

# Staffing Decisions™

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## Social Media and the Recruitment Process

Using social media for sourcing candidates as part of the recruitment process sounds like a no-brainer. After all, using social media channels such as LinkedIn are more cost-effective, and attract a wider range of potential candidates, than the classified ads of yesteryear.

Before leaping headlong in the social media morass to look for candidates, whether augmenting or replacing traditional processes, bear in mind that there are some land mines.

Jacqueline Smith, owner of JJ Smith Consulting, in the Boston area, says that seeking information about applicants and potential candidates online, while easy to do, can be a slippery slope. “In my opinion, using social media profiles in hiring could be dangerous, leaving HR

open to potential discrimination lawsuits in many areas.

“While using social media to verify and confirm information is a legitimate use,” she says, “I would find it difficult to believe that recruiters and hiring managers do not use social media profiles to screen out candidates based on their appearance.”

Her concerns are shared by others. Julie Sumner, owner of Monarch Endeavors, a consulting firm in Cleveland, is a former lawyer who specialized in labor and employment litigation. She says there are many land mines to watch out for when using social media in the recruiting and hiring processes. “By viewing someone’s social media profile, you most likely will be able to obtain all sorts of information related to protected characteristics,” she says. “If a picture is included in the profile, you can likely tell the person’s gender, race, color, and possibly age. A quick review of the profile may also tell you information about the person’s religion, national origin,

veteran status, or disability.”

Why is that potentially problematic? Because, says Sumner, the EEOC has stated that all information obtained at the pre-employment stage will be presumed to have been used as a basis for the hiring decision. Thus, even though you may not intend to use the information you obtain relating to a particular candidate’s protected characteristics, if your hiring decision is ever called into question, the EEOC will presume that you did so because you had the information available to you at the time the decision was made. “That,” she says, “puts companies at risk of EEOC charges or lawsuits alleging discrimination.”

### Minimize Risks

If your company believes social media insights are important, says Sumner, one way to reduce risks is to have an outside third party search social media sites and then relay to you only information pertaining to the candidates’ qualifications.

It’s important that HR play a role in educating hiring managers and others about the potential risks of using social media in the hiring process. ▲



### For More Information:

**Forbes: How to (Legally) Use Social Media to Recruit**

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/adp/2016/10/24/how-to-legally-use-social-media-to-recruit/#507604ec478a> (<http://bit.ly/2exG4EF>)

**SHRM: Social Media Use in Hiring—Assessing the Risks**

<https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-magazine/pages/0914-social-media-hiring.aspx> (<http://bit.ly/2eAXg96>)

### Hot on the Inside

**A Wide Network? . . . . . 2**

Make sure that your personal network isn’t restricted only to those in your own profession or interest area.

**Make the Offer . . . . . 3**

All too often, you can lose the best candidate you have by being “too slow or too low” in your offer.

**Tooting Your Own Horn . . . . . 4**

It isn’t always a bad thing ... unless you overdo it.

# Is Your Network Wide Enough?

There's plenty of buzz about networking these days, but social media networking is only part of the picture. What is networking really about, and what steps can you take to build and nurture a strong professional network? (Hint: It's not about *get*, it's about *give*.)

Networking involves meeting and developing relationships with other business people, or people who complement your own profession or areas of interest. One key to successful networking: Don't be narrow in terms of those you develop relationships with. You may be surprised to find how valuable connections can be even when they come from seemingly unrelated professions. Networking is important for a number of reasons:

- To expand your knowledge base;
- To develop connections that may be helpful in terms of generating new business or finding new career opportunities;
- To broaden your horizons;
- To spur creativity and innovation in your thinking. Innovation doesn't come from a singular focus on one area of interest – innovation often stems from divergent viewpoints and ideas that may not initially seem connected or relevant, but can spur creativity.

## The Internet Challenge

The internet has made it vastly easier to find and connect with people than in the past. But it can often be challenging to find credible people to connect with. It's relatively easy for anyone to establish a credible-looking presence online – even when they're not.

Whatever your ultimate networking goals, some basic rules should be followed:

**BE OPEN-MINDED** We tend to have a

very narrow idea of who should be in our network. But if you limit your contacts only to those in your industry, your geography or your demographic, you'll miss out on new relationships that can yield valuable new insights.

**DON'T BE OVERLY SELF-PROMOTIONAL** That's a huge turnoff in both traditional and online settings. This type of behavior online will result in people unfollowing or blocking you, or simply not paying attention to your comments or inquiries.

**GIVE AS MUCH AS YOU GET** We live in an information-rich society. Even if you sell information or expertise, you need to be willing to share your knowledge freely. Effective networking is more about "give" than "get."

