

how to build
an effective



talent acquisition
strategy.

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chapter 1. introduction to talent acquisition strategy.

Some HR departments today seem to spend all of their time in reactive mode. They're either backfilling for unanticipated vacancies, reacting to ever-shifting business priorities that have created new talent needs — or rushing to put out some other fire. But it doesn't have to be that way.

With a best-in-class Talent Acquisition (TA) strategy in place, HR teams can be far more proactive and value-adding in their approach. Instead of scrambling to cover short-term needs, these teams are fully integrated into the long-term business planning process and better aligned with senior leaders on big-picture goals. What's more, they're able to map their existing talent capabilities to match the business strategy — including plans for adopting new technologies.

In this context, your TA strategy is an essential ingredient of your business's success, guiding how you take action today to build the organization of tomorrow.

In this ebook, you'll not only learn how to develop that blueprint, but also how to diagnose talent-related pain points and connect your TA strategy to specific business outcomes that matter. Finally, we'll turn to some of the ways that partners can help. Read on, and you'll be ready to roll out a best-in-class TA strategy at your organization today.

a sound TA strategy allows HR teams to be more proactive and value-adding in their approach to securing talent

chapter 2. recognizing the pain points.

Have you ever read through what seemed like 10,000 resumes, only to discover that not a single candidate makes the cut for a screening call? If so, you know how the rest of the story goes: The entire process resets to square one. The vacancy remains. Your existing staff members continue to be overburdened at work.

We feel your pain. And in order to find the right antidote, you need the right diagnosis first. Here are three telltale signs that you need to have a more robust TA strategy in place. We've included a few suggested short-term fixes for each — but remember, these are temporary bandages and shouldn't be thought of as substitutes for a comprehensive TA strategy reboot.

limited success with job boards

Online job boards are great for exposure, but they won't magically produce great candidates if you don't use them properly. Ask yourself if the job is clearly described, if you're providing enough information about your company (including its mission and values) and if your job postings are optimized with relevant keywords.

top 5 channels used to find a job



*among workforce who have changed employer in the last 12 months

randstad employer brand research global report 2020



negative employer branding

Are you finding that job seekers don't know about — or worse, have a negative perception of — your organization? Yikes. If so, your employer brand probably needs some attention.

A strong **employer brand** is an especially pivotal draw for Gen Z workers, many of whom are about to enter or just recently entered the workforce. This cohort finds a pleasant work-atmosphere more important than job security and prefers digitally advanced companies that offer ongoing opportunities for learning, development and growth.



new initiatives requiring immediate hires with niche skills

Standard recruiting methods can sometimes come up short when you have highly specific or niche talent needs. While staffing partners — firms with deep talent pools available on demand — can certainly help in a pinch, developing your own forward-thinking TA strategy can help you avoid having to scramble for talent as often. Work with senior leaders ahead of time to develop a plan for how you will source hard-to-find-skills. Otherwise, when the business need is critical, and the supply of skilled talent is scarce, you'll find yourself between a rock and a hard place.

Do any of these TA-related woes sound familiar? If so, it's a safe bet that one root cause is your lack of an overarching TA strategy that's integrated with your business goals. And we'll help you develop one in chapter 5 — but first, let's look more closely at the business case for doing so.

what do generations want



chapter 3. connecting talent acquisition to ROI.

In a fast-moving economy characterized by constant disruption, the only thing that never changes is the fact that everything's always changing — and that's why it's so important to have a far-reaching TA strategy in place. Here are five ways to frame that strategy in terms of bottom-line business impact.

1. greater capacity to adapt and scale

Given the pace of change today, the ability to adapt and scale when needed can give companies a competitive edge. When you partner with staffing firms that have global reach and deep rosters of qualified talent, that's not a problem. Staffing partners can flex and scale to meet your growth needs, ensuring that business continues as usual and that the quality of your products or services doesn't fall off whenever demand spikes.

2. reducing time to fill

When there is a low unemployment rate, it means there's a shortage of qualified talent in nearly every industry. Indeed, the average **time to fill at most organizations is 36 days**, which is 36 days you simply can't afford to spare. But the right TA strategy should not only help you catch up, but also get ahead — and attain a crucial edge on your competition.



3. decreasing departmental overhead

The right TA strategy will help you reduce the costs associated with HR overhead, which in turn can free up working capital to invest in growing your business — a win-win. You should consider incorporating human resources outsourcing (HRO) as part of that strategy, too, as it can deliver significant ROI.

4. culture fit

Your TA strategy will enable you to understand not only the qualifications that candidates need, but also the intangible factors that will make someone a good fit for your workplace culture. And that's critical, indeed, as the cost of a bad hire is estimated to be as high as 21 percent of an employee's first-year salary. You can't afford to let the wrong ones in.

