

# To Hire More Top People, You Need to Become Talent-Centric



Excerpts from Electronic Recruiting Exchange.com

*If you're not seeing and hiring enough top people, you have a problem. If things are getting worse rather than better, you have a bigger problem. If you're using more high-priced contract employees to fill in the gaps to meet hiring needs, you're masking the problem.*

Everybody wants to hire top people. Better advertising and marketing is part of the solution, in addition to having enough recruiters who know how to recruit top people. Even more important than these two combined is having every hiring manager committed to hiring top people and capable of doing it. There are a lot of other steps involved in solving the problem, but the bigger issue at the core of all of this is that most companies' hiring tactics, techniques and tools were not designed to hire top talent.

They were inadvertently designed to fill positions with marginal candidates.

Nobody ever went out of his way to hire marginal candidates. But this is the kind of thing that happens when tactics drive strategy, rather than the other way around.

A talent-centric strategy means that every single step involved in hiring is designed to meet the needs of top talent. This means that every interface, every advertisement and ad place-

ment, every form, every question, every meeting, every email, every encounter, every schedule, every call, every follow-up call, every offer, and everything else is designed to ensure that a top person will be wowed. Furthermore, this strategy should be different for a top engineer, a top manager, a top salesperson, a top college grad or a top part-timer to work in the call center.

In evaluating your hiring processes from a talent-centric standpoint, here are 10 important factors worth considering:

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**1. The compelling nature of the job itself.** Remove your company name from one of your typical online job descriptions. Would a top 10 percent person apply to it if she read it and if she already had a good job?

**2. The quality of your advertising and marketing effort.** Take the job above and go to the site it's posted on. Put in the keywords a top person would use to find the job in the search box without your company

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name. If your job is listed on the top 10 jobs and it has a non-traditional and compelling title, you are on the right track.

**3. Effective use of high touch in a high-tech environment.** How good is your customer service? Are candidates contacted within 24 hours after applying and called by a recruiter within 48 hours? Can a top candidate instantly access more information about the job either online or by talking with a live person?

**4. Use of advanced marketing techniques.** You are headed in the right direction if you have created unique approaches based on the level of the job and how active or passive the person is. Advanced marketing techniques include developing targeted marketing campaigns, designing different websites for different people, and using different Customer Record Management, and interactive marketing tactics, depending on the type of position to be filled. The key is not only have different approaches for different professionals, but also the idea that you want to target candidates who are the best in class regardless of the job level.

**5. Use of proactive referral programs (employee referrals and networking).** Do you have a very professional employee referral program in place? This means it's well-administered, candidates are contacted regularly, and the database of leads is kept current with great information, including candidate quality and key strengths. Also consider how well

current employees provide you with names of great candidates who aren't looking, how steady these great leads are developed, and how well you get more names of great people from names generated using the best Internet name-generating techniques.

**6. Quality of the screening process.** Is your screening process designed to attract top people or keep marginal people out? Are people energized by your method of asking questions, luring them in for a more rigorous exchange of information? Or do your questions eliminate good people who are perfectly qualified doing comparable, but not identical, work, or good people who feel disrespected by the types of questions asked or if it takes too long?

**7. Quality of candidate experience online.** Top people sometimes look for better jobs, especially on bad days. If a top person gets the urge to look for something better, would the person be able to find your site and find the job quickly? Is this person likely to apply based on what he or she reads, and how long would it take to apply? Is there enough supporting information available to reinforce the person's desire to engage?

**8. Quality of candidate experience onsite.** After a few hours of interviewing, how many of your candidates feel great about your company and the opportunity presented?

**9. Recruiting team's time and ability to recruit.** Top people require more hand-holding and more effort to find them. It doesn't matter how

good your recruiting team is if it doesn't have enough time to recruit top people. You need to evaluate how much time your team has to recruit and how good it is at recruiting and hiring top people without having to pay salary premiums.

**10. Hiring managers' ability to attract and recruit top talent.** If your hiring managers aren't capable of hiring top people, everything else is a waste of time.

The point here is you must become more talent-centric in the future if you want to hire top people. Things will get tougher, not easier, so don't make excuses. Recruiting top talent is more about marketing than selling.

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