**DON'T IGNORE FACE-TO-FACE** Online networking is an add-on, not a replacement, for traditional networking. People connect with people and those connections are generally most meaningfully made in person.

Lisa Barrington, founder of Barrington Coaching, in Phoenix, offers some additional "do's" when it comes to effective networking:

**DO** consider everyone you meet a networking opportunity. The rules have changed. The difference between work and "life" is no longer a bright line. Your network can extend across all facets of your life. Take advantage of this with every person you meet.

**DO** look at networking as an everyday activity, not a scheduled event. Allow conversation about your skills or job search interests to enter conversations naturally. Don't be shy about inserting such topics where they make sense. Look for the opportunity.

**DO** make your networking about others, and when they express interest in you, be prepared to share. Custom-

## Temps as Consulting Resources

Today's temporary workers come with a wide variety of experience. Aside from the specific job you're hiring them to do, you may be able to benefit from their experience in other ways.

Your temporary workers bring a new viewpoint to your internal processes, and may be able to offer suggestions that make things work better. A problem that's totally new to you may be one that a temporary worker has seen on another assignment . . . and knows how it was solved.

And, while some still think of temporary workers in terms of clerical and administrative positions, a growing number of employers have discovered the concept of temporary managers and even professional-level executives on a temporary basis – and at a much lower cost than the price of traditional outside consultants, too.

Think about that for a moment. And when the time is right for you to consider temporary help, give us a shout and we'll walk you through how you can "dial it up and dial it down" without having to spend money unless it's necessary, improving your company's chances of staying viable in a constantly challenging business landscape.

We're real people here, and we're here to help.

ize your discussion around what you've learned about them, and how you can solve a problem or leverage an opportunity for them or their organization. ▲

## For More Information:

**Bloomberg BNA: Social Media Presence Attracts New Clients, Bloomberg Law Survey Shows**

<http://www.bna.com/social-media-presence-n57982082672/> (<http://bit.ly/2fqliCT>)

**Harvard Business Review: How to Make Your Network Work For You**

<https://hbr.org/2010/02/how-to-make-your-network-work.html> (<http://bit.ly/292iXR8>)

**Huffington Post: 8 Keys to Getting Real Value From Business Networking**

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/marty-zwilling/8-keys-to-getting-real-value\\_b\\_12818050.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/marty-zwilling/8-keys-to-getting-real-value_b_12818050.html) (<http://huff.to/2eKr2Ys>)

# Finding the Right Candidate

## Making Them an Offer They Can't Refuse

Once you've found a top candidate you want to make sure they'll accept your offer. But all too often these days, that job offer will be rejected. Why? John Zappe, contributing editor of ERE.net, calls it the "too low and too slow" syndrome. Research from CareerBuilder backs him up: 39% of the time candidates reject an offer because they've received another offer first (too slow); 29% of the time they reject it because the comp/benefits package didn't meet their expectations (too low). How can you craft and deliver an offer that's not likely to be refused?



Nancy Saperstone is senior HR business partner at Insight Performance, an HR consulting firm in Dedham MA. She says that, "In this candidate-driven market, long gone are the days when a company could hire an over-qualified candidate for pennies. Prospects know that they hold the cards and now have multiple options, so they have raised their expectations. Candidates will no longer put up with tedious applications,

drawn-out interview processes, outdated company websites and weak company brands."

How do you succeed in this competitive marketplace? Move quickly, says Saperstone. In a candidate-driven market, prospects have other offers on the table and aren't waiting around for yours. "If you know that you want to hire a prospect after the interview, don't hesitate," she says. "Put together a data-driven, competitive offer, with a benefits package summary to deliver to the candidate within one to two days of the final interview."

**BE PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE** Candidates are very aware of their worth in today's marketplace. Use salary surveys to understand the competitive landscape. If the candidate counters your offer, don't dismiss that counteroffer out of hand. In addition, says Saperstone, candidates are also aware of different benefits, such as working from home, so adding in some extra perks can only sweeten the deal.

**SELL THE COMPANY AND THE ROLE** In today's hiring environment, companies need to sell their culture, brand and perks to employment prospects. Everyone on the interviewing team should be ready to share information on the company's benefits, experiences and development opportunities.

### Understand Expectations

The process of ensuring an accepted offer begins with the candidate vetting and courting process. Better understanding of candidates' expectations *before* making an offer can provide early warning signals that the position isn't the right fit for them or for you.

And remember, it's not just *what* candidates say in response to your questions, but *how*. Observing subtle body language

may let you glean more information than a direct question.

For instance, asking candidates, in a casual conversation, "Who hired you for your current position and is that person still your boss?" can lead to another key question, "What will your boss say when you give your letter of resignation?" A sequence like this can help you determine if a candidate is really motivated to change jobs or just "kicking the tires."

