



3 HR Best Practices to Fill Jobs and Keep Your Team Happy

Unemployment rates in the U.S. are at historic lows and many businesses are finding it increasingly difficult to find the right people. Businesses are struggling with the reality that there are more job openings¹ than there are people looking for work.²

To compound the problem, hiring practices have not kept pace with the talent landscape. Many companies have resisted changes in the traditional definition of roles, how they assess talent and ways to expedite the recruiting processes through an evidence based and data driven approach.

With more jobs than people, it's a candidate driven market. You need a solid strategy in place to give candidates a reason to join your team and for them to stick around. To determine whether your company is battle-ready, focus on these three HR best practices:

1. Consider your strategy from the employee's perspective
2. Develop an HR program that supports talent growth
3. Drive HR efficiencies to set your people up for success

It All Starts with the Employee Experience

Before you even post a job, think about why someone would want to join your company. Recruiting is sales and you need to offer something people want to buy. As companies strive to be great places to work, there is a strong focus on employer brand and employee value proposition. But the sales pitch doesn't stop once you attract the talent you need. Employees expect certain advantages as part of their employment relationship.

Employer Brand

Just as a corporate brand encapsulates a company's offer to its customers, the employer brand describes the company's offer to its employees. Like a product brand, an employer's brand is easily influenced through social media. If a close friend recommends a product, you might try it if the product sounded appealing. The same is true of employees recommending their company to a friend. Liking and sharing via social sites and career review sites reaches a far wider audience than close friends. It's important to note that more than half of job seekers research a company from its own sites, according to a LinkedIn study³, and many verify claims via social media and employer rating sites before applying.

An employer brand is not developed overnight. It stems from your values and culture—and it needs to be evangelized from the top down for real impact. Once you have defined your culture and brand, it's time to get the word out through marketing, social media and through your best advocates—your people.

A strong brand matters

Employers report getting 50% more applicants, saving 50% for every hire, when they have a strong brand.³

The payoff for a strong brand is significant. Employers report getting 50% more applicants, saving 50% for every hire due to an easier, shorter process and hiring employees one to two times faster if they have a strong brand.³

¹ <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/jolts.nr0.htm> (Accessed September 2019.)

² <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf> (Accessed September 2019.)

³ https://business.linkedin.com/content/dam/business/talent-solutions/global/en_us/c/pdfs/ultimate-list-of-employer-brand-stats.pdf (Accessed September 2019.)

Employee Value Prop

An employee value prop conveys what an employee gets for working at the company. Here are some of the top concerns that employees have about their place of work:⁴

- **Flexibility**—more than half, **53.6%**, want flexible hours
- **Work-life balance**—**78%** are concerned about work intruding into personal life
- **Fair pay**—**65%** think they are underpaid
- **Career development**—nearly half, **44.7%**, would change jobs to get more experience
- **Nice colleagues**—**48%** say this is a top career priority

Through your employee value proposition, you can communicate what a potential candidate can expect to gain from joining your company and what distinguishes their experience at your company from your competitors. You should infuse your value proposition into your job descriptions. You can also leverage these messages into your marketing, advertising and social media campaigns.

Job Posting

The job posting is your first impression. It should be compelling and incorporate your value proposition—and it should be free of any language that discriminates or discourages certain people to apply. An effective job description should include:

- A clear explanation of the job duties, major areas of responsibility and required skills
- Required education
- Desired work experience, including professional level and areas of responsibility
- Any industry-specific accreditations
- Hard skills, including computer applications and technical abilities
- Soft skills like ability to manage people, work with others effectively and motivate colleagues

Once you have your job description, you need a marketing strategy to reach potential applicants.

Where the candidates are

A Glassdoor study found that **79%** of job applicants use social media in their job search.⁵

Competitive Benefits

A survey conducted by Glassdoor found that 63% of jobseekers saw benefits as a major factor in whether to accept a job offer.⁶ So how can you get the most out of your investment and remain competitive without breaking the bank?

Determining which benefits and perks to offer should fit with your corporate culture. Some companies offer paid time for volunteering to encourage employees to participate in the charitable aspect of the company culture. Selecting the right perks that align with what your talent cares about is an important consideration. Your company will stand out from the crowd if you can anticipate more non-traditional benefits before they become mandated or trendy.

⁴ <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/jolts.nr0.htm> (Accessed September 2019.)

⁵ <https://hrdailyadvisor.blr.com/2018/12/17/what-your-employees-want-from-the-workplace-and-how-to-get-there/> (Accessed September 2019.)

⁶ https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/salary-benefits-survey/?utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F (Accessed September 2019.)

Of course, employers must track government requirements and offer the mandatory leave benefits granted by federal, state and local agencies. The federal Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires applicable large employers (ALEs) to offer certain medical benefits or potentially pay ACA penalties. Even so, small businesses may still want to offer medical, dental and vision benefits to remain competitive.

Assembling a benefits package is challenging for small businesses. Often the plans are cost prohibitive and not very attractive to employees. There are options including going through an HR outsourcing company that can administer benefits for your employees. This approach includes plan administration.

