



Wanted!

Think about it. You can't go to any store nor log onto most professional sites these days without seeing them. What's the "them"?

Wanted signs!

No, these aren't the wanted signs hung by law enforcement. On the contrary, the signs that capture our attention everywhere we turn are posted by employers desperately seeking talent. The frantic search is on for qualified, willing, and committed people to fill a glut of vacancies.

What's happened? Why is it that, despite so many people between jobs or considering a move, that hiring has become so sticky? Good questions!

In this edition of **EA Insights**, we consider the Great Resignation's flip side -- the challenge of attracting and retaining good people for the roles that are open.

So, keep reading. Hopefully, employer, you finally can put your wanted sign to rest!

All the best,

June

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The Great Resignation: Winning the Hunt for Talent

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According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, roughly 47.8 million workers **voluntarily** left their jobs in

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Quotes

"Don't hire for the sake of hiring. Hire because there is no other way to do what you want to do."

~Sam Altman

"You'll have to hire people to expand your business. But it's a good discipline to really question if you need each and every hire."

~James Altucher

"Unfortunately, as you hire more people, the casual, informal 'do what it takes' culture, which worked so well at less than 40 people, becomes chaotic and less effective."

~Steve Blank

"[A] lot of companies are hiring away from creativity and they don't know it. For instance, they are requiring everybody to have a college degree. The most creative people I know couldn't deal with college."

~Nolan Bushnell

"It's easy to hire too fast and have chaos and disorganization and insufficient management."

~Stewart Butterfield

calendar 2021. That number is staggering! Think about it; in a single year, just shy of 4 million people each month said "Thank you, but no thank you!" to their positions.

With that rate of voluntary departures, not to mention the individuals whose joblessness was not of their own doing, it's no wonder that employers are clamoring to fill vacancies. Given the competition, how do you win the hunt for talent and attract the *right* folks (and not just anyone who'll say "yes")? Moreover, how do you keep not only those you already have but also those who now agree to join you?

Be strategic about the need.

Especially when the work's piling up, though tempting, avoid simply throwing more "hands" into the mix. There's a tendency to see every open spot as one to be filled...period...immediately. However, before contacting HR to post the position the moment after the old employee bids everyone farewell, be sure about the real need.

Take a moment to step back and review where the company is now as well as its short- and long-term direction. Is there a continuing need for that newly vacated role exactly as it was last performed? Should it be repurposed in some way to align more closely to current or future needs? Should it be reimaged entirely or perhaps even eliminated so resources can be used differently to get the job done? Investing a little time into strategic thinking about company needs, and the various options available to fill them, can lay a critical foundation for wise decision making around hiring.

Carefully craft the role.

Ever see a position description or job announcement that still references some old technology or process? That happens because no one took the time to update the document to reflect what the job looks like today!

Before moving forward, pause to revisit the way the job is portrayed, updating as appropriate. Describe duties in clear, concise, and current terms. It doesn't serve you well to rely on vague or outdated language or to reserve an inordinate amount of the actual work for the "and other duties as assigned" catch-all so that the new staff member receives a major surprise after signing on the dotted line.

In terms of match, also show the job seeker how the position connects to mission and impact. Additionally, demonstrate where the role offers opportunities for continued growth -- both within the advertised role and, after performing well, into a next one. COVID has given people an opportunity to reevaluate why they're working, where they're working, and whether it all has meaning beyond just a paycheck. With voluntary turnover on the rise, you don't want to ignore this aspect of the job seeker's decision making.

So, employer, adjust your thinking. Each posting is more than a pro forma necessity. See it as the first way to show the serious job seeker who you are and what you stand for as a company, what the position truly entails, and how it has difference-making potential for others as well as for that individual. By viewing the announcement in this manner, you help candidates assess whether the position you have to offer is a skill-set, values-focused, and career-path match.

Pay attention to the hiring process.

Newsflash: People don't like hassle! If navigating your hiring process is akin to playing a game of Jenga, then some good folks will pass. Get some assistance with process improvement. Outside eyes are effective to see efficiencies or to spot confusion or contradiction that may be blind spots to internal players.

