successful sourcing trends.

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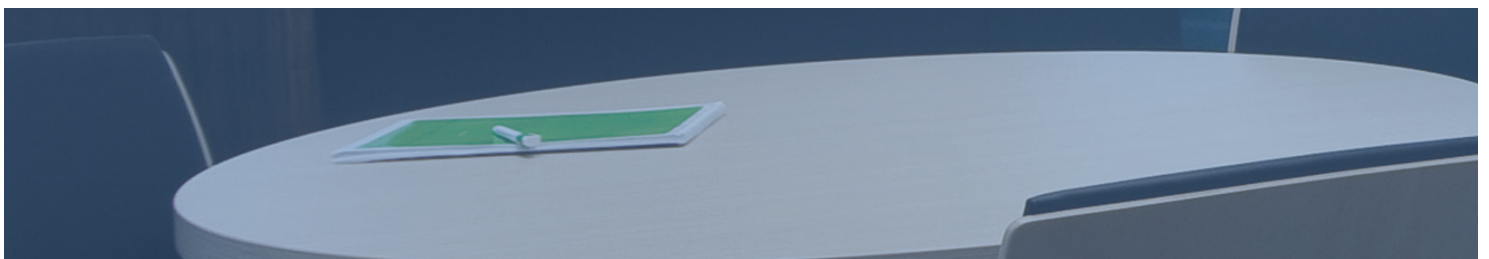
LEVERAGE YOUR EMPLOYEES' NETWORKS

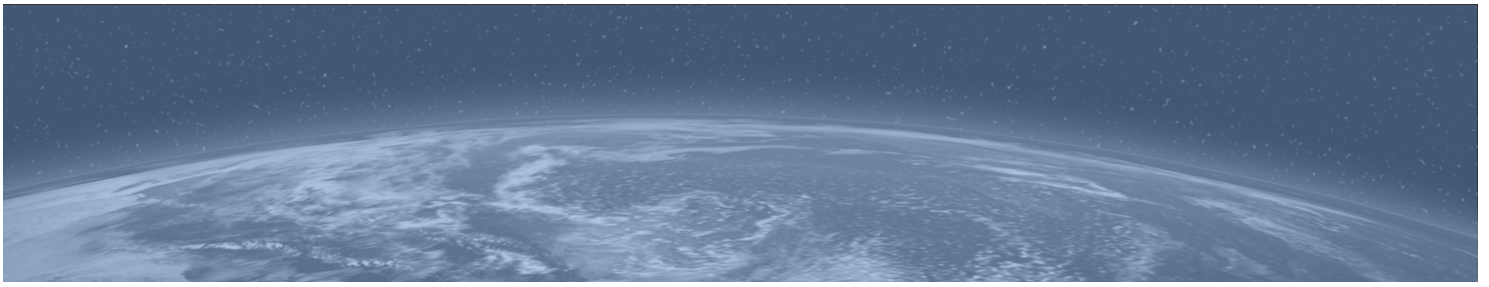
You hear this all the time, “the best source of candidates is referrals.” Do you know why you hear it all the time? Because it's true. Ask yourself, are you doing enough to leverage the networks of your existing employees? Here at ClearCompany we've found a great deal of success in hosting prospective employee Open House nights at our office. Employees invite friends and colleagues, we provide food, good music, and (we think) good company. By showcasing our unique company culture, we're able to make real connections with excellent candidates, some of whom have since become excellent employees.

4

EXPERIMENT WITH NEW SOURCES, STUDY YOUR RESULTS

Your number one source of candidates five years ago might be one of your worst performing sources today. Candidates are fickle, and the job board market is intensely competitive. Put those two forces together and you end up with a sourcing climate that is sure to keep you on your toes. Next time you open a new hiring cycle for a recurring role, use historical analysis (see item 2!) to drop the lowest performing source from the prior cycle and add at least one new source.





5

THINK GLOBAL, ACT LOCAL



Customize your strategy based on location and role. The job board that delivers excellent account managers in Omaha might be a total dud if you're looking for engineers in Dallas. Each geographical region will have quirks, and it takes time to fully understand each location. Like a good craftsman (or craftswoman) be sure that you're using the right tool for the job as you make job board selections.

6

SKETCH OUT YOUR IDEAL CANDIDATE, BUT DON'T BE AFRAID TO BREAK THE MOLD

Most recruiters know to beware of the search for the "Purple Squirrel" — the fictional candidate whose resume magically mirrors the list of minimum and ideal qualifications of the role for which you are recruiting. Here in the real world, we know it's incredibly rare to find that 100% match. So how can you be sure you're finding the right fit, even if they only match 75% of the ideal qualifications? This is where keeping an open line of communication with your hiring managers is key. Which traits are of utmost importance, and which ones are nice but not critical? Keep an open mind and you might find the perfect candidate hiding in plain sight.

7

PUT YOURSELF IN THE SHOES OF YOUR IDEAL CANDIDATE



Where are they right now? How can you reach them? This may sound simple, but if you take the time to mull over these questions, the results can be astounding. Are there certain websites, conferences, or local networking events that your ideal candidate might frequent? If you're not sure how to answer these questions, consider asking an employee who is already successful in the role — they probably have some ideas about where to find their peers.

8

YOUR COMPETITORS IN BUSINESS ARE NOT THE SAME AS YOUR COMPETITORS IN TALENT

In your business, you know exactly who you're competing against for clients. It's quite tempting to narrow your focus when hiring and to look only for candidates that have experience with one of your rivals. Yes, in certain niche industries this strategy may be critical, but that's more the exception than the rule. If you're recruiting for a role at a for-profit organization, think about whether there are roles that develop similar skill sets within academia, government, non-profits or other sectors. Can you think of at least a few? Good. Now go after those candidates!



KATIE BOND
DIRECTOR OF CLIENT SERVICE
CLEARCOMPANY

As our Director of Client Services, Katie Bond has seen every sourcing strategy out there. Over the past few years, she's watched the fight for top talent become an uphill battle, and spends her days helping clients find new solutions.