Benefits are important

63% of job seekers consider benefits a major factor in whether to accept a job offer.⁷

Interviewing, Hiring and Making the Offer

It's important to have a plan to properly interview, hire and make your candidate an offer. It goes without saying that the interview is an essential part of the hiring process. And not having a compliant process in place that is followed consistently can open your company up to serious legal risk.

Remember to:

- Regularly train managers about proper interviewing techniques
- Prepare questions in advance; ask open-ended questions that get the candidates talking
- Only ask questions that are based on the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for the job
- Avoid questions that could elicit information about age, gender, religion, national origin, marital status or any other federal, state, or local protected class
- Be aware of applicable laws that prohibit asking about topics such as criminal background or salary history
- Keep an open mind—we all have biases, but we should do our best to remove them from the interviewing process

Onboarding

Onboarding begins with the acceptance of the offer and ends when the employee is up and running in the new role. It can include training, job shadowing and ramping up on new technology. Don't underestimate the power of a positive onboarding experience. Nearly 33% of new hires actively search for a new job within six months if they have a poor onboarding experience, according to the Harvard Business Review.⁸ There's a lot at stake.

To ensure the best employee experience, you'll want to plan and prepare for your new team member's arrival. Simple things that can help them hit the ground running include:

- Announcing the new employee's arrival to colleagues and encourage them to welcome their teammate
- Having the new employee's workstation ready to go with necessary software, email, phone and office supplies

⁷https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/salary-benefits-survey/?utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F (Accessed September 2019.)

⁸<https://hbr.org/2015/03/technology-can-save-onboarding-from-itself> (Accessed September 2019.)

- Showing the new employee to their workspace and make introductions so the new employee can meet key people on their first day
- Planning a team lunch or after-work gathering for the new employee and their immediate team members within the first week
- Allowing plenty of time for training to help the new employee get familiar with company rules, processes, procedures and expectations
- Reviewing the new employee's role and responsibilities and provide clarity on expectations by mapping out their first week schedule

What to avoid:

- Scheduling the new hire to start while the manager is out
- Assigning the new hire to work with a team member who has a major project due in a few days or who is stressed or unhappy
- Giving the new hire a bunch of busywork, because you are too busy

New employees are deluged with paperwork—including W4s, I-9s, mandated notices, company documents and benefits election forms. With a good tracking system, you can know if an employee has filled out forms, enrolled in benefits and completed mandatory training. A tracking report can help you ensure the onboarding process is complete and that you are compliant with employment-related regulations. When you consider that up to 20% of staff turnover occurs within the first 45 days of employment,⁹ it's easy to see the value of a standardized onboarding process.

“ TriNet has been a terrific partner. We wouldn't be where we are today without them. I think the organization has benefited from TriNet's capacity. ”

Amy Errett, CEO & Founder, Madison Reed

Employee Support

In a small company that may not have an HR manager, it can be difficult for employees to get the answers they need about benefits, deductions and leave policies. All too often, the owner or finance manager is doing the payroll and benefits and has to read up on leave policies or research answers before providing support to employees.

Larger companies—and small businesses outsourcing their HR—typically have access to resources like a support line, an online dashboard and a mobile app where employees can get answers. They can also look up vacation time and leave balances, change deductions and access tax documents. Many employers use online tools for requesting time off, submitting expense reports and time tracking. Having custom support is another way to differentiate your benefits offering and provide a simple experience for your employees.

The same online tools can be of great value to employers because they generate data and reports to track time off, compensation and benefits. This data can help you evaluate existing programs so you can remain competitive.

⁹ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/85broads/2013/07/19/how-not-to-lose-your-new-employees-in-their-first-45-days/#315a920e3be3>
(Accessed September 2019.)

Career Development

Once you have your talent on board, it's critical to have a career development plan in place to keep your employees motivated to grow. You can offer reimbursement for training and certifications and provide time off to attend classes. You could also purchase training programs that can be delivered online or in person. There are vendors who specialize in training—from technical classes to mandatory compliance training like sexual harassment prevention. These services can include tracking completion and providing reports.

Performance management has been evolving, in part because technology and data are showing traditional models haven't been the most effective. Major companies like Accenture and Microsoft doing away with annual reviews,¹⁰ while others are eliminating employee rankings. Many companies choose alternatives like quarterly or even monthly checks-ins and regular goal-setting. There are software solutions available to manage this process and HR outsourcing companies typically provide technology platforms to support this.

A performance management program that is well-received by employees can have many benefits to the company and employee, including:

- Improved morale
- Increased employee engagement
- Improved relations between manager and employee
- A renewed focus on employee goals as a means to achieve company goals

Investing time and resources into your employees' future will show you care about their career and that you are building a culture based on consistent, constructive feedback.

Compliance Training

Many businesses require training for safety, company culture, ethics, job role and business programs. But there are mandatory trainings in many states, like the sexual harassment prevention training required in California, New York and Delaware, among other states and localities. To remain compliant, it's important to track who has and hasn't taken training. Training isn't just for new hires; some training must be repeated annually.

