

What Talent Shortage- Recruit Top Candidates

What Talent Shortage?

The Secret to Recruiting Top Candidates in a Tight Talent Market



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We get people.

The main point of discussion in the recruitment industry at the moment, especially in the technology sector, is the talent shortage. There seems to be constant outcry, and a mass media hysteria, around how hard it is for companies just to find talent now, let alone engage it.

However, here at Sourced we haven't experienced this. Sourcing great talent has always been difficult, but recently it hasn't become more difficult than usual. Although finding and placing talent is our area of expertise, this does show us that the idea of there suddenly being a shortage of talent is slightly misguided. This would suggest, for example, that the growth of the New Zealand technology industry is stymied by a lack of ability for all companies to immediately scale (right now), and this is not representative of what we are seeing. As always, great talent is open to moving around / into the country when presented with a great offer; fair pay, a great working environment with great people, and projects that they can be passionate about.

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The fact is, there is no one particular market factor or candidate motivation that is preventing employers from finding talent. With the tech industry bigger than ever, and still growing, perhaps one issue is not that the talent does not exist, but that the strategies companies are using to attract and engage this talent are falling short. Perhaps we need to stop looking at how the market needs to change, and start looking at what we can do better.

A Reason to Move

We've long been proponents of the power of a strong employer brand. In today's market, with information being so readily available and candidates having an expectation to be able to access it, companies need to recognise and address this demand for transparency. Like in other industries, the

tech sector's top talent is likely already employed elsewhere. Partnering with a great recruitment agency is a good start on the sourcing side, but if you truly want to attract the cream of the crop then you're going to need to give those top candidates a reason to move. That means you need to showcase your company's culture, people, the role you want them to take and the work they'll actually be doing.



"There is a dire talent shortage... unless you are a great place to work."

- Tom Peters

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Showing off your swanky cafeteria or impressive array of ping-pong tables might be a good strategy to attract the freshly graduated engineers straight out of University, but if you want to get those higher, senior level candidates, you have to offer more than that. Autonomy, day-to-day diversity and being granted some flexibility in where and how they work are key motivators for that level of candidate. If these aren't a part of your employee value proposition, then you're already at a

disadvantage when it comes to engaging this talent.

To satisfy those needs and bring these candidates in, you need to make your company a great place to work. Although it might sound simple, it's certainly easier said than done. A key point is to find out what your employees want in a workplace, and to try and build your culture to reflect that. Create an environment that your employees enjoy being in and you will find that they will be happy about coming to work, and won't be able to wait to tell others about how much they enjoy working with your company.

To find out more about how you can tailor your employer brand to attract top talent, take a read of [our guide to employer branding](#).

Compromise

Changing your talent attraction strategy is one thing, but the job isn't done after getting top talent interested. You still have to close the deal and bring them in. It's at this point that we can often see a disconnect, as companies have different expectations to the talent, which can create friction between the two parties. It's at this stage where compromise becomes key to getting the right person.



"Recruitment is like fishing. You may think that there is a shortage of fish, when the real problem is where you fish and what bait you use."

- Dr John Sullivan

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Part of the issue that companies are having engaging talent is that they aren't able to find talent at the level they need for the price they are willing to pay. We're not suggesting that you have to bend to a candidate's every whim, but we are in a candidate driven market and we can't keep using the same old strategies. The interview process is the perfect place to address this. Interviews have changed, and are now more two-way than ever. Candidates are looking for more information when speaking to a potential employer, and they aren't afraid to ask an interviewer about anything they might want to know about. Because of this, you need to be prepared to be interviewed yourself when you're interviewing a candidate. They will want to ask about your company's culture and work environment, and are savvy enough to shrug off generic answers.

When you're asked these questions make sure to have a specific example in mind, or go one further if you feel like you want to progress with the candidate. Don't be afraid to give them a taste of what it's like to work at your company. Show them around the office, and introduce them to the team (especially the people they're working with) and think about inviting them round for an informal event or gathering. There's nothing wrong with inviting them around to the office on a Friday afternoon so that they can get familiar with the people and the environment before they start.

5 Questions Employers Should Prepare to be Asked in an Interview



What is your point of difference?



Where do you see the company in 5 years time?

These are all great ways to get great candidates excited to join you, but you probably won't get the chance to implement them if your interview process is long and strenuous. **The hiring process is taking longer than ever**, and the patience of top talent is starting to wear thin. Although it's understandable that companies want to undertake aptitude tests to ensure they're making the right hire, unnecessarily putting candidates through the wringer leaves a negative impression on applicants and leaves you with a vacant role. Keeping the number of interviews and testing procedures as low as possible avoids both of these, and may actually result in better hires. Top candidates don't tend to be on the open market for long, so speeding up your hiring process will make sure those high-demand candidates stay engaged throughout.



Why did you start/join this company?



What do you like most about working here?



What challenges do you face?

Summary

In every scenario involving top talent, compromise is key (to a degree). The talent is out there, but employers need to adjust to the current market conditions and take the steps necessary to thrive in it. If that means that companies need to review and overhaul their employer brand, or be more flexible in the arrangements they offer to candidates, then that's what it takes. We are not suggesting that you change anything that is core to your values or existing team, but simply that if you make yourself an attractive proposition to candidates, by understanding what you are offering, their motivators and the state of the market, you'll find yourself asking the same question we are: "what talent shortage?"

A great first step in doing this is to give a read of our **guide to employer branding**, which is full of useful knowledge and advice to help you discover, implement and share your employer brand.

For some extra reading, we also recommend visiting our friends at **Concentrate** and downloading one of their free eBooks covering principles that apply as much to your internal brand as they do to the external: <http://info.concentrate.co.nz/fix-your-foundations>