**The Top 5 Staffing Trends and Challenges of 2020**

With [more employers competing for a smaller talent pool](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-u-s-now-has-more-open-jobs-than-job-seekers/), it has become increasingly competitive for businesses who want to hire great talent. In November 2019, the [American unemployment rate was 3.5%](https://tradingeconomics.com/united-states/unemployment-rate), the lowest rate since 1969. According to the [2018 Recruiter Nation Survey by Jobvite](https://www.jobvite.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/2018-Recruiter-Nation-Study.pdf), 74% of recruiters believe hiring will be more competitive in 2020. Let’s take a look at some of the biggest staffing challenges employers face, with five staffing trends that are helping to combat them.

The American economy has reached the tipping point with more open jobs than there are workers to fill them. In September 2018, [American job openings (and quit rate)](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-09-11/job-openings-in-u-s-increased-in-july-to-record-6-94-million) reached a 17-year high, *Bloomberg* reports. To avoid candidate churn and improve hiring and retention, businesses must be aware of these top five challenges in hiring employees in 2020.

### 1. Talent Shortages

According to the [2019 Global Recruitment Insights and Data (GRID) site by Bullhorn](https://www.bullhorn.com/blog/2019/02/the-top-staffing-recruiting-trends-for-2019/), the top challenge cited by recruiters is talent shortages, which 73% say is an issue. With much of the best talent already employed, recruiters must look beyond candidates who are actively applying for jobs and use cold outreach to find talented candidates who are already working.

Professional networking site [LinkedIn reports](https://business.linkedin.com/content/dam/business/talent-solutions/global/en_us/c/pdfs/Ultimate-List-of-Hiring-Stats-v02.04.pdf) 87% of people are open to new job opportunities. It’s up to recruiters to proactively find the right fit for potential employees.

### 2. High Competition

Less candidates equals more competition. Businesses need to make their offering more attractive than their competitors.

That’s not just in terms of financial compensation. A [2019 CNBC/Survey Monkey Workplace Happiness Index study](https://www.cnbc.com/2019/04/01/to-be-happier-at-work-this-is-what-the-majority-of-us-workers-want.html) found non-monetary job benefits are key to boost job happiness. The survey results showed 14% of people prioritized more training or learning opportunities, and 9% said more paid time off was most important to improving job satisfaction. Opportunity, contribution, autonomy, and meaning were also cited as important workplace qualities.

### 3. Slow Hiring Processes

Slow hiring processes can make your best candidates check out and move on. According to a 2017 study by Glassdoor, the [average hiring process length](https://www.glassdoor.com/blog/how-long-should-interviews-take/) in the United States is around 24 days. Some industries and positions may warrant shorter or longer hiring process. For example, a role in government takes about 54 days to complete the hiring process, while bars and restaurants hire in around 10 days.

If your company’s average hiring process time is longer than the industry average, you could be turning candidates off. As hiring processes drag on, a company faces the following risks:

* The candidate may not feel valued and becomes disinterested.
* The candidate is approached by a competitor and wants to work for them instead.
* The candidate is interviewing with multiple companies and takes an earlier offer.

One way to keep candidates interested is to be transparent about timelines to give them realistic expectations. Hiring Managers need to let candidates know what they can expect from the process, so they don’t lose interest and move on.

### 4. Increased Transparency

Since many of the most talented candidates can afford to be selective, that means candidates are vetting companies just as much as businesses are evaluating candidates. There are company review sites out there, like [Glassdoor](https://www.glassdoor.com/index.htm), and even job search sites like [Indeed](https://www.indeed.com/) that feature company reviews on their listings.

This is a challenge for companies looking for candidates. Businesses must work to make involuntary turnover as smooth of a process as possible. Retention must be a priority. Engaging employees must be an integral part of business strategy to improve a company’s reputation and attract the best talent.

