



TALENT ACQUISITION STRATEGY

Best practices for long-term sustainable results

Optimizing and activating a talent acquisition strategy and process

Preparing for your company's future workforce means assessing who, when, why, and how you hire – all embodied in your talent acquisition strategy. At first, talent acquisition and recruitment may sound like they're the same, but in reality, they're vastly different. That's because recruitment means finding a person to fill a specific opening, like a newly vacant or created role. Recruitment is just one short-term element of a company's human resources strategy, similar to their total rewards or performance management.

In contrast, talent acquisition means thinking about a company's hiring needs for the months and years ahead. Essentially, recruitment is more practical in nature, while talent acquisition is premeditated. It is important because top talent doesn't wait around, they're in demand, and your competitors move fast. This need to plan your company's future workforce and stay competitive becomes clearer when you understand the impressions you're making on your target audience.

An article by Deloitte, [Courting the Candidate Consumer](#), discusses how “brand-conscious companies are beginning to interact with potential employees with the same care they would give to their customers. They are redefining the talent acquisition experience by making sure their candidate-customers gain tangible value from the interview process and have the capabilities to navigate and succeed within the organization, should they be offered a position.”

According to Deloitte and akin to consumer marketing, one way to attract the candidates you want, is to focus your job descriptions on the candidates' needs, a tactic that yields three times as many highly rated applicants. Job candidates also want to believe in their employers' work and that their employers will work for them. People often wish to join a company with a mission that aligns with their values, for example, one who is socially conscious or prioritizes employee wellness. Aligning your talent acquisition strategy with your organization's core values helps to showcase the corporate culture – a major factor in many candidates' decisions.

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Search + Talent Advisory

Consider how many top employers speak to diversity and inclusion as part of their culture or values. Like [Microsoft](#), who regularly lands on Glassdoor’s best places to work list. Have you wondered how they match their internal actions with their external words? Or how they ensure they demonstrate their values and maintain their brand promise?

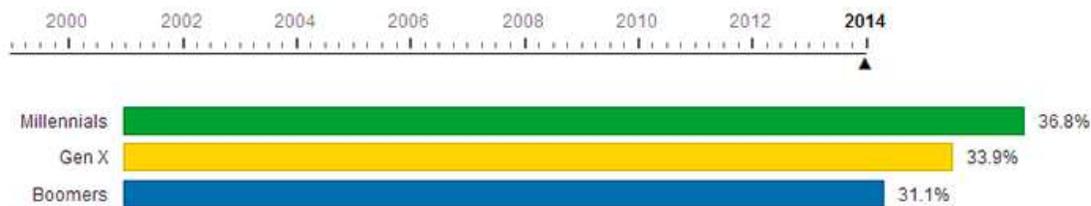
Chuck Edward, Microsoft’s head of global talent acquisition, says they ensure accountability with their inclusive hiring and unconscious bias training, to set a tone with managers. “Our leaders and hiring managers are hungry to bring in talent... This is the best time to really open up who you look at,” he explains, especially because, “if [employees’] skills match the labour market and our customer base, we are all going to win.”

No question – the future of work is already here and companies need to be prepared. In that case, the role of talent acquisition within this new working world presents a wealth of unique opportunities, but also challenges. As TA teams expand the profile they’re seeking, they’re also examining the web’s role in hiring, automated technologies and evolving career trends.

Your career site isn’t the only way to connect with candidates. So make a point to use every channel possible to interact with future employees – as long as it’s relevant to them, or else you’ll be wasting their time and yours. Understanding the demographics of your future workforce and how they use and prefer to be engaged with when looking for jobs is key. For example, according to Pollara SOCIALscape 2019 research, while almost 90% of adult Canadians are active social media users, usage differs across generations:

MILLENNIALS:	88% use Facebook, 52% use LinkedIn, 62% use Instagram
GEN X:	80% use Facebook, 50% use LinkedIn, 36% use Instagram
BOOMERS:	73% use Facebook, 39% use LinkedIn, 21% use Instagram

In 2014, millennials became the biggest generation in the Canadian workforce (37%)



Source: [Statistics Canada Get the data](#)

49% of Millennial workers would quit their current job in the next 2 years, if they had a choice. (Deloitte Global Millennial Survey 2019)

The number of baby boomers retiring will increase to **285,000 per year** by 2026 (Stats Canada 2019). The volume of retirees isn’t all that concerns hiring managers or human resources teams – at **16%, Canada’s turnover rate is the fourth highest in the world** (LinkedIn). As you can see from the stats, the talent landscape is growing ever more complex. Finding the right people with the right skills is recognized by many companies as being their top issue in hiring.

