



5 Signs You've Outgrown “Self-Service” Hiring



Introduction

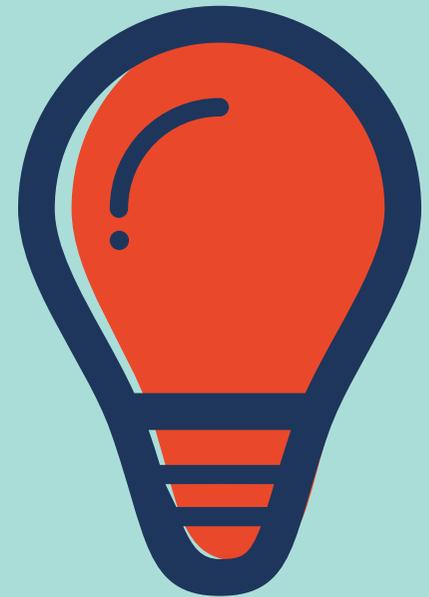
Building a strong team requires focus, effective communication and an ongoing commitment to the recruiting process. It is often said that people are the most important part of a business. Yet, talent acquisition tends to be the place that many struggle and often try to limit spending.

So when do you know you have outgrown the “Self-Service” recruiting model? At what point does the law of diminishing returns set in? Let’s take a look at some of the top signs that the time is right to consider some focused help.



1) You Need Employees with More Specific Experience and Knowledge

There is no doubt that referrals make great hires. Using personal networks to help build your company's staff, especially in the early stages, is most definitely something to fully leverage. However it can be difficult to know when you cross that threshold of when the right time is to move beyond “who you know” in order to supplement the team with others you will need to drive your company to the next level. It can start with noticing some explicit holes that need to be filled. Having the right mix of people who have had success and challenge your ideas and have “been there before” can be monumental for you company. Those type of employees have come across a variety of problems – outside of ones you might be facing. This will require finding people **OUTSIDE OF YOUR NETWORK** – people you and your team don't know yet and will need to find.



2) You've Literally “Exhausted” Your Managers

During times of team expansion it is often put onto the hiring managers themselves to reach out to their personal networks to kick off the recruitment process. The manager adds this workload onto the work that they are meant to be doing for the company. Although this practice makes sense in the early going – since most of those initial hires will likely be people that they are somewhat connected to – and they may have had them in mind to bring them on board from the start. Then the dig goes a bit deeper. The next round has managers sending messages to friends and family seeking their help in the networking game. Again, this is also understood as the company is trying to watch bottom line and is willing to forgo some of the production the manager can produce in their true area of expertise (be it sales, marketing, engineering, etc.) to have them carry recruiting work as well. But when is it enough? And when does the company start to suffer because time spent on the core business initiatives is being lost? Keep an eye out for manager burnout.



3) Post and Pray Is Not Working

Job postings can be effective in the right scenario. However, job postings enable you to settle for the best "available" talent. And that is what you are doing, is settling. Instead, by finding and engaging targeted people who are not actively seeking a career change can provide you with the pool of talent that you NEED. But, this is time consuming. It is literally a full time job to find and reach out to these candidates. Creative messaging and multiple outreaches requires advanced planning and constant adjustment to achieve results. It is key to have a strong pipeline. As well as confidence that you are making strong decisions that can be attributed to the number of options you have. Being in a position to compare candidates to one another for each role over a condensed period of time is very beneficial. You should be excited about the slate from which you are choosing and maybe even have difficulty making that choice. Those are signs of a strong, well-sourced talent pipeline. This requires a continuous, dedicated effort to sustain and manage. Dependence on job postings will not get you there.



4) Failing to Meet Hiring Deadlines and Missing on the “Right” Hires

Everyone needs to prioritize. In a high growth situation, this is a big challenge – there’s never enough time in the day, so most of the time you pick the things that need immediate attention. Next thing you know, hiring continues to fall lower and lower on your list. Perhaps you hire to get it out of the way and move on to avoid a hiring deadline – but have you truly found best person for the job? Or maybe you miss on your deadline completely and you can’t deliver your product on time or respond to customers because you are short staffed. You need help!



5) Reliance on Contingency Agencies

You may have determined a possible solution is to hire an agency and that will help. The problem is, the help is limited. There are still many pieces that will need your attention. The immediate attraction of an agency is that they are “engaged” but not being paid until there is a hire. But what about the time you invest with them – to onboard and train their team, the time to pre-screen and interview the candidates and then to pay the normally “large” success fee on EACH and every candidate hired? This model can help you out of a bind but should not be the default strategy. It’s not scalable and it’s not in your best interest. Plus – cross your fingers those new hires stick. It may seem like it is low risk, but keep in mind, an agency’s end game is the hire - that’s how they make their money. They work for themselves, not you.



Conclusion

These signs are extremely common, and can sneak up on you before you know it. It's time to assess your current business plan holistically and figure out how hiring fits best into priorities. Time invested in hiring should be valued and well spent by company leadership. Determine the best areas for that focus – most often on thorough interviewing and deep dives into skill and culture fit. Whether it is time for you to hire your own recruiting specialist or seek outside consultative help, understand the value of an intermediary. Use that resource to target and engage specific talent, provide unbiased insight and guidance, engage candidates and hiring teams throughout the process to compare feedback and provide an unemotional base line assessment from which decisions can be made confidently. Working in concert with you and your hiring managers, the right person or team helps uncover flags and identifies areas to focus on during the assessment process. When areas such as assessment, employment negotiation and onboarding are handled professionally you will reduce the number of rejected offers as well as the chance for bad hires. Investing in people starts at hiring. Look at this as good news! Your business is succeeding. It's just may be time to push it to the next level.





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