### 5. Unrealistic Employer Expectations

Employers that want top talent need to have realistic expectations about how to achieve that. Here are some things that can hurt hiring efforts:

* Low salary offers
* Refusal to cover moving costs for an out-of-state candidate
* No medical or dental benefits coverage
* No 401k
* No workplace flexibility, like remote work options, even periodically
* No employee development opportunities or continuing education reimbursement

These are some of the [benefits employees want from a job](https://hbr.org/2017/02/the-most-desirable-employee-benefits) today, *Harvard Business Review*reports. An employer that refuses to offer a respectable wage and does not help candidates achieve work-life balance won’t be attractive.

## The Top 5 Staffing Trends of 2020

To face these challenges, employers are evolving their workplaces to meet the needs of candidates. Here are five staffing trends those who work in Human Resources are adapting to a smaller pool of talented candidates searching for jobs.

### 1. Prioritizing Candidate Engagement

Technology has made it easier to keep in touch with candidates and keep them engaged. Email and social media channels like LinkedIn enable always-on communication.

Texting has also become a more mainstream form of communication, with [Jobvite reporting](https://www.jobvite.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/2018-Recruiter-Nation-Study.pdf) 43% of millennials accept it, 46% of Generation X are open to it, and 36% of Baby Boomers will text with recruiters. During the hiring process, ask your candidates if it’s OK to text. If they say yes, you have another way to keep them engaged.

### 2. Recruiting Through Non-Traditional Channels

Jobvite also reported that recruiting through social media is the norm, with 77% of hirers using LinkedIn and 63% of hirers using Facebook.

Recruiters are also moving to channels like Instagram to reach more talent and stand out, with about 25% recruiting on Instagram. Expect more innovation in finding talent, including connecting with candidates through communities like those on Slack, Reddit, and LinkedIn Groups.

### 3. Building Brand Culture

It’s not just about the job anymore. It’s about who the company is and how the company relates to the candidate.

A [2018 report by Talent Economy found millennials](https://www.chieflearningofficer.com/2018/02/20/millennials-want-workplaces-social-purpose-company-measure/), who will make up 75% of the workforce by 2025, prioritize working for socially responsible companies – and 64% won’t take a job if the employer doesn’t align with their values.

If a company culture is negative or undefined, that can hurt recruitment efforts. Businesses must think about the characteristics that make up their ideal employees and build a culture that supports that. Businesses need to demonstrate that culture on their website and marketing materials and exemplify what drives the culture in their product or service. Candidates are taking note.

### 4. Going Digital

Another benefit of technology for hiring is that it helps streamline hiring processes. Candidates can find all the information they want about a job online, apply through a web portal and see real-time updates on their candidacy status.

Digital technology is also [improving efficiency for recruiters](https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/315294). Just like marketers, recruiters can use tools to track recruitment campaigns, align hiring strategies across multiple digital channels, and use A/B testing to see what components of job postings are most effective. HR professionals and recruiters must use digital analytics to improve their efforts and stay ahead of the competition.

### 5. All-Encompassing Talent Management

Hiring for a single type of position can’t be the norm today. According to *Forbes*, [29% of all American workers](https://www.forbes.com/sites/tjmccue/2018/08/31/57-million-u-s-workers-are-part-of-the-gig-economy/#7303ed667118) have an alternative work arrangement as their primary job, and 57 million people work in the “gig economy,” which means they’re working at least one freelance/contract job even if they’re also employed full-time.

The rise of the gig economy means the best candidates for your business may not even want to work for you full-time. Or, they may be working a variety of gigs and not have a traditional full-time job at the moment.

Expect more businesses to be open to hiring remote workers, contractors, and temps in addition to full-time positions. Also, recruiters will increasingly expand their services to hire for a multitude of types of roles, too.

## Staffing Challenges Can Be Overcome with the Right Solutions

Employers must shift their mindset of how they treat talent and move from thinking of them as candidates to treating them as customers. Great talent needs to be engaged, given opportunities that align with their values and provided worthy offers in order to consider your company. There is more competition and less candidates actively looking, but with the right strategy, your company can succeed.

ECA Staffing Solutions has strategies to face the challenges mentioned here. We use innovative staffing services and the latest in technology to streamline hiring and find the companies we work with the best talent.

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