

5 Stellar Strategies For Recruiting Passive Candidates

Just because most job candidates are currently employed doesn't mean they are out of reach for recruiters. In fact, of the 79 percent of candidates who are employed, at least 61 percent are open to, and maybe even hopeful for, a change of employer, according to [Jobcast](#).

But [recruiting passive candidates](#) requires a different approach than recruiting active candidates, since it requires an extra layer of salesmanship from the recruiting side. With the right tactics, recruiters can entice candidates to switch jobs, even if they weren't considering it to begin with.

As Lou Adler, CEO and founder of training firm The Adler Group, [writes](#), "Recruiting passive candidates is not about selling them on how great your open job is; it's about getting them to sell you on why they're qualified."

Here are five strategies from HR experts on how to recruit passive candidates the right way:

1. **Use [social media](#).** Recruiters can learn a lot about a candidate by looking at his work history, interests and skill sets on social networks. Not only are Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn great places to gather background information, they're also useful for getting in touch with passive candidates.

"If you can't reach candidates via job boards, you can tweet at them, connect with them on Facebook, add them to your G+ circles, and even heart their excessive Instagram selfies," [writes Samara Parker](#), community manager at Jobcast.

2. **Use ALL online outlets.** While social media is a great way to broadcast company branding and learn about a candidate, the popular social networks aren't necessarily where candidates are spending the majority of their time online. Recruiters should also be looking at online associations, college career centers and other social networks specific to an industry, [notes Katherine Jones](#), lead analyst at Bersin by Deloitte. "For example, if you're looking for a neuroscientist where would you look for them? Would you look on LinkedIn? Maybe. But you'd look at where do neuroscientists hang out on the web. You always need to know where the people you're targeting live online," Jones adds.

3. **Focus on the opportunity and growth.** Many job ads discuss the skills and experience required, but when recruiters are in selling mode, these details aren't going to get passive candidates to leave their company and join a different one. Recruiters should instead talk about the opportunities in the company and current projects to peak the candidate's interest, [Adler suggests](#).

4. **Ask the right questions.** When approaching passive candidates, recruiters need to convince the candidate to switch jobs and companies, but often they treat the interview process the same as they would with active candidates. Instead, Lou Adler

suggests asking the right questions to discover hidden problems with the candidate's current job that the new job could somehow solve. Here are a handful of the questions he recommends [on LinkedIn](#):

- Think about the most satisfying job you've ever had. What made it so satisfying, and does your current position offer these same things? If not, what's missing?
- Are you maximizing your use of time, or do you feel that in the last year or so you've just been treading water?
- Is this your dream job? If so, why, and if not, what would it take to make it one?

5. Push candidates away only to reel them in more. After describing the job and hearing about his background, express concern that the candidate isn't qualified or doesn't have enough experience for the job. Creating a challenge for candidates flips the switch to make the passive candidates the sellers instead of the recruiters. As [Adler recommends](#), say something like, "I'm a little concerned you haven't managed as big a team as this department needs. Despite this, can you please tell me about your biggest management accomplishment? I want to see if there is a fit that isn't too much of a stretch."

What other ways can companies successfully recruit passive candidates?

Adapted from the article, 5 Stellar Strategies For Recruiting Passive Candidates, written by Charles Coy.