



# What are the most effective channels for sourcing?

When it comes to talent acquisition, businesses have never had so many options for finding the right person for the job. From blogs to YouTube, from phone calls to networking meetings, there are now a plethora of sourcing channels available.

With such a wide range of channels at your disposal, it's tempting to conclude that recruitment has never been easier. This is true to an extent, sourcers are certainly spoilt for choice when trying to locate a candidate. However, being able to use all of the available channels effectively and staying ahead of the competition while doing so is no small task.

Indeed, it could be argued that the very nature of sourcing has now changed. While finding potential candidates – may have become easier the real challenge is to be able to engage talent to the extent that they are willing to choose your business over your competitors.

Regardless of the channel being used, sourcers must have the ability to convince candidates that they represent a company that is an ideal place to work. In the age of the 'TalentSumer' - individuals who choose their employer in the same way they select a consumer brand - being able to present your business as an attractive working environment is the key to recruiting the best talent on the market.

*"Engagement is now more important than ever. Finding candidates isn't necessarily the problem anymore. It's getting them to answer your email, phone call or InMail. You need a tailored message that resonates with that person's skill sets and passion and values to get an answer."*

**Fara Rives**

Director, Strategic Talent Acquisition

*"Those businesses that put thought, effort and research into tailoring their engagement strategies to their sector and brand, have a far higher chance of producing something of relevance and interest - both which are fundamental to engagement - than those that don't. How can organisations expect to engage with individuals in a relevant, interesting and authentic way if their strategies are not tailored?"*

**Alfonso Nunez**

Director, Client Solutions





effective for engaging a prospective candidate for a creative role. Social sourcing in general will have more of an impact when searching for junior candidates, while mature age workers may still favour more traditional methods such as the phone. By having a clear picture of who your ideal candidate is, your chances of successfully engaging them will be greatly increased. After all, it's much easier to find someone and connect with them if already you know who they are and what makes them tick.

## Avoiding the bandwagon

With so many sourcing channels to choose from, it can be difficult to know where to start when planning a strategy. As a result, it's tempting to simply replicate what other businesses are doing. If everyone else is doing it must be the best way, right?

Jumping on the bandwagon in this way is rarely the path to successful sourcing. To secure the right person for the job, you need to develop a persona for the ideal candidate and then think about where you can find and engage them. Achieving this will be near impossible if you're simply copying someone else's approach.

There is no easy definition of sourcing best practice. The ideal strategy depends almost entirely on the needs of your business, the kind of role you're looking to fill and the type of person you're hoping to recruit. What works for sourcing a compliance officer in the financial services industry is unlikely to prove effective for hiring a graphic designer at a creative agency.

Your sourcing strategy needs to be tailored to take each of these factors into account. Certain channels will be better suited for sourcing certain roles or types of candidates. For instance, when sourcing through social media, banking professionals are more likely to be receptive to LinkedIn, while a visual channel such as Instagram may be more

*"What works for one company may not be the best option for another. Following trends will not necessarily give the same return on engagement as received by a competitor or a company within the same vertical. Essentially, there needs to be balance, research and planning rather than the immediate adoption of trends in a marketplace or businesses' environment."*

**Marcus Twyman**

Lead, Strategic Talent Acquisition

*"Companies need to keep abreast of new trends in order to stay relevant, ahead of the game and their competitors, but they need to be strategic in their selection of new tools and methods by keeping their focus on the type of talent they are looking to hire."*

**Gurprit Bhambra**

Strategic Talent Acquisition Specialist



## Putting together a profile

So, how can you go about developing a persona for your ideal hire? The obvious starting point is to be sure of the skills the role requires. Are there many people on the market with these attributes? If not, you may need to consider people with a related skillset who have demonstrated they have the potential to learn the skills you need.

Just as important as skills is thinking about the kind of person you're hoping to hire. To ensure a good cultural fit, your ideal candidate needs to be aligned with your company's values. Even if you recruit someone with all the right skills and more, they will not prove a success if they are out of sync with your company culture. There are also demographic factors to consider. Are you looking for someone with a particular range of experience, or are you planning to hire more women or people from minority backgrounds? Put all of this together and you'll have a good idea of the exact kind of person you're looking to recruit, significantly boosting your chances of bringing in the right person for the job the first time and avoiding wasting time and money on unsuitable candidates.

