

THE JOB CANDIDATE'S JOURNEY

RECRUITING AT EVERY STAGE



THE JOB CANDIDATE'S JOURNEY

A guide to understanding a job candidate's decision-making cycle and incorporating it into your recruitment strategy.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION - 3

STAGE ONE: CONSIDERATION - 7

Profile: The Millennial - 10

STAGE TWO: RESEARCH AND VALIDATION - 12

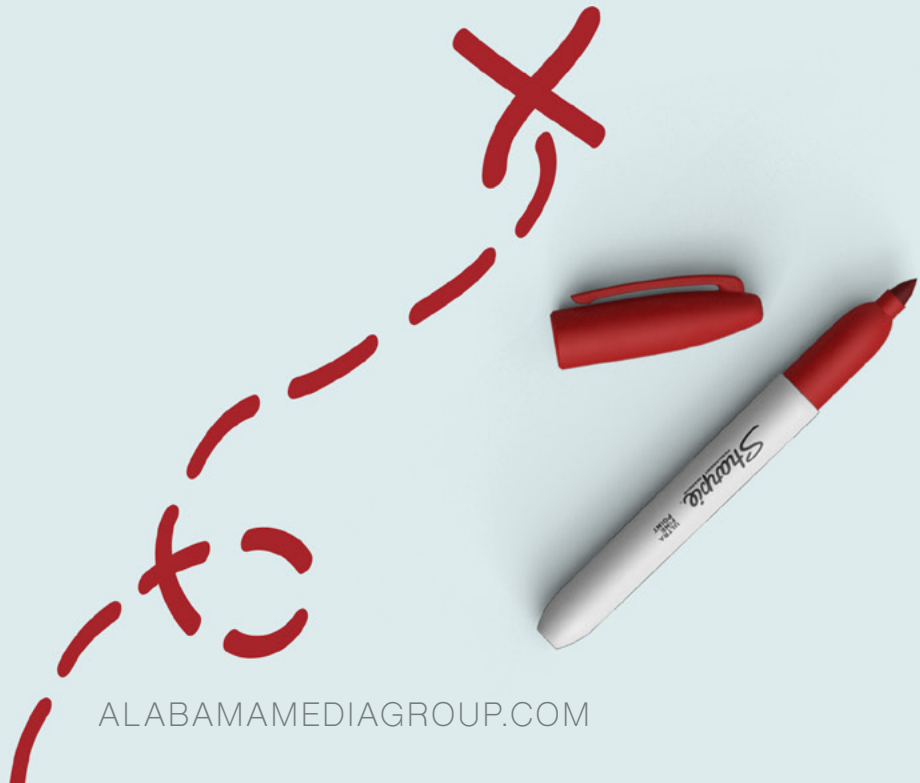
Profile: Generation X - 15

STAGE THREE: APPLICATIONS - 17

Profile: The Baby Boomer - 19

STAGE FOUR: AFTER HIRING - 21

GETTING STARTED - 24



Talented personnel are critical to the sustainability and competitiveness of any business.

That's why recruiting the best employees must be a priority. Employers today are rapidly shifting the ways they find and hire top talent, taking advantage of new technology and adapting to shifts in the workforce.

Companies face increased competition for job candidates' attention, differences in values between younger and older workers, and a new reliance on technology at every step of the recruitment process. Employers who fail to keep pace with these trends run the risk of falling behind their competitors and missing out on the best candidates.

GET ORGANIZED



“If you want to win in today’s job marketplace, you have to know what employees are demanding.”

— Paul McDonald, senior executive director with Robert Half, an international human resources consulting firm based in Menlo Park, CA



You can start by learning about the stages of the candidate’s decision-making process and distinctions between job seekers of different generations. Tailoring your recruitment efforts to these factors will help increase job candidates’ awareness of opportunities with your company and build a pipeline of great prospects.

RECRUITING TRENDS TO KNOW

A new focus on employer brand

Many employers now use targeted messages to highlight company features that appeal to the types of talent they hope to attract.

Distinct needs within the workforce

Millennials have different expectations than previous generations with regard to flexibility of hours and physical location. Meanwhile, Baby Boomers are delaying retirement and working longer.