There are training vendors and training platforms that can help an HR team. Some will offer basic business skills training and advanced topics in an online catalog. Others may offer onsite training and customized options for your company. You also need to document your training programs and have access to reports that track training across the employee lifecycle.

Planning for the Future

As your workforce grows, so does your investment in people. Your success depends on getting the right talent for your organization in the door and keeping them. Budgeting for HR is critical. You can't cut corners on recruiting and benefits and still attract the best talent.

Ongoing development to retain your team

The average cost per hire is as high as **\$4,400** for technical and skilled labor in certain industries.¹¹

¹⁰ <https://bernardmarr.com/default.asp?contentID=1011> (Accessed September 2019.)

¹¹ <https://www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/business-solutions/Documents/Organizational%20Staff%20Size.pdf> (Accessed September 2019.)

The average cost per hire for U.S. employees can begin at around \$500 per hire for lower skilled talent, up to as high as \$4,400 per hire for technical and skilled labor in certain industries.¹¹ Add to that onboarding and training and you can see that growth is expensive.

Workforce analytics makes budgeting for HR tasks across the employee lifecycle much easier. With data captured, you can predict funding needed to support workforce growth, forecast attrition and plan to backfill positions. With all of this knowledge, your company can prepare for the upcoming workload and be ready to support company goals.

Drive HR Efficiencies: Know Your Options

Businesses looking at HR best practices often focus on budget. They may be anxious about the increasing cost of HR and wonder if they'll be able to support future growth. They may want to add HR resources and tools but feel they can't justify the investment. If you're focused on your company's success, you need to know where your company is headed and how HR can help get you there.

Do it Yourself vs. Expert Help

Outsourcing HR is a strategy some businesses are reluctant to embrace. They may feel they are too small to justify it or that they are large enough to handle it on their own. But there can be a huge return on investment, especially if you are putting your money into expert support where you are falling short.

Compliance is an area where small businesses typically do not have the budget or resources to do the task properly. The average small-business owner spends \$12,000 every year dealing with regulations, according to one study. Of small business owners doing HR themselves, 14% report they are spending more than 20 hours a month on federal regulations.¹² Keep in mind, that is just the investment of their time—it does not include fines or settlements from any violations.

Other common costs include:

- Increased recruiting and training costs due to high turnover
- Decreased profitability due to low employee engagement
- Fines or penalties resulting from regulatory audits
- Increased legal fees to manage DOL or IRS audits
- Lost productivity navigating employee relations concerns

But hiring experts pays off in many ways. It allows you to attract better talent that delivers against your company goals and allows you to improve your onboarding to create a positive experience and ultimately reduce turnover. Perhaps most importantly, it allows you to offer attractive employee benefits packages that help you compete for top talent against larger companies.

¹¹ <https://www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/business-solutions/Documents/Organizational%20Staff%20Size.pdf> (Accessed September 2019.)

¹² <https://nsba.biz/new-survey-regulations-a-major-issue-for-small-business/> (Accessed December 2019.)

Multiple Vendor Solutions

There are many ways a small business can achieve its HR goals. Choosing multiple vendors is a common approach. When considering what kind of help you need, you will find an endless list of resources, including third party staffing agencies, payroll companies, benefits administrators, training vendors, risk management and compliance consultants, and technology platforms. You could piece together a solution, but this approach brings the challenge of managing different timelines, processes and user interfaces.

HR outsourcing companies, in particular professional employer organizations (PEOs), can offer a one-stop approach for the HR team and the employee. In some cases, the PEO can integrate with applications your company is already using, providing flexibility to keep the parts of the HR program that are working for you.

“What I certainly knew is that when it came to choosing the right type of benefits and managing that type of stuff, it was a whole new world for me. So, selecting TriNet was a huge advantage for us.”

Eric Varady, CEO & Founder, Topology

A Full-Service HR Solution for the People Who Matter

You need incredible people for your business to thrive. And incredible people want an environment that brings culture, benefits, simplicity and opportunity together. By teaming up with a full-service HR provider like TriNet, you're freed up to focus on your people and your growing business.

Fuel your growth with a proven foundation of HR expertise, access to benefits, risk mitigation and compliance guidance, payroll and technology. Access to comprehensive benefits that were once limited to large enterprises is now available to businesses of your size. Get the comprehensive benefits and service options you need to compete for talent—even against the giants. And because one size doesn't fit all, we offer industry-tailored solutions to help organizations solve their unique HR challenges.

Push forward and cut a clear path for you and your employees. When you are free to focus on your business, incredible things happen.

About TriNet

TriNet (NYSE: TNET) provides small and medium size businesses (SMBs) with full-service HR solutions tailored by industry. To free SMBs from HR complexities, TriNet offers access to human capital expertise, benefits, risk mitigation and compliance, payroll and real-time technology. From Main Street to Wall Street, TriNet empowers SMBs to focus on what matters most—growing their business.

Go to **TriNet.com** to get started or speak with a TriNet representative at 888.874.6388.

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