

The future of attracting, retaining, & managing talent



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WHITE PAPER

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Keeping up with changes in the workforce

Has your company updated its recruiting processes lately? What about your employee benefits options? If the answer to either of these questions is no, you may be falling behind your competitors in attracting and retaining today's talent.

You might not feel it now, but you will. By 2014, between 47 and 50 percent of the world's working population will have been born after 1980 (known as millennials), and this group expects to be courted and treated in a way that may seem unfamiliar to those from older generations.

Companies that want to reach this generation should realize that many millennials coming out of universities have never had a real job. In fact, millennials are graduating with the lowest rates of summer jobs since 1948. Many will have volunteered and perhaps traveled around the world in a gap year or with their baby boomer parents, but many of them have never needed to show up for work on Monday morning. As a result, they have no idea what it's like to work inside an organization today.

Digital attraction and inspiration

This generation is the online generation—the digital natives. There isn't a single thing they can't look up and watch a video on or experience in a visually stimulating way, except what it's like to work in your company. The world of work is like a black box to them. Click the "About Us" tab on almost any corporate Web page, and you'll find paragraphs of text describing the company—text that the millennials won't read. Companies need to change the way they attract millennial candidates by making their jobs come to life through blogs, videos, and employee interviews about what it's really like to work at the company.

It's critical for companies to take a step back and look at their value proposition from the perspective of a millennial. Why would millennials want to work for your company? Is your company a place where true collaboration, innovation, and teamwork are fostered? If it is, can you visually showcase it through videos, for example? Companies should ask whether they are creating an emotional experience when people come to the careers page on their website. Recruitment research specialist Potentialpark Communications perhaps summed up this concept best: The most effective career sites "go beyond information, and offer inspiration," appealing to "the emotional decision centres of their visitors."

The search for talent becomes a search for skills

The opportunities that exist in organizations today are very different from those of yesteryear and will continue to evolve in the future. A career likely will evolve from achieving sequential promotions to developing a portable, highly valued skill set.

In the future, companies may focus on hiring people with specific skills for shorter project-based work on an as-needed basis, rather than keeping and continually developing a permanent workforce.

And instead of showing promotions on their resumes, workers will begin to use some form of signposts—badges or flags on their profile of competencies that say they have teamwork experience or decision-making experience, for example. This information gives business leaders the ability to plan because they have a repository of people with the skills they need, and it gives millennials the affirmation and validation they need to feel they are progressing.

Millennials expect to be told what they need to do to achieve goals, rather than to be given just goals on their own. So, managers should at least equip workers with the opportunity to gather experiences and different skills. This way they can pick their own paths.

Learning, using, and sharing skills and knowledge

Research shows that many companies stopped or slowed their hiring between 2007 and 2011. As a result, baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964), who are more likely to have deep technical knowledge, may represent 80 percent of the workforce in some companies. Sounds like a good problem to have, right? Not necessarily. In a few years, companies could face a myriad of knowledge transfer issues when the boomers are retiring and the millennial new-hires are asked to fill their roles.

What kinds of knowledge transfer issues? Simple communication of information is one. Already the use of email in the United States by 12- to 17-year-olds is down by 47 percent. Communications from this future workforce are social media related and instant messaging driven.

Storing and retaining information is another knowledge transfer issue. Business leaders will need to consider entirely new definitions for the skills or knowledge base of the workforce, because knowledge may need to be only accessible rather than known. Millennials are accustomed to having instant access to all the information they need on the Internet—no need to memorize facts or figures.

Extracting and sharing the knowledge of more senior and higher-performing employees could become increasingly difficult as that knowledge becomes their own source of competitive advantage. Those who have elite skills and knowledge probably will become free agents.

Welcome back: Recycling employees and their skills

In the not so distant future, we might see as high as 30 percent of hires become recycled hires—the same people rehired again and again. This trend has a major influence on the way employees promote their skills and the tools employers use to search for and recruit them.

Business leaders will still need to identify their high-performing employees and plan for knowledge transfer, but they'll also need to accept that they may hire and even rehire employees multiple times during the course of many years. To prepare for this likelihood, business leaders should develop and maintain relationships with their high-performing employees, even while they are not there or are working for someone else.

Recruiting becomes Recruiting Marketing

None of these changes will be easy for organizations—especially for the recruiting team. Supplying organizations with project-based workers means constantly attracting and engaging new candidates, and then placing them into talent-appropriate pipeline pools so candidates are ready to harvest when an appropriate job comes up. To be successful, recruiters have had to rapidly embrace and adopt a social recruiting approach. Many have even applied marketing best practices to the art of finding and nurturing talent. These new approaches to recruiting, combined with the trend toward project-based engagements in the future, will require a shift in both mindset and practice.

Managing the expectations of such a diverse workforce and candidate pool creates a unique set of challenges for business leaders from a recruiting and talent management perspective. The ability to attract, retain, and manage several different generations at once will soon become one of the biggest factors in determining organizational success. To help you understand and plan for these challenges and become one of the successful organizations, be sure to read “The influence of social technologies and how to prepare for the changes.”

This paper is based on an article by Doug Berg, Innovation Explorer, SuccessFactors

About SuccessFactors Recruiting

SuccessFactors Recruiting optimizes workforce performance by getting the right people into the right roles – faster.

The world of recruiting has undergone a significant shift, with an explosion of new tools and channels to find candidates. Most traditional recruiting solutions are only addressing a part of the challenge – selecting the best candidates. SuccessFactors Recruiting is the only solution that is designed to help you attract, engage and select the candidates that will drive business results. We do this by combining an intelligent and social Recruiting Marketing process with a mobile and collaborative selection process to create the only Recruiting Execution (Rx) solution on the market – the prescription (Rx) for better hiring.

About SuccessFactors

SuccessFactors, an SAP company, is the leading provider of cloud-based Business Execution Software, which drives business alignment, optimizes workforce performance and accelerates business results. SuccessFactors customers include organizations of all sizes across more than 60 industries. With approximately 15 million subscription seats globally, we strive to delight our customers by delivering innovative solutions, content and analytics, process expertise and best practices insights. Today, we have more than 3,500 customers in more than 168 countries using our application suite in 35 languages.”

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