

## ***Plan to build your team, don't just react to the market.***

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### ***We can't find the right people!***

An increasing number of businesses are facing a challenging recruitment environment. There seems to be a lack of suitably qualified people to fill the gaps in their teams. There are a number of reasons for this lack of people supply. For many of our clients, it's either due to the economies that they have their organisations based in or because of sectoral issues.

### ***Why?***

For most businesses, these are factors outside of their control. It's a condition that economists call "full employment". What it means for companies is not having enough of a supply of suitably qualified people to fill the vacancies or gaps in their business. However, as I have written here and elsewhere before, while on the surface, this may appear to be the case, it can also be a result of companies looking for the perfect "off-the-self" solutions - which when it comes to people, is hardly ever the case. Particularly for larger organisations, their ability to grow talent needs to be addressed, but I digress. Not all businesses have those types of resources and sometimes, the skilled and experienced people needed, can only be sourced elsewhere.

### ***Sell it to them –***

***HR increasingly needs to be as focused on their audience, as much as their PR/Marketing/Sales colleagues are!***

Having a plan to address this lack of suitable people, is important. The world is increasingly moving at a faster pace. HR needs to think more like their marketing & sales colleagues do. They need to view hiring in the same way as getting and keeping customers. Businesses can't assume that because they have an opening in the team, that the 'right people' will want to apply. This is particularly the case for more senior level positions. Often, it is candidates' who 'pick & choose' which opportunities to apply for. So, it's important that any business puts its best self forward into the market. What do I mean by this?

I specialise in sourcing senior people for "less ordinary opportunities" Positions that may not be immediately clear as to how they will be filled. Normally on the sourcing projects that I work on, there is a challenge for the candidate moving into an organisation as it is often into a business in a state of change. The business is moving into a new market or new phase of growth. They are redirecting and refocusing the company into a different strategy.

I come along with an exciting career opportunity, but the 'right' candidate is perfectly happy with their present career path and with their present employer. Some are with high profile companies with great packages and great opportunities. I talk to them about this other opportunity that are a little less ordinary, perhaps offering a more exciting/interesting career direction. However, on occasion, the candidates have not heard of the company! Now my clients' companies are no slackers. These are major companies in their own right. However, candidates are sometimes from a different sector or focused on a different aspect of the market. This is an issue for the company. So, for any business in the 21st century, selling themselves, to future potential employees can be as critical as promoting the company's product/service, to potential customers.

***"Having a business that is great at what it does, is one thing, but don't hide its light under a bushel"***

*Help your employees build their profile, to help build yours*

### *Using all the digital tools in the arsenal!*

Organisations/companies/ businesses need to let the market know who they are, what they do. It's not just about advertising and marketing to potential customers. It is also about making potential employees aware of what a great opportunity it is to work with and for your business.

The website and platform interface needs to be more than a data gathering exercise for HR. It needs to be human, and involve real people as early as possible. Great people, want to join great teams. So, it needs to be a team effort. HR on its own can't build the team. All management areas need to be part of the messaging as to why this is a great place to develop a career.

### *Getting physically involved!*

Are your senior/middle managers helping to promote and develop people in the industry via local community forums? (real people in real rooms - not so much of the virtual ones, please). Is your company sponsoring/supporting/ part of developments in the local collage/third level - furthering the cutting edge thinking in the industry? Are people on your team, doing interesting things with your product or service? Do they have ideas that you can support or develop for them?

Getting employees to upload data and information on the company on to Facebook or LinkedIn, or similar platforms, can look dry and lack authenticity. However, helping/encouraging them to show a great night out, or a major project-win that they are part of and very proud of, is very different. They may have an interest in social responsibility project or outreach into the local community. They may be supporting people to use your company's tech/expertise/product/service to develop or meet a social need?

There are many adverts where customers discuss the difficulties that they face and that have a strong product component in them. Why not do the same for potential employees, with support, opinion, examples of industry related issues and how best to address them. Be seen as a resource across the industry, as a destination for those looking at the cutting edge!

And in the same way as your marketing colleagues will try and have appropriate contact at certain touch points, so too does your HR need to connect with potential candidates journey to you. This is very much in the same way, your Marketing/Sales/PR do with your customers

Hiring in a full-employment sector/market/economy requires the business to have a plan. HR needs to work with PR and Marketing to let those who are looking to develop their careers, know that yours is a dynamic modern, progressive company with exciting products and services, which provides amazing career opportunities. That the career development and growth opportunities with your organisation cannot be found, elsewhere.

As a company's manager/ team builder, you need to help your target audience understand and know who your company is and why working with your organisation is a career defining moment. Great companies don't just make great products or services, they become a destination target for the brightest, driven people to work at.

Companies need a strategy to attract and build the best teams possible, across multiple platforms – social & traditional formats, particularly when the market for hiring people is getting 'tight'. The organisation need to build a plan around what the company is about and how dynamic, working there is. It needs to promote on a corporate and personal level, to attract the types of people it wants on its team. If you are lucky enough to have a charismatic leader in the company who will attract people to her/him, great! However, for the rest of us, you will need to make it clear, that only the brightest, most driven, most committed, work here.

### **ACTION PLAN**

- Lose the Stock images: use real images of real people, with real smiles in the real work place.
- Lose the heavy descriptions: When explaining what the company does, use stories and videos to make the point, use video tours that help describe culture and values
- Work across multiple platforms/channels – get the whole team involved, particularly those doing more interesting things. And don't forget the traditional ones, either.
- Keep it real: use real people, with real stories to tell, in real face-to-face encounters, at Third level conferences, industry think tanks, etc. And if they're don't exist, why not build them?

The management team needs a team building plan! And that plan, needs to attract the best!

Eugene Ivory has over 25 years' experience managing and supporting multinational to early stage business. He has successfully served clients across a broad spectrum of global companies from financial services and consumer packaged goods to Medical and Technology.

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