What exactly does this mean for sourcing? Firstly, it's much simpler to find the ideal candidate when you have a firm idea of who that is. More importantly, it also becomes easier to engage them. Having an understanding of who you are looking for allows you to identify the channels that are most appropriate for engagement. For example, if you need to hire a junior developer with good communication and collaboration skills, Coderwall - an online community for developers to connect and share skills - may be a good channel to explore. Without this kind of insight, you could find yourself blindly choosing one of the multitude of sourcing options that are now available, not knowing if this is a channel the candidate will be receptive too. Considering that many of the skills you're looking for are likely to be in short supply, this uninformed approach is one you simply cannot afford to take.

*"Think of engagement as a pheromone that attracts like to like. Only candidates that have a positive response to the brand's imagery, digital content, marketing collateral etc, will be likely to engage and interact with the business. Candidates that are excited about the brand's initiatives, progress in the marketplace and culture will generally result in employees that are engaged and interested in helping their employer reach its goals."*

**Marcus Twyman**  
Lead, Strategic Talent Acquisition

*"As an MSP, we encourage hiring leaders to be more actively engaged early in the process, and help shape the ideal candidate profile as well as the compelling story of why a candidate should consider their opportunity versus competing opportunities. A poorly positioned opportunity will attract 'B' talent at best."*

**Paul Kistner**  
Executive Director of Operational Excellence and Strategy

## Innovation and analysis

People are now more accessible than ever. From LinkedIn to Facebook, we've never made so much information about ourselves publicly available and businesses have never had so many channels at their disposal to connect with potential employees.

However, the fact that it's so easy for companies to get in touch with talent means only those who are able to do so in a genuinely engaging manner will be able to stand out from the crowd.

Provided it results in an engaged candidate, almost any sourcing channel can prove effective. For example, Google has made use of billboards to recruit new talent. Back in 2004, the tech giant placed a billboard in Silicon Valley that featured a complex mathematical question only people with the skills it needed would be able to solve.

Those who did so were directed to a webpage on which they were encouraged to apply for a job at the company. Other innovative sourcing methods include Ikea concealing career information in flat-pack furniture packages and Volkswagen putting job adverts on the bottom of cars taken to mechanics for servicing.

Whatever sourcing channels you employ, it's important to pay close attention to the relevant metrics to ensure candidates are being effectively engaged. What sort of metrics you should consider vary depending on the channel used. For instance, likes, shares and retweets are good indicators on social networks, while page views and time spent on page are good to know for content such as blogs. By analysing relevant metrics, you'll be much closer to ensuring you employ a sourcing strategy that results in candidate engagement and the ROI this delivers. Fail to do so, and you run the risk of wasting both time and money on channels that are unsuitable for your ideal hire.

*"A healthy balance is needed. First and foremost, you need to measure the success of your engagement strategy to effectively manage your time, money and return. Yet, while doing this, there has to be some time set aside for experimentation, otherwise you will never grow or become better by learning what to do, or what not to do."*

**Fara Rives**

Director, Strategic Talent Acquisition

*"Metrics will tell you where you are with candidate engagement and it's the single best way to measure your strategies. With that said, there's always room for improvement and keeping up with new trends can provide businesses with ideas on new strategies they could implement. So while the focus should remain on the current metrics, experimenting with new and unproven strategies can help to re-energise the approach to candidate engagement and if executed well - could prove successful."*

**Gurprit Bhambra**

Strategic Talent Acquisition Specialist





*"I strongly believe that, as high calibre talent and skilled individuals are sought after by more and more employers, those businesses that engage more effectively, with customers, candidates, employees, target individuals, and talent pools will be far more likely to have an opportunity to employ these people."*

**Alfonso Nunez**  
Director, Client Solutions

## Engagement is everything

Engagement is the most important weapon you need in your arsenal if you're to come out on top in the war for talent. Know who your ideal candidate is, know where you can find them and know the kind of interaction they will respond to. Armed with this knowledge you'll stand a much greater chance of making effective use of the sourcing channels at your disposal and ensuring top talent chooses you ahead of your competitors.



**SIMON TOWNSEND**

Chief Innovation Officer,  
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