Take a hard look at screening and selection criteria as well. Many of the traditional factors used to winnow down the applicant pool have little-to-no real

"Often, the pressure of the business and fear of having an open position encourages us to hire people who are either not right for the job or not ready to take on the responsibility."
~Maureen Chiquet

"We have to hire, retain, and develop the best staff."
~Steve Easterbrook

"We have a training period; we have certain guidelines and structure. You can't hire talented people and stifle them. That's not the way it works anymore."
~Todd English

"I thought [this] was what I wanted to do, for about 2 weeks. We had an orientation class..., but I was like, 'There is no way this is going to be my life.'"
~Evan Glodell

"Hiring and retaining talent ... is expensive and vital. Those people have real power over their bosses, especially because it is often fairly easy for them to find work elsewhere[.]"
~Hank Green

"Time spent on hiring is time well spent."
~Robert Half

"My vision is to hire qualified employees that may have not yet had the opportunity to create a better life for themselves[.]"
~Grace Hightower

"It's counterintuitive to take a long time to hire someone, but it will save you enormous amounts of time and money later. Our biggest mistakes in hiring stem from speed."

bearing on job readiness or success. Accordingly, reassess your position gate-keeping strategy so that you have admission criteria that bring to your attention people who have success potential, even if their path to you has been a nontraditional one.

Run a well-structured onboarding program.

There's an old saying that you only have one chance to make a first impression. Well, that's true-ish. You see, in the work world that "one chance" has an extended life. It certainly begins in all of the recruitment-phase activity, but it stretches into the onboarding period.

During orientation, the new employee still is evaluating whether this was the right move, just as you are. Welcoming people to an organization and/or to a role in a hodgepodge manner may signal that there is more lack of structure to come and may send a talented team member packing instead of settling in. (And, in today's hiring-frenzy environment, don't think that your candidate has cut all ties with other interested employers and wouldn't be very happy to move elsewhere...quickly.) So, develop a solid onboarding program to acquaint the person with the organization as well as company-wide needs and expectations. Also, ensure that there is a well-organized plan for orienting the person to the specific job and the team that will be joined. The better the start, the better the likelihood of retaining that new hire and setting the framework for success going forward.

Be mindful of culture.

Lastly, culture matters! Now, I know that if you are old-school, this admonition borders on warm-and-fuzzy, but there's a business purpose afoot with the comment. Yes, people are looking for a place to work...and, for many, a place to work hard. However, they also note that environment is important. Workplaces shrouded in fear, or perpetual exhaustion, regular interruptions into off-hours personal time, or requirements for in-office face-time when comparable work could be done remotely are proving less and less desirable to talent on the market, especially with a range of employment options available.

Companies make huge investments on branding campaigns but fail to realize that the first, and best, branding begins within. When people in the organization believe in, are committed to, and feel valued by the company, they show it in their work, in customer interactions, and in broadcasting to others that they've found a great place to work...even on the days when there is much to do. And, that is the best way to attract and keep people!

How are you doing at winning the hunt for talent? Open roles, as well as recruiting and re-recruiting, cost time, money, and morale. If you're tired of spinning and are ready to improve your efforts in this area, call on us at **Executive Advantage**? Use us as that set of outside eyes and strategic partners to help you achieve better results. [Contact us today](#).

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~Pamela Meyer

"[T]he consensus among HR professionals is that the most consistent and efficient means of finding good people is to use word of mouth."

~Fabrizio Moreira

"Onboarding starts with satisfying the most basic of Maslow's psychological needs: belonging. New hires shouldn't arrive to an empty cube and be forced to forage through corridors searching for a computer and the bare necessities of office life. A new hire isn't a surprise visitor from out of town. Plan for their arrival."

~Jay Samit

"[W]e must make it easier for us to hire people. It takes [us] an average of 240 days to complete the hiring process for executives joining ... from outside... We are losing talented people because it simply takes too long."

~David Shulkin

"Developing a good, healthy culture is extremely important... Culture reflects the essence of [an] operation because it directly affects the success of a company's hiring practices and overall strategy."

~Scott Weiss