

The Golden Egg of Strategic Recruitment

An ebook by Signa
and TransparentC.





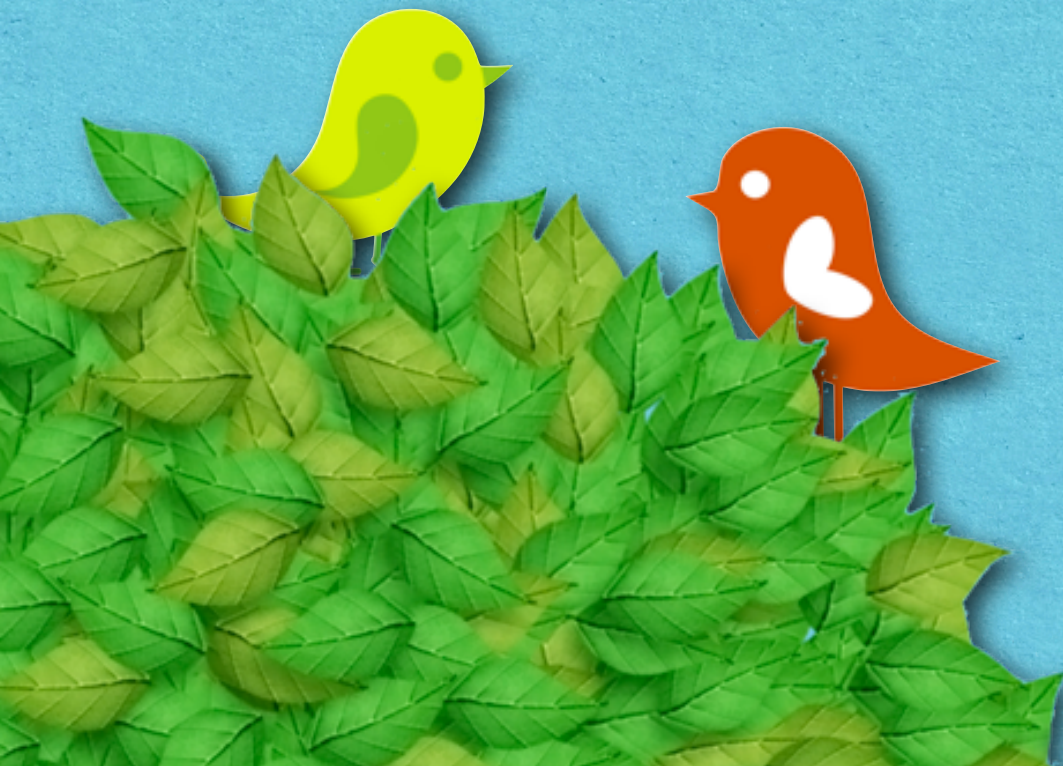
Background

With employment growth in Alberta at 1.7% this year, companies are finding that more often than not, talent is the limiting factor to growth rather than opportunity. According to Alberta's Occupational Demand and Supply Outlook Report, there will be a 114,000 person deficit expected by 2021- these jobs exist, but not the people to fill them.

Organizations that are doing business in Alberta are getting creative about how they look at recruitment. This ebook is written to help you think more creatively about where and how to acquire talent in an environment where our target audience (potential employees) wield more power than the organizations that need to hire them. Potential employees have so much more choice than previous generations did. However, recruitment strategies are still aimed at a generation or period in which organizations had the upper hand with fewer jobs and plenty of people looking to fill them.

Who is This Ebook For?

This ebook is for anyone in human resources or leadership that has recruitment within their portfolio. The intention is to add value to the talent procurement strategy for organizations that are not finding the people they need and are becoming frustrated with their current recruitment toolset.



Your Binoculars Are Facing The Wrong Way



On average, 14% of the population is looking for work today. These are people who decide that they need a career change, or are otherwise unemployed for some reason. We're familiar with this group because we see them respond to our job postings every day with a resume and cover letter.

When you look at that 14%, there are probably a significant number of people that will not fit your organization. It could be lack of required skills or experience, or that they don't align with your values. The important point here is that trying to find your next hire in less than 14% of the population can be quite fruitless.

The remainder of the population is NOT looking for work. They are satisfied with their jobs, making a decent living, and relatively happy in their day-to-day roles. It seems counterintuitive, but this is where you should be hunting for your next hire. Sure, they haven't indicated that they want to make a change, but there is something we can do about that.



Birds of a Feather...

The reality is that this 86% of the population will not have all the criteria you want to target. Your odds of finding the ones who do are much better, but there's still work to be done to fine tune the search.

Just like any good marketing person would tell you, you have to know your audience first.

Take a cue from one of the best retailers in Canada: the Body Shop. The Body Shop marketing team builds and reviews what they call an audience persona prior to each marketing campaign. They detail nearly everything they know about their ideal customer. What they wear, where else they shop, their attitudes about current affairs-everything. They go as far as designing a life-sized cutout of their perfect customer and giving that persona a name.

