**Human Resource Management Strategies in Selecting Appropriately Skilled People to Fill Open Positions in an Organization**

**Introduction**

Recruitment and selection form a major part of an organization’s overall resourcing strategies, which identifies and secures people needed for an organization to survive and succeed in the short to medium-term (Elwood & James, 1996). The basic purpose of recruitment is to create a pool of suitably qualified candidates to enable the selection of the best candidates for the organization, by attracting more and more employees to apply in the organization whereas the basic purpose of selection process is to choose the right candidate to fill the various positions in the organization (Gamage, 2014).

Available evidence indicates that there is a positive and significant relationship between recruitment and selection and the performance of an enterprise (Gamage, 2014). Sang (2005) for example discovered a positive association between recruitment and selection and business performance. Such were also of positive results between recruitment and selection and performance as seen in Ichniowski and Shaw (1999), Katou and Budhwar (2006) and Wright et al. (2005). Other studies such as Syed and Jama (2012) have equally shown that implementing an effective recruitment and selection process is positively related to organizational performance. Some of the strategies human resource management uses to select appropriately skilled people to fill open positions in an organization are evaluated below.

**Recruitment events**

Recruitment events are perfect for attracting the type of people you need. Events can range from hosting open days to being at job fairs, holding a hackathon and graduate recruitment drives. Many organizations hold events annually to allow people to network and learn about new technologies. For instance, Microsoft usually holds Professional Developer Conference (PDC), in July. During the conference, they host thousands of web developers and other professionals looking to update their skills and meet new people.

Other organizations host countrywide job fairs. Participating in this type of job fair may be an excellent way to meet a large variety of candidates. Other events may not be specifically for recruiting, but attending these events may allow you to meet people who could possibly fill a position or future position. For example, in the world of fashion, Fashion Group International (FGI) hosts events internationally on a weekly basis, which may allow the opportunity to meet qualified candidates.

The advantage of this method is that the recruiter has access to specific target markets of candidates. On the flipside, the method can be expensive and you may not be looking at the right market. To ensure that you get the best return on investment (ROI), you must know precisely what type of candidate you want to attract and what your employer value proposition is.

**Professional organizations and Associations**

Almost every profession has its own professional organization. When some human resource personnel need to fill a highly skilled position, they prefer sourcing candidates from professional organizations. Many professions require that on qualification, people register with the appropriate professional association.

There are also other organizations where registration is voluntary, but it adds to the credibility of a candidate’s qualifications. Partnering with these associations and organizations can put the human resource personnel in touch with top talent.

Some examples of professional Organizations include: Professional Nursing Association, Society of Women Engineers, International Federation of Accountants, Institute of Management, Consultants, National Lawyers Guild, International Federation of Journalists (union) and International Metalworkers Federation (union).

The advantage of this method is that it is industry specific and there is opportunity for networking. However, it might be time consuming to network and in some cases there might be a fee to place an advertisement.

**Referrals**

Most companies have some kind of employee referral program in place. Employee referral is a combination of internal and external recruitment. Existing staff are encouraged to refer people they know for vacancies.

The value is that it’s cost-effective, quick and you can trust that employees won’t refer unsuitable candidates. Also, the new hire will already know more about your organization than an outside hire.

Most recruiting plans include asking current employees, “Who do you know?” The quality of referred applicants is usually high, since most people would not recommend someone they thought incapable of doing the job. E-mailing a job opening to current employees and offering incentives to refer a friend can be a quick way of recruiting individuals. Due to the success of most formalized referral programs, it is suggested that a program be part of the overall HRM strategic plan and recruitment strategy.

However, using referrals as the only method for recruitment can lead to lack of diversity in a workplace. It may lead to nepotism, that is, preference for hiring relatives of current employees, which can also lead to lack of diversity and management issues in the workplace.

**Campus Recruiting**

Colleges and universities can be excellent sources of new candidates, usually at entry-level positions. Consider technical colleges that teach cooking, automotive technology, or cosmetology. These can be great sources of people with specialized training in a specific area. Universities can provide people that may lack actual experience but have formal training in a specific field. Many organizations use their campus recruiting programs to develop new talent, who will eventually develop into managers.

For this type of program to work, it requires the establishment of relationships with campus communities, such as campus career services departments. It can also require time to attend campus events, such as job fairs. Recruiting out of college ensures a large number of people to grow with the organization. Also in campuses, there is plentiful source of talent. However this method is time consuming and only appropriate for certain types of experience levels.