Increased reliance on social media

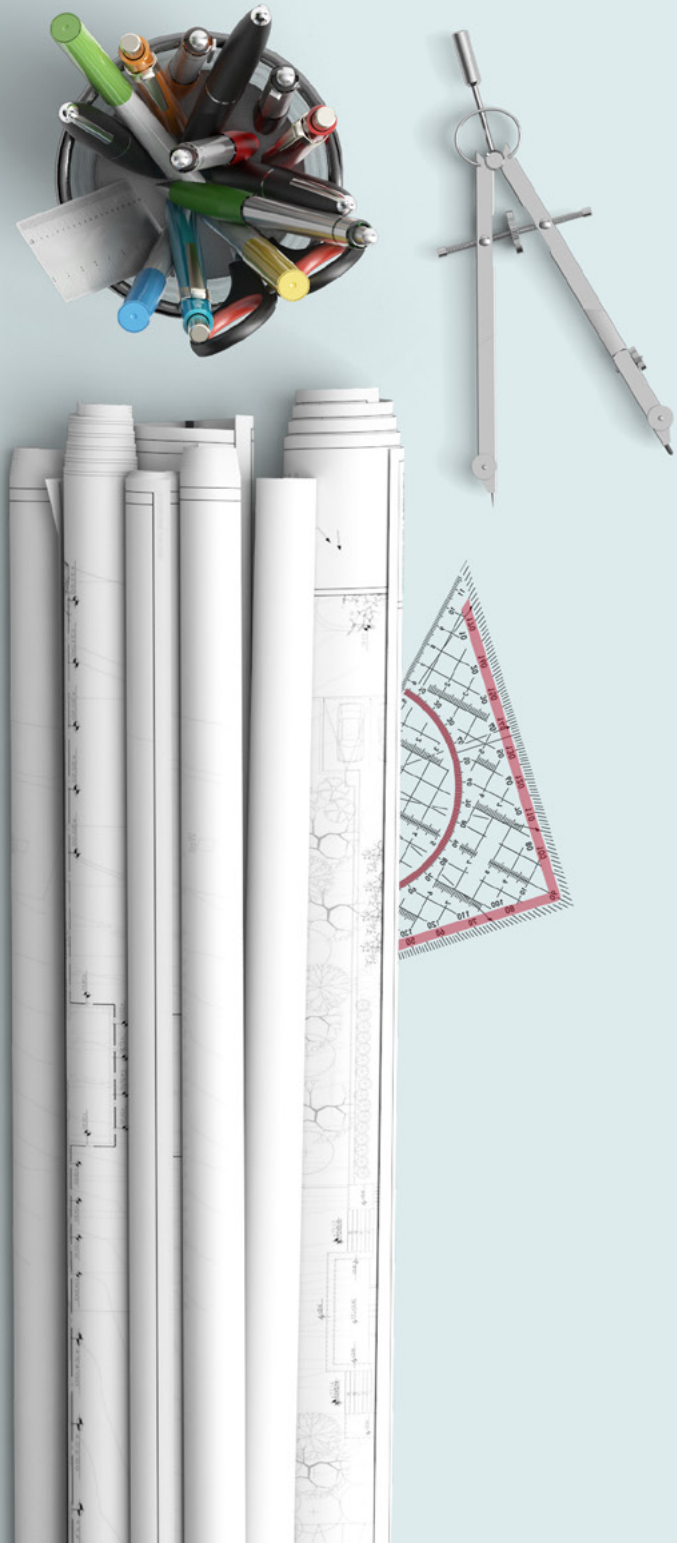
Job seekers now regularly use social media sites like LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. Employers can take advantage of social media to build relationships with job seekers and promote their employer brand.

The rising role of mobile

The ubiquity of smartphones means more job seekers than ever use their phones to view job postings and complete the application process. Employers need mobile-accessible job posts and applications to make sure they don't miss out on talent.

An emphasis on culture

Job seekers increasingly consider a company's culture as a key part of their decision-making process. Employers have taken note, defining and promoting their workplace culture to attract potential candidates.



THE JOB CANDIDATE'S JOURNEY

The candidate decision-making cycle comprises four stages, beginning with looking for positions and ending with starting a new job. Knowing what recruiting tools work best at different stages can help you engage your best prospects at each step of their process.

STAGE ONE
CONSIDERATION

STAGE TWO
RESEARCH AND VALIDATION

STAGE THREE
APPLICATIONS

STAGE FOUR
AFTER HIRING

Stage One

CONSIDERATION

At this stage, potential employees are not actively searching for a new job. They may not even be aware of your company as a potential employer, let alone know the specifics of your corporate culture or the benefits that come with certain positions.

Your goal at this point is to build awareness of your company and your employer brand. You want to get noticed by potential candidates and prompt them to seek more information about your company. Accomplish this by providing consistent exposure to your company's brand, culture, and products and services, all the while highlighting elements that make your company different from other potential employers.





DIVE INTO DISPLAY ADS

At the consideration stage, display ads—online advertising that often features rich media—provide an effective way to increase awareness about your company. These ads will have the best results when you keep them highly focused.

Keep your target in mind

Design the ads to appeal to the job seekers your company hopes to attract. For example, instead of using stock photos, use real photos of people that reflect the pool of candidates you want to hire.

Go where your audience is

Place display ads and other media on websites or in publications that appeal to your ideal demographic. For example, a recreational apparel company might place employment ads on websites that focus on outdoor sports.

WHAT'S YOUR EMPLOYER BRAND?

Employer branding means promoting your company as the employer of choice to a targeted group of talent. Your employer brand clearly communicates:

Your company culture

Your company culture conveys what it's like to work at your organization from day to day. Is your company casual or formal? Do employees work in open concept spaces or in individual offices? Are office hours flexible or carved in stone?