5. hiring for a growth mindset

When employees are genuinely interested in learning from colleagues and contributing to your company — versus working only for a paycheck — you'll find that your company is primed for growth. And a savvy TA strategy can help you attract, hire and retain exactly these candidates.

At the end of the day, of course, implementing a more robust TA strategy should deliver value in myriad ways. But, when making the business case to internal stakeholders, start with the five areas discussed in this chapter and you'll be well on your way to securing buy-in.

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chapter 4. steps to building an effective talent acquisition strategy.

Now that you understand all of the ways an effective TA strategy can affect your bottom line, it's time to start building one. There's one major caveat, however: The single most valuable piece of advice about TA strategy may be that there's no single-best method for building such a strategy. It's not one-size-fits-all, in other words.

Nonetheless, taking a structured approach helps — and we've got the guidance you need. So follow our lead, and pretty soon you'll be able to significantly reduce time to hire while serving as a far more strategic partner to the business.

getting started

As you evolve your TA strategy, remember that business goals should be your “true north.” You should also think strategically, and try to take into account any trends that are unique to your industry or line of business. While, ultimately, your plan will touch on many different aspects of employee attraction and recruitment, at the outset you should focus on just a few areas, with the understanding that your plan will continue to change over time.



start with the future

Your TA strategy will be most effective when it aligns with and supports the overall growth strategy of your business. So start with 12-month, two-year and five-year business plans to determine which functional or departmental areas will likely see the most growth, then think about your related talent needs. You should definitely look to partner with senior leaders at this stage, and by anticipating key growth areas — and securing buy-in from the top-down — you'll help ensure smoother execution down the line.



Your TA strategy must identify ways to stay current with — or better still, ahead of — trends and forecasts for your industry. For instance, are there new technology applications that are likely going to create new talent needs? By understanding these dynamics, you'll be better prepared for the future and have a much greater chance of success when it comes time to start sourcing candidates.

build your brand — every day

Simply put, companies with strong employer brands attract strong candidates. That's why your TA strategy should clearly articulate how you plan to communicate your company's culture, perks and benefits, and level of digital sophistication. According to one Randstad survey in the U.S., **62 percent** of job seekers want to join companies with reputations as digital leaders. So you should think about how you'll engage with different audiences across digital platforms and channels.



leverage technology and data

Technology and data are integral components of an effective TA strategy. How you use them also tends to have a determining influence on who you recruit, where you recruit them from — and more.

On the one hand, technological advancements can quickly create demand for (or eliminate) specific skill sets within your organization. So you should try to establish relationships with tech-savvy teams or other information sources. That way, you can stay in the loop about new developments and keep your talent strategy ahead of the technology curve.

From another perspective, any number of software tools can help you collect, record and evaluate data related to candidate recruitment, acquisition or experience, just to name a few. As you work on your TA strategy, outline which metrics you can generate in-house and which you may need to acquire. Identify who within the organization can help interpret results, how and with whom you'll share results and what you'll do in terms of next steps.

To get the most value from the latest technologies impacting the recruiting and hiring space, you might also consider aligning with a digitally proficient recruitment and workforce solutions partner. This type of partnership can make your digital strategy more robust, while minimizing costs and risks.

**a tech-forward workforce
solutions partner can
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continue to finesse

As with any functioning plan, of course, your TA strategy is necessarily going to evolve over time. And that's okay. Keeping it up to date, and ensuring ongoing alignment with key stakeholders, will help you secure top candidates — with less stress, and lower bottom-line cost. Your plan should be a living, growing document, not something set in stone.

That's it — follow these five steps and you'll be well on your way to putting an effective TA strategy in place.

chapter 5. how staffing partners can help.

Savvy employers are turning to strategic partnerships to secure skilled talent — and gaining a competitive edge as a result. An overwhelming **92 percent** of employers in the U.S. believe it's important to have a digitally proficient recruitment and workforce solutions partner in order to achieve key business goals.

But before you begin evaluating potential vendors, it's vital that you first understand the four different types of staffing firms.

temp firms

Temp firms, as the name suggests, have one area of focus: They place candidates on a temporary basis, often in response to short-term needs such as seasonal spikes in work volume or the emergence of new talent needs for projects or initiatives.