Target your ideal employee the same way. Immediately, you will know when he or she walks through your door, and you'll have the foundation to engage them. Consider just how essential it is to find the right team member that will compliment your company's values and help drive your team. Customers come and go, but staff will be with you for a while. It's the difference between casual dating vs. deciding to get married - the impact of your decision is vastly different. Invest the time now to define your target candidate and find the right fit for the long haul.

Expand Your Field of View

Getting specific is good, but be careful about getting too narrow. Your target segment may have a list of attributes that limits your market too much. For example, a very small percentage of the population is interested in being paid 100% by commission. Even if that's the "type of person you really want" you need to consider whether it's reasonable to hold out for that one person who checks off all the boxes you're looking for – is it realistic to assume the glass slipper will fit someone? Can you be creative about changing that attribute and overlook the minutiae if the big picture is looking good? Really focus on putting all of those specifics through their paces. What can you be flexible on, and what are absolute must haves? We have all heard that skills can be taught, but attitude cannot. A motivated employee who is engaged with your company's vision is primed to learn new skills and a strong addition to your team.



Don't Hold Your Breath Waiting for the Golden Bird

If you take a look at your recruitment marketing today, what are you saying in your job postings and on your website? Is it about what your organization needs? If your approach is traditional, you likely have a long list of required skills, behavioural attributes and desired experience on your job postings. These are all what your organization needs in a successful new hire – not addressing what's in it for them. Bad move. It is a lot like building and selling a product without asking what customers want first. It doesn't work anymore and we're talking about your team here, not the customer. It's a "Hail Mary" pass in the end zone, hoping someone will catch the football – and we know it's exciting when it happens, but unfortunately rare that it does. The problem is that the only people interested in this information are the 14% of job seekers we were talking about. Remember, we're casting a wider net to catch people that are not really listening for you yet, and strike up the conversation that will create an opportunity that didn't exist before.



How's Your Bird Call?

We need to be empathetic in our approach. Rather than approaching this market with a list of things that your organization needs, you need to approach this market ready to nurture a conversation. The conversation is what allows you to figure out which are the right levers to pull when it comes to winning that individual, or if your organization even has the levers to pull in the first place. Subtraction has its place - keep in mind that being strategic about your recruitment also allows you to filter out ones that don't fit.

The problem with most job requirements is that they are not conversation ready.

Start the conversation with the right story: a story aligned for your ideal candidate.

The people that work for you today are a great starting point. Your key employees can help you figure out what two or three things need to be said for you to start the conversation with the 86% that are not looking for work today. What would they say is the reason they love working with your team? Is there a strong, shared sense of core purpose, vision and values? Based on that, what would resonate with that non-job-seeker market? Your whole objective is to have the true, authentic story of your culture and organization from the eyes of your current employees and package that in a way to start the exchange.

The story is a great launching point, but pay attention to where the narrative ends so you can let the conversation begin.

Chirping in a Megaphone Is Just Wrong

Now that we are ready to have the conversations, and our people are giving us the talking points, we need to use the right channels to have those conversations.

Newspaper ads and websites like Monster are set up for you to pitch what your organization wants (wrong approach) to the wrong audience (14% job seekers rather than the 86% non-job-seekers).

The best way to determine if these methods work for you is to look at the superstars that work for your organization today. We would bet that they joined your company through a relationship and conversation rather than through a blind pitch you made on a job-seeker site.



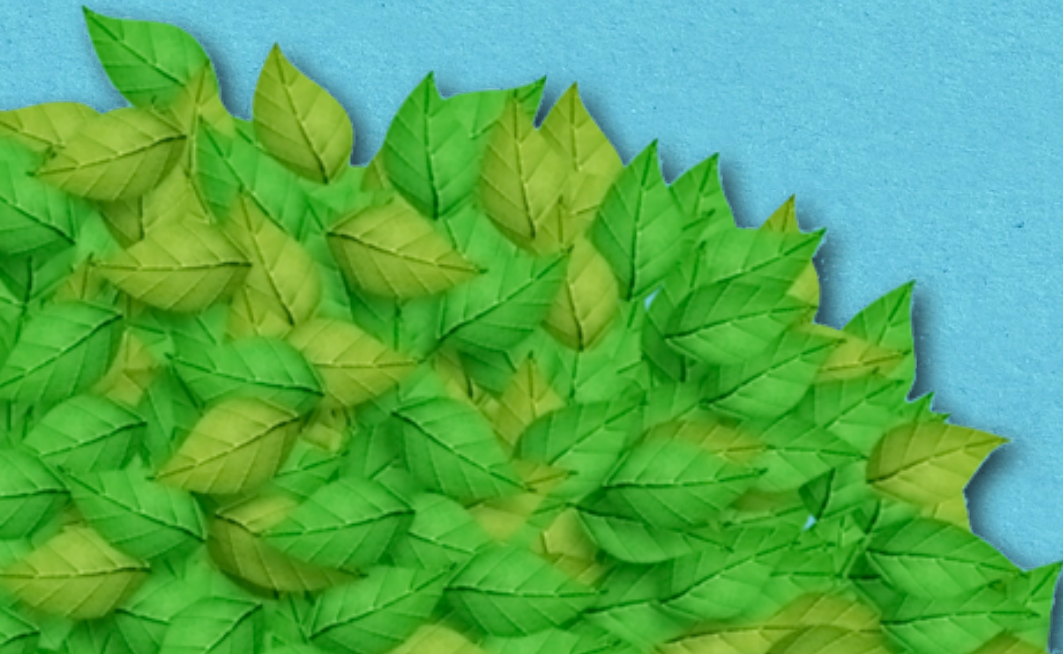
Of Course We'll Suggest You Start Tweeting

Social media and networking are conducive to conversations. This is where you are asking a few key questions and listening, either at an event or on Twitter.