Watch the body language of applicants as they respond to these types of questions. Do they maintain eye contact? Do their eyes suggest a sense of regret or mixed emotions? Or, do they appear optimistic about future opportunities and confident that their boss will be in full support?

When making the offer, think of it as a sales pitch. Include details about the company, the position and the benefits, tangible and intangible, that the prospect will enjoy if they accept the offer. A candidate's answers to such questions as, "What's important to you in a work environment?" can help you identify some good key messages to include in your offer to help boost the odds of getting the right candidate on board. ▲

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### For More Information:

**ERE Media: Too Slow or Too Low—Why Offers Are Being Rejected**

<https://www.ere-media.com/ere/too-slow-or-too-low-why-offers-are-being-rejected/> (<http://bit.ly/2fqRQVQ>)

**Fortune: Millennial Job Applicants Rejecting Your Offers? Here's Why.**

<http://fortune.com/2014/05/28/millennial-job-applicants/> (<http://for.tn/1kAu63G>)

**ZipRecruiter: Turned Down: How to Handle a Rejected Job Offer**

<https://www.ziprecruiter.com/blog/turned-down-how-to-handle-a-rejected-job-offer/> (<http://bit.ly/2ePuWSI>)

## Toot Your Own Horn (Appropriately)

If you aren't hitting the levels of success you had hoped for, sometimes a little introspection may be in order. Start by looking in the mirror. As the old saying goes, "We have met the enemy, and he is us."

What are the common forms of self-sabotage you can fall prey to – and how can you spot, and alleviate them?

Consider the issue of "locus of control," a concept developed in 1952 by Julian Rotter, a world-famous psychologist at the University of Connecticut.

Those with an internal locus of control are more likely to improve their performance because they believe they are responsible for their own success or failure. If they don't get a job, or promotion, they consider what they might do differently next time. If a recommendation they make is rejected, they consider how to reframe that recommendation to better meet the needs of, and overcome the objections by, the other party.

Those with an external locus of control see their successes or – especially – their failures as resulting from people or circumstances outside their control and therefore not susceptible to

improvement (except perhaps by developing better sucking-up techniques).

To some extent these tendencies are part of our basic character, and not easily changed. But in all cases, by making sufficient effort, we can do a better job of self-management. A good first step is to recognize built-in natural tendencies.

Amanda Mitchell is founder of Our Corporate Life, a New York City company that focuses on reducing disruptive drama in the workplace. She works with dysfunctional teams, and helps individual clients manage their careers and navigate challenging corporate environments. Here are some of her recommendations for individuals who feel that their career is not headed down the right path:

■ **Recognize that the onus is on you.**

Don't expect company leaders, or your direct manager or supervisor, to automatically recognize your contributions or talents. It's your responsibility to make your value known in an appropriate way. Yes, it's OK to toot your own horn, so long as you don't do it too loudly.

■ **Share your accomplishments.**

Participate in cross-departmental

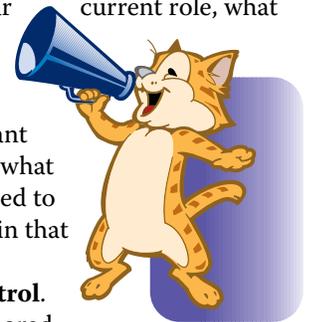
projects, and help yourself and others by sharing your knowledge and noting recent wins with people you wouldn't normally meet. Again, how you do this is important. You want to make the point without coming across as a self-important jerk.

■ **Conduct periodic career self-checkups.**

When things are humming along well at work, it's easy to become too complacent about your career. But that's the best time to do a quick career checkup: What do you like about your current role, what do you dislike, what role do you want next, and what do you need to do to attain that goal?

■ **Take control.**

If you're bored, take on a new project. Find a mentor. Start building your network. Meet new people and learn what's happening in your industry. Reconnect with your colleagues. ▲



### For More Information:

**Business Insider: How Your 'Locus of Control' Drives Your Success (And Stress)**

<http://www.businessinsider.com/proactive-people-are-successful-and-less-stressed-2014-7> (<http://read.bi/2flppKY>)

**Fast Company: How Your Locus of Control Impacts Business Success**

<https://www.fastcompany.com/1840496/how-your-locus-control-impacts-business-success> (<http://bit.ly/2flAZqZ>)

**Psychology Today: Locus of Control & Attributional Style Test**

[http://psychologytoday.tests.psychtests.com/take\\_test.php?idRegTest=1317](http://psychologytoday.tests.psychtests.com/take_test.php?idRegTest=1317) (<http://bit.ly/23jCWdm>)