

SPECIAL REPORT

THE MAGNETIC ORGANIZATION: HOW TO ATTRACT TOP TALENT TO YOUR COMPANY



Human Resource Solutions 

“Creating Exceptional Workplaces and Extraordinary Results”

THE MAGNETIC ORGANIZATION: HOW TO ATTRACT TOP TALENT TO YOUR COMPANY

If you've tried to hire employees lately, you know how challenging this can be. Some industries have an overabundance of available talent. Job seekers are applying what I call the Cinderella approach to job hunting. They are trying to squeeze into any job that comes along. This makes it extremely challenging for employers who are on a mission to find employees who are the right fit for their organizations. Countless hours are being wasted going from applicant to applicant, searching for the one who will seamlessly transition into the organization.

Of course we have the other side of the coin. IT and healthcare workers are seemingly impossible to find. I say seemingly because these people are being hired everyday; perhaps just not by you.

In this special report, we'll reveal talent acquisition best practices that our most successful clients use and we'll explain how you too can achieve the same level of results, regardless of budget. We'll also debunk some common myths about the business of talent and help you create a magnetic organization where employees are pulled into your orbit with little effort on your part.



BECOMING A MAGNETIC ORGANIZATION

Imagine what it would be like to have qualified people lining up outside your door waiting for the next position to open? Companies all around are making this happen, so why aren't you? What do they have that you don't have? One word comes to mind: determination. That's right. They are determined to create a magnetic workplace where only exceptional hires need apply. Notice how I didn't say they are seeking to attract employees who can do the job, or those who are willing to work for less. They can afford to be selective because they've become a magnetic organization.

Here's how you can do the same in your organization.

DETERMINE YOUR LEGACY

When working with my clients, we always begin by looking at the end results we'd like to achieve. I ask my clients, "What do you want your legacy to be?" More specifically, "What do you want customers and employees saying about your organization?" Past responses have included the desire to be known as a place where customers like doing business and employees enjoy coming to work; where innovation is encouraged; where people feel a strong connection to the mission of the organization.

Legacies are like individuals. They come in all shapes and sizes. Trying to be something you are not will only end up in failure. For example, if you work in a tightly regulated industry like finance, you must have rules in place to ensure federal regulations aren't violated. You cannot follow the "do whatever you need to do and then ask for forgiveness" style of management that is more typically found in technology start-ups, or you will find your shop closed down by the Feds. But that doesn't mean that you can't loosen the dress code up a bit and add some fun to the workplace.



Take Note:

What would you like your company's legacy to be? List adjectives you'd like people to use when describing your company.

What are people saying today about your organization? Place a star next to those areas that you'd like to change.

CREATING AN EXCEPTIONAL WORKPLACE

Exceptional workplaces create the magnetic field that pulls top talent towards the organization. An example of this is Google, who in 2011 received over two million resumes and hired seven thousand people. Everything was up at Google last year – revenue, profits, share price, paid search clicks, hiring – and so, too, was employee love; the search giant climbed to the top slot of the Fortune 100 list of best places to work.

The reason? Employees rave about their mission, the culture, and the famous perks: bocce courts, a bowling alley, onsite haircuts, free of charge. Then there's the food: some 25 cafés companywide, all gratis. Wrote one Googler: "Employees are never more than 150 feet away from a well-stocked pantry."

You don't have to have a Google-size wallet to create an exceptional workplace. Another famous benefit of working at Google is the 20 percent time program. This is a play you can steal right out of the Google playbook. Google allows its employees to use up to 20 percent of their work week at Google to pursue



special projects. That means that for every standard work week, employees can take a full day to work on a project unrelated to their normal workload. Google claims that many of their products in Google Labs started out as pet projects in the 20 percent time program. You can scale this back to fit your staffing needs and make your workplace attractive to those who like to innovate.

Maybe you don't have the budget or room to feed an army. But that doesn't mean you can't provide similar perks to attract the best and the brightest. Think outside the box. One firm I know stocks their kitchen with organic farm fresh milk and Cliff bars. Another has a local Japanese restaurant deliver platters of sushi to the office, to keep the masses energized. Other budget-friendly ideas include stocking the lunchroom with fresh fruit and healthy snacks and contracting with a local chef to provide healthy dinners for employees to bring home to their families.

It's not enough to pull people towards your organization. You also have to have enough magnetism to keep them engaged. Make work fun. For example, one of my favorite companies has a "Tuesday is Optional Tie Day" where employees can wear ties to work. They also allow well-behaved canines to fraternize with the rest of the workforce. Pull together a team in your organization and give them free reign to come up with ideas that will resonate with your people.