Talent Acquisition Planning

To lead a successful workforce transformation, top employers’ TA teams are looking at their organizational culture and business objectives, and addressing core challenges, so that they can create customized search plans that work for them and the business units they support.

Developing a talent acquisition framework is crucial to plan your strategy to source, assess, engage, hire and transition candidates into employees. Effectual processes and practices leverage evidence-based data to bring the function of recruitment to the next level. Tracking and measuring metrics help determine how to improve ROI while attracting, cultivating, and retaining amazing people. Having an efficient and effective talent acquisition process will help you optimize your employee experience well beyond the point of hire.

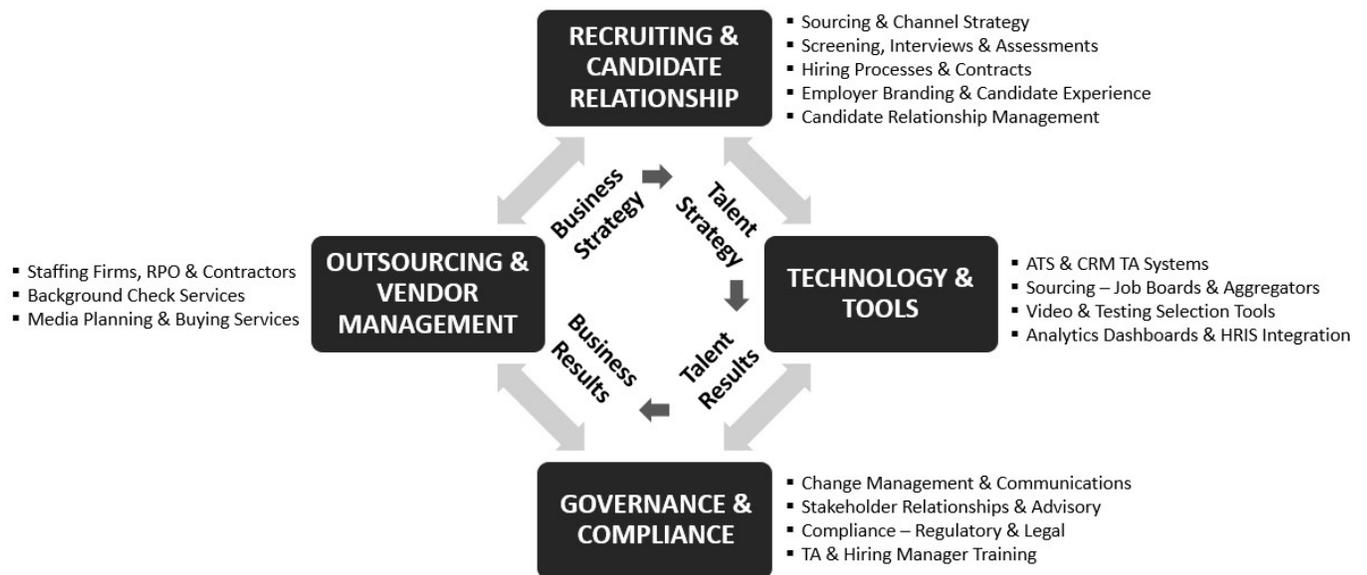
A customized plan should start with a **detailed assessment** that includes:

- business goals and requirements
- thorough review of current strategy – programs, materials, technology systems/tools, data
- effectiveness of team and current practices
- quality of performance data and retention rates of employees hired by the TA team
- understanding the candidate journey and experience

Here is a **TA framework** we use along with important metrics that will help you evolve your approach.

TALENT ACQUISITION STRATEGY

Workforce Planning, Business Alignment, Business Unit Strategy, Job Design, Budgeting, Measurement



TALENT ACQUISITION STRATEGY MEASUREMENT		
Efficiency	Effectiveness	Impact
Understand what is occurring, resource utilization and process outcomes	Understand overall quality and talent outcomes	Understand the relationship of TA activity to business outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vacancies/Hiring Volume ▪ Time to Fill (TTF) ▪ Source of Hire ▪ Cost per Hire (CPH) ▪ Cost per Application (CPA) ▪ Application Conversion Rate ▪ Offer Acceptance Rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality of Candidate ▪ Quality of Hire ▪ Candidate Pool ▪ Short-term Turnover ▪ Retention Rate ▪ Speed to Competency ▪ New Hire Satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Net Hires (Total and by Segment) ▪ TA Goals vs Organizational Objectives ▪ Recruitment Program Success ▪ Lost Revenue to Vacancy Days

Follow these *6 best practices* to create and implement a proactive talent acquisition strategy and process for long-term, sustainable success:

PASSIVE CANDIDATES



1. Sourcing passive talent can find your ideal hires.

The best candidates aren't actively job searching. Foster relationships with passive talent – analyze past applicants, those who interviewed for other positions, scan your competitors, consider your existing workforce, rely on employee referrals, LinkedIn, and Indeed talent databases. Developing your own talent community and proactively communicating to them can become one of your best sources of hire.

CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE



2. Provide a red-carpet experience.

Focus on delivering unparalleled candidate experiences across every touch point – from the career site, to the application, from interviews and offer, and every follow up and interaction in between. Seize all opportunities to deliver on your employer brand promise to demonstrate how your company treats its people. Ensure social media channels illustrate your culture, career pathing, and day-in-the-life stories.

AGILE



3. Start with a plan. Evaluate and adjust often.

While having a defined plan is essential, you'll also want to be flexible enough to pivot when needed to ensure an agile talent acquisition process. As your company expands or changes direction, it may be a good time to revisit your TA roadmap, engage and unify stakeholders, identify contract or project-based job openings, and evolve your key messaging to resonate with candidates.

75%+

of job seekers said they've been approached by another employer while already employed—and 99% of them would be willing to take an interview. (Indeed Career Guide 2020)

STAKEHOLDER ALIGNMENT



4. Focus on meaningful hiring manager experiences.

Talent acquisition teams don't just need to market to potential employees, they must market themselves and the function to the business and be a business partner to hiring managers. Active listening, understanding and proactive follow up are key, as well as getting stakeholder buy-in by mapping how TA will support the overall business goals and objectives. This approach builds partnerships, trust and credibility.

EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE



5. Streamline processes to work for everyone.

Ensuring stakeholders are aligned from the start will simplify the entire talent acquisition strategy. Focus on efficiency and effectiveness by reflecting on whether your process is logical and what your biggest priorities are. Putting yourself in the candidates' and hiring managers' shoes will give a wider perspective. Look at your hiring, retention and performance data and ensure you're using it to hire right.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES



6. Try before you buy.

While a user-friendly ATS is table stakes, a slew of new technologies has arisen to aid TA – AI-powered resume scanners, interview scheduling technology, chatbot screening, video interviewing, to name a few. It's important to stay on top of talent acquisition tech trends to modernize and remain relevant, but pilot, test and learn prior to investing in a full enterprise-wide solution.

The Business of Talent Acquisition

Talent acquisition is so much more than collecting volumes of resumes and filling roles. It's part of the overall human capital management strategy, aligned to organizational culture and business performance.

↑ 34%

**INCREASE IN IMPROVED
HIRING VIA SOCIAL
RECRUITING**

(Source: Jobvite)

33%

**EMPLOYERS USE TESTS TO
EVALUATE CANDIDATES'
CAPABILITIES**

(Source: Business Chief)

66%+

**OF COMPANIES HIRE
CONTRACTORS, TEMPORARY
STAFF & FREELANCERS**

(Source: WeForum)

94%

**OF CANDIDATES ACCEPT
AN OFFER FASTER IF FROM
A MANAGER**

(Source: LinkedIn)

↑ 85%

**INCREASE IN SPEED TO
HIRE VIA AI USE IN
RECRUITMENT**

(Source: Forbes)

10X

**TALENT POOL EXPANSION
VIA EMPLOYEE NETWORKS**

(Source: LinkedIn)

This eBook reviews just some of the many ways you can transform the talent acquisition function, elevate your strategy and experience measurable business results. The cost of hiring someone who turns over quickly is high – so ensure your strategy is aligned with business needs from the get-go and is backed up with a streamlined and efficient process. And remember, while artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies are abundant in the TA lifecycle and indeed here to stay, don't forget to display a human touch and seek to make lasting connections.



ABOUT ML6

ML6 is a talent advisory and recruitment firm providing customized talent solutions to help build **extraordinary employer communities**. We help our clients manage change and drive growth through people – from advising on people processes and practices to hiring. **Our services include:**

Advisory

- Employer Branding
- Talent Acquisition Optimization
- Onboarding

Search

- Executive
- Contingency
- Contract



Pique your interest? If you would like to schedule a meeting to discuss an audit of your current talent acquisition strategy and process, or would like more information on talent acquisition strategies in general, contact:

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