**Recruiters**

Some organizations choose to have specific individuals working for them who focus solely on the recruiting function of HR. Recruiters use similar sources to recruit individuals, such as professional organizations and websites. Recruiters are excellent at networking and usually attend many events where possible candidates will be present. Recruiters keep a constant pipeline of possible candidates in case a position should arise that would be a good match. There are three main types of recruiters:

**Executive search firm.** These companies are focused on high-level positions, such as management and CEO roles. They typically charge 10–20 percent of the first year salary, so they can be quite expensive. However, they do much of the upfront work, sending candidates who meet the qualifications.

**Temporary recruitment or staffing firm.** Suppose your receptionist is going on medical leave and you need to hire somebody to replace him, but you don’t want a long-term hire. You can utilize the services of a temporary recruitment firm to send you qualified candidates who are willing to work shorter contracts. Usually, the firm pays the salary of the employee and the company pays the recruitment firm, so you don’t have to add this person to your payroll. If the person does a good job, there may be opportunities for you to offer him or her full-time, permanent position. Kelly Services, Manpower, and Snelling Staffing Services are examples of staffing firms.

**Corporate recruiter:** A corporate recruiter is an employee within a company who focuses entirely on recruiting for his or her company. Corporate recruiters are employed by the company for which they are recruiting. This type of recruiter may be focused on a specific area, such as technical recruiting.

A contingent recruiter is paid only when the recruiter starts working, which is often the case with temporary recruitment or staffing firms. A retained recruiter gets paid up front (in full or a portion of the fee) to perform a specific search for a company.

While the HR professional, when using recruiters, may not be responsible for the details of managing the search process, he or she is still responsible for managing the process and the recruiters. The job analysis, job description, and job specifications still need to be developed and candidates will still need to be interviewed.

This strategy is time saving but it is expensive and the HR personnel have less control over final candidates to be interviewed.

**Social Media**

Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and MySpace are excellent places to obtain a media presence to attract a variety of workers. In 2007, Sodexo, which provides services such as food service and facilities management, started using social media to help spread the word about their company culture. Since then, they have saved $300,000 on traditional recruiting methods (Sodexo, 2011). Sodexo’s fifty recruiters share updates on Twitter about their excellent company culture. Use of this media has driven traffic to the careers page on Sodexo’s website, from 52,000 to 181,000.

The goal of using social media as a recruiting tool is to create a buzz about your organization, share stories of successful employees, and tout an interesting culture. Even smaller companies can utilize this technology by posting job openings as their status updates. This technique is relatively inexpensive, but there are some things to consider. For example, tweeting about a job opening might spark interest in some candidates, but the trick is to show your personality as an employer early on. According to Bruce Morton of Allegis Group Services, using social media is about getting engaged and having conversations with people before they are even thinking about you as an employer (Lindow, 2011). Debbie Fisher, an HR manager for a large advertising agency, Campbell Mithun, says that while tweeting may be a good way to recruit people who can be open about their job hunt, using tools such as LinkedIn might be a better way to obtain more seasoned candidates who cannot be open about their search for a new job, because of their current employment situation. She says that LinkedIn has given people permission to put their résumé online without fear of retribution from current employers.

Creativity with a social media campaign also counts. Campbell Mithun hired thirteen interns over the summer using a unique twist on social media. They asked interested candidates to submit thirteen tweets over thirteen days and chose the interns based on their creativity.

Many organizations, including Zappos, use YouTube videos to promote the company. Within the videos is a link that directs viewers to the company’s website to apply for a position in the company.

Facebook allows free job postings in Facebook Marketplace, and the company Facebook page can also be used as a recruiting tool. Some organizations decide to use Facebook ads, which are paid on a “per click” or per impression (how many people potentially see the ad) basis. Facebook ad technology allows specific regions and Facebook keywords to be targeted (Black, 2011). Some individuals even use their personal Facebook page to post status updates listing job opportunities and asking people to respond privately if they are interested.

The biggest advantage of social media is that it is probably the cheapest strategy one can use for recruitment and it reaches a big pool of potential employees. Social media is however time consuming and the responses can be overwhelming as hundreds of job seekers might be jostling for the opportunity.

**Conclusion**

Recruitment and selection in any organization is a serious business as the success of any organization or efficiency in service delivery depends on the quality of its workforce who was recruited into the organization through recruitment and selection exercises (Ezeali and Esiagu, 2010). It is therefore important for HRM personnel to understand the objectives, policies and practices used for selection. They should have adequate information upon which to base their decisions. As Robbins (2005) observed, organization’s human resource policies and practices represent important forces for shaping employee behaviour and attitudes. In view of the findings, the study suggests that in designing and instituting recruitment and selection criteria quality should not be compromised. This is more so as the right type of labour is hard to come by. Furthermore, given that organizational environment is ever changing, an organization’s management should constantly evaluate the organization’s selection methods on the basis of their validity, impartiality, scope of usage, and cost.

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