Don't make the grave mistake of misusing channels that were meant for conversations. There are way too many organizations ineffectively "pitching" their job postings on Twitter and LinkedIn and its being dismissed by the 86% who simply aren't tuned in to that channel.

Social media is a great forum for the conversation. Instead of passively broadcasting your role and hoping someone responds, reach out specifically to what seems like the right person and get the conversation started.

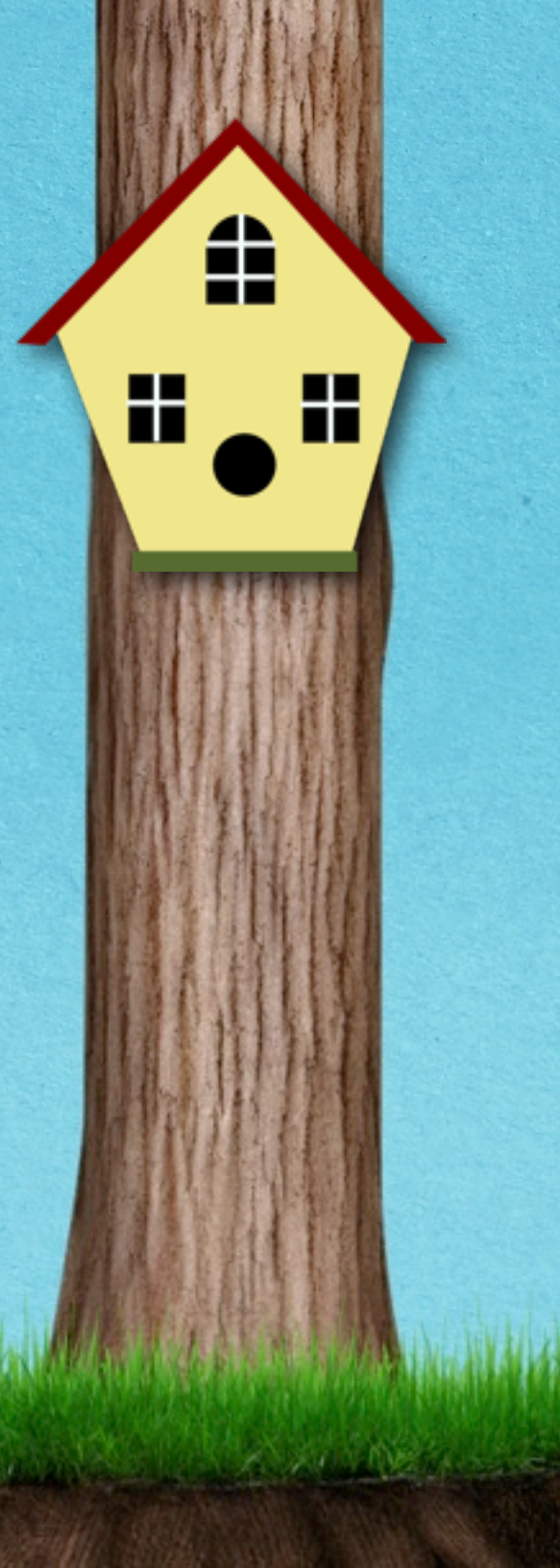
The key here is to listen and have discussion.



Summary

The central theme of this ebook mirrors a shift that marketing people have seen in the last decade as they aim to relate their company's product and services to their customers in an environment where there are so many alternatives. The balance of power moving to consumer (the potential employee) from the organization and the rise of conversational tools (social media) is the same. Marketing has had to shift their strategies and integrate their traditional tools with new ones - recruitment is no different. By knowing your audience, having the right background, being ready to talk on their terms, and using the right tools to do so, you will see a shift in the quality of people walking through your door.

We will leave you with one more thing to think about. Remember that talented people know other talented people. With the right approach, they'll carry many of the conversations for you making your organization truly a sought-after place to work.



The Authors

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Colin Christensen could perhaps be the biggest nemesis to old-school HR. After 20 years of hiring and recruiting, he's constantly rocking the boat by creating practical solutions for traditional problems. He believes that by building better culture in organizations through engagement and motivation, everyone can truly love life through their work – leaders and employees alike. And this is the foundation to an effective recruitment process.

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Jason Bekdashe knows nothing about building synergies, helping you pick low-hanging-fruit, or paradigm shifts. What he does know, is how to successfully market and promote new initiatives to employees. We forget that we constantly need to win employees' attention and sponsorship if we're going to keep the organization moving forward and internal campaigning allows us to do that.

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