Take Note:

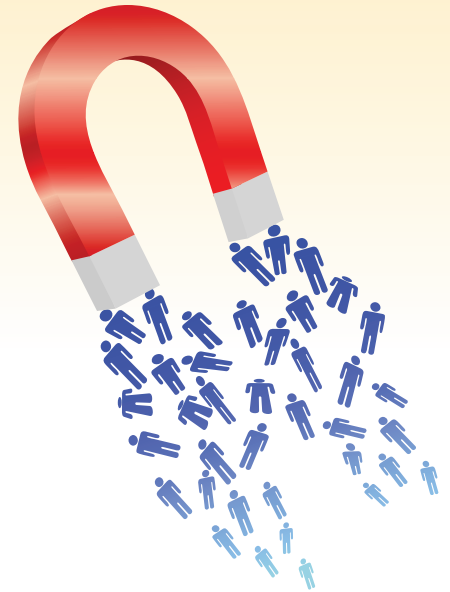
List three innovative ideas that can be easily implemented in your organization.

What steps will you take to implement these ideas into your workplace?



THE IMPORTANCE OF BRANDING

You could be the coolest company on the planet, but that won't mean a thing if no one knows about it. The Internet has made it easier to brand your organization as a magnetic workplace. It has also made it more difficult for companies who are way behind the times, because they stick out like a condemned house in a nice neighborhood. I advise my clients to look at their websites as if they were selling their house. You only get one chance to make a first impression. It's doubtful you'll be able to convince people to return to your site if they don't like what they see the first time they visit. They'll never know about that re-launch you finally decided to do after years of procrastinating.



When working on branding, it's important to paint those you are trying to attract into the frame so they can envision themselves working in your organization. This is a case where looks matter. For example, if you are seeking seasoned professionals and your website looks like a Gap ad, experienced candidates won't click past the homepage, because it appears people with their depth of knowledge need not apply.

Your website should act as a magnet to attract job seekers to your company. Can a prospective employee get a good sense of what it's like to work in your organization? Are all of your benefits, including non-monetary benefits such as Free Tea on Tuesdays, well displayed on your site? You don't have to pay wads of money to a Hollywood producer to create a memorable video for you. Instead, assemble a group of people in your organization who are interested in spreading the word about how great it is to work at your company. Ask them to shoot some YouTube videos, or, if your budget permits, hire an experienced videographer to capture their words. Include social media buttons so visitors to your site can easily share their findings, including job openings, with others.

Take Note:

What specifically do we need to do to improve our brand?

What kind of first impression are we making when potential employees visit our website? What can we do to improve upon this impression?



DEVELOP YOUR TALENT ACQUISITION STRATEGY

If you don't know where you are going, then you'll never reach your destination. Yet many business leaders decide overnight to add to staff and then begin their search, with little thought as to where they are headed. It's not until they run their ships ashore that they realize they are in uncharted waters. At this point, it's usually too late to retreat and begin again. The damage has been done.

Now imagine if you had a process in place that could be used whenever you needed to search for talent. Think of how much more efficient that would be. You wouldn't have to start from scratch every time you went into hiring mode. Your people would know exactly what steps to take when searching for talent. The process should include guidelines for having positions approved, a framework for job descriptions, and steps that must take place before an offer is extended.



ASSESSING TALENT

It takes skills, practice, and patience to hire top talent. Make sure everyone involved in the hiring decision is trained on behavioral-based interviewing. Behavioral-based interviewing focuses on experiences, behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that are job-related. It is based on the belief that past behavior and performance predicts future behavior and performance.

Everyone who is involved in the hiring process should be trained in behavioral-based interviewing. It's an investment that will pay dividends for years to come. Look for a program where participants will have adequate time to practice their newly acquired skills.

My clients with workforces that are the envy of others all have one thing in common. Patience. Whenever assessing candidates they always ask, "Is this person good enough?" If the answer is, "No," or, "I'm not sure," then they pass on the candidate. Their patience always pays off.

Take Note:

Who in my organization should be included in behavioral-based interviewing training?

What other steps do I need to take to create a magnetic organization?



BIO:

Roberta Matuson, author of the international best seller, ***Suddenly in Charge: Managing Up, Managing Down, Succeeding All Around*** (Nicholas Brealey, 2011), a ***Washington Post Top Five Business Book for Leaders*** is a highly sought after expert who is known for her ability to dramatically improve workforce productivity and profitability. She is also the author of ***Selecting for Success: The Complete System for Hiring Top Talent***.



Roberta is President of Human Resource Solutions (www.yourhrexper.com), a firm that helps organizations create exceptional workplaces that deliver extraordinary results. Her clients include Boston Beer, Best Buy, Inc., Gen Re, Winston Flowers and The Treasury Executive Institute. She is currently a Business Expert for Monster and an expert blogger for Fast Company. Roberta is frequently quoted in publications around the Globe including *The New York Times*, *The Globe and Mail*, *Business Week* and *The Telegraph*. She can be reached by phone at 413-582-1840 or by e-mail at Roberta@yourhrexper.com. Visit www.yourhrexper.com to sign up for Roberta's complimentary newsletter on boosting productivity and profitability.