

Using opportunity marketing to attract your best employees

Marketing is a powerful tool that can be used to attract more than just customers or clients.

When polished and used properly, it can enable your organization to stay more than competitive by keeping an ongoing parade of top talent coming your way to fill each position you have open.

Marketing messages can be used for nearly any task you want. In fact, sooner or later some kind of marketing message is going to influence you. You can turn that same power to draw the right people to your company. Think about what kind of marketing message that you would be influenced by – whether or not you were seeking another job – then, use it to supply your company with the top people around.

DRAWING QUALITY TALENT REQUIRES QUALITY MARKETING MATERIALS

Taking time to prepare the right materials for your candidates is like preparing a garden. You have to do it with the end result constantly in mind. The day will



come when you will reap the fruits of your labors and see the candidates come – when you most need them to. Before that day comes, however, you will need to put in some time and effort. The preparatory work can be a little difficult, and you're going to have to get a little dirty in preparing the garden correctly – breaking up the ground, removing the rocks, grass or weeds, adding fertilizer, and more. After the work is done and you are enjoying the results, other companies will wonder how you keep prime candidates coming and how you managed to gather so much talent under your company's roof.

The truth is that hiring and retaining top talent on an ongoing basis is not easy. Proper marketing, however, can reduce much of that work, as long as the groundwork is laid first. The marketing of a good job opportunity is just as powerful to draw top talent as is offering a quality job in the first place. The key to effective marketing is to fully understand all about the job – from every angle.

This means that you must consider the...

- Roles and responsibilities;
- The outcomes expected;
- The opportunities for advancement;
- The various management styles the employee will encounter;
- The culture of the company;
- The micro culture of the team;
- And, the surrounding community.

Marketing to the talent you want means thinking of more than just your customers. That is only half of the equation. You will need to think about what that talent wants and needs and then matching them with the needs and wants of your company.

You will need to understand the mindset, behaviors, desires, wants and needs of the specific talent you want to attract and then market to them. By aligning your current talent pool with your opportunities – and the jobs they dream about – you can create a strong foundation for employees that will be around for a long while.

LIKE TRADITIONAL MARKETING, DIFFERENTIATION IS THE KEY

A very important part of being able to draw top talent for your open job positions will largely depend on your ability to differentiate your position from your competitors. Doing this, however, requires attention to details. Candidates typically love details, as opposed to more generalized information, and the more you can give them the better off you will be toward successfully getting their attention.

By providing them with more details than your competitors, you will also find that they will more quickly become comfortable with your company, hiring personnel, and the job opportunity. More information will also reduce the time needed for interviewing the same candidate, since they will have much of the information needed to participate in the interviews already in their hands. Providing them with so much good information up front will also cause your organization to shine – especially when the competing organizations don't provide it. You will also find that candidates "personality masks" will fall faster and they will become much more willing to reciprocate by sharing more deeply and openly much sooner.



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Patrick Ropella is Chairman & CEO of the Ropella Group an international Executive Search, Leadership Transformation, and Corporate Consulting firm. He authored the book and web-based training program, *The Right Hire – Mastering the Art of SMART Talent Management*, and has seen his content featured in many trade magazines, business publications, and industry journals. Patrick regularly speaks at webinars, career fairs, and conferences.

THE PROBLEM WITH TYPICAL JOB DESCRIPTIONS

After examining many job descriptions through the years, it can be easily seen that most of them contain very little actually useful information. This is true of at least 80 percent of all job descriptions. When you consider that this is probably actually hurting your ability to draw the top talent you want, it is imperative to change your ads – and this can be done without much difficulty.

The remaining 20 percent of job ads are considerably better, well thought out, and they often include some of the job expectations. Some of these, however, also fall short. The best ads will contain information related to outcomes and expectations – which is what the opportunity is really about. Still, many of these in the 20 percent range often lack an important essential – the ad does not really sell the opportunity – they just don't make the opportunity sizzle!

Position descriptions that are well developed will be both detailed about expectations and will sizzle with opportunity. It is these characteristics that will attract the top talent you want. These kinds of ads will make your interviewing team happier about interviewing top talent, enjoy the overall information exchange process more and even do a better job of interviewing.

THE TYPICAL JOB AD

Let's take a look at a typical ad that might be found on the average job board (Figure 1). This ad was created for the purpose of this sample. Figure 2 shows the same ad upgraded for marketing purposes. As you read the ad, several revisions have certainly stood out and caught your eye. They should include:

- A greater attractiveness using a logo and adding sales-style wording. You should also have noticed that it now reads more like a marketing message than a want ad.
- An emphasis is placed on the newness of the Emergency Room. If your facility is not new, find some attractive feature that stands out and focus on it in your headline.
- Note that the “musthaves” and the “experience required” are right at

the top. There is no need to make unqualified people read the whole advertisement.

- A description is added to “Meditech.” If something is required, describe it. Tell the reader what it is, but avoid industry jargon, acronyms or internally used titles.
- The requirement that the candidate have “Emergency Room registration experience” is strengthened by using the qualifier of “a few years.”
- Prospects are led directly to the hospital Website in order to expose them to more employment branding efforts of the hospital.

NOW, REDO THE AD ONE MORE TIME TO MAKE IT REALLY SIZZLE

The additional material that you need to make your job ad sizzle can easily be added if you have already made use of our Search Prep Questionnaire. The best ads will contain specific outcomes and often have breakthrough results – getting the attention of the real top performers. You can easily upgrade your ad to make it even better. Start out by listing the top five “must haves” on your position description. These are your deal breakers – if they don't meet these five things then you simply toss their resume. Once you have these “Must haves,” then you want to add in the “outcomes” that you expect the new candidate to achieve.

Here are some general ideas for outcomes that you may include:

- Money increased or money saved, and by how much.
- Numbers raised or numbers cut, and by how much.
- Percentages improved or percentages eliminated, and by how much.
- Problems solved and what benefits will be derived.
- Innovations/products/programs they are expected to create or improve.

Adding the “must haves” as well as the “outcomes,” will limit those who apply for any job position, and still draw those you want to target. Here is the same ad upgraded once more for

marketing/sizzle purposes with these elements added to draw the top talent you want (Figure 3).

After looking carefully at this ad, you should be noticing how it does much to clarify the position and gives the reader a list of things they must have and the desired outcomes. The refined ad will now help your company draw more of the candidates it wants – letting you build a stronger company – and a greater bottom line.

Fig 2

Fig 3