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full-service staffing firms

Full-service staffing firms offer broad-based services and have some of the most extensive capabilities for solving end-to-end business problems for their clients. While these are large companies, they often have specialty business lines that can leverage domain expertise to clients in a wide range of talent markets — from life sciences to engineering, nursing and human resources. They'll often bring proprietary technology solutions, with a focus on cost reduction, increased efficiency and growth.

retained search and executive search firms

While retained search and executive search firms share many common features, there are important differences. Whereas retained search is primarily used to source candidates for senior-level roles, executive search is used exclusively for executive-level candidates. Typically, executive search firms also focus on nurturing relationships with “passive candidates” — executive-level leaders who aren't actively seeking new employment opportunities but are open to learning about an enticing offer.

boutique, niche and specialist firms

Boutique, niche and specialist firms make up the fastest-growing segment of the staffing ecosystem. These providers focus on building candidate pipelines within a specific skill area or geography, so they have limited capability to scale or deliver on diversified talent needs.



what kind of staffing partner

should you work with.

what to look for in a staffing partner

There are pros and cons that come with working with each of these types of staffing firms, ultimately depending on your business needs. But no matter what those are, your staffing partner should be able to deliver in the following four areas.

1. a strong grasp on your TA needs

Staffing firms that combine the latest tech with a human touch — and dedicated local experts who will get to know your business needs — are far more likely to deliver solid value over the long haul. Considering that your needs will likely change, given today's highly disruptive economic climate, your partner should be able to deliver on-demand talent for virtually any skill area across industries.



temp firms

place candidates on a temporary basis



full service firms

offer a comprehensive suite of HR



retained and executive search firm

find candidates at either the senior or executive level

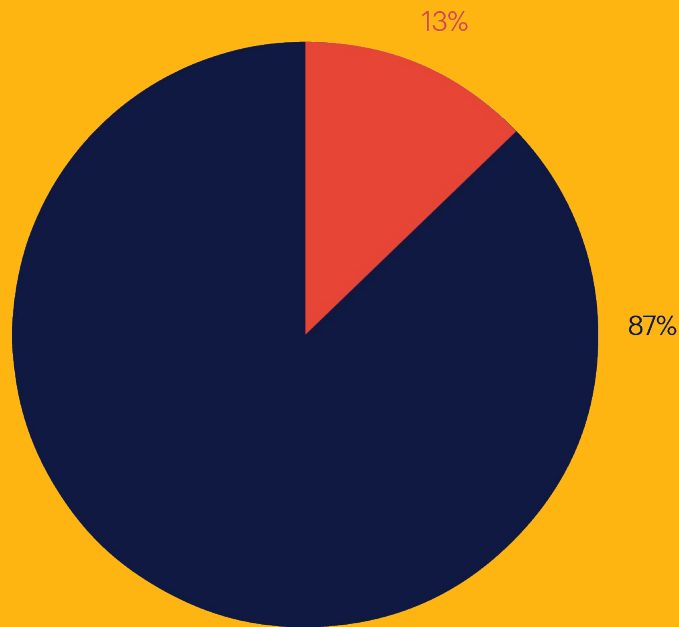


boutique, niche or specialist firms

focus on talent within specific skill sets and geography

13%

of employees world-
wide are engaged in
their work



2. a best-in-class approach to employee engagement

When employees aren't engaged, your business suffers. And according to a recent global **Gallup study**, only 13% of employees are engaged in their work. So it's important to seek out a true partner and advocate — a human-oriented company that will not only source for the right skill set, but send you qualified candidates who are primed for growth and will fit in with your company.

3. demonstrated expertise with employee retention

Employee churn is a pervasive issue at too many companies today. And if employees are leaving your company only to join a competitor, that's a double hit. So your prospective partner should come prepared with solutions to help you not only hire, but also retain, high-value employees.

4. the latest and greatest workforce management tools

Technology investments can yield serious productivity and performance improvements, but that kind of change always comes with a price tag. The right partner for your business will be able to provide access to sophisticated tools and proprietary solutions — that way, you can reap the benefits of the latest tech, while minimizing risks and financial outlays.

Focus on these four areas and you should have no trouble finding the right partner for your business. And if you still aren't sure what to look for when vetting vendors, check out these essential questions to ask when deciding on potential partners, as well as some of the other ways that staffing firms can power the growth of your business.

Of course, it might seem easier in the short term to use existing talent to take on additional tasks. And it might seem daunting to recruit the skilled talent you really need. But burdening your existing team with extra work creates additional stress and often leads to burnout and employee turnover — costly outcomes.

Luckily, bringing on great new team members isn't nearly as difficult as you think. By partnering with a staffing firm that can deliver deep insights into labor market conditions, innovative technology solutions and connections to thousands of qualified candidates, you'll be on the path to building a best-in-class workforce.

a good staffing partner should have a:

- strong grasp on your TA needs
- best-in-class approach to employee engagement
- demonstrated expertise with employee retention
- the latest workforce management tools



randstad

human forward.



Ready to find out how we can transform your approach to talent acquisition? [Schedule a meeting](#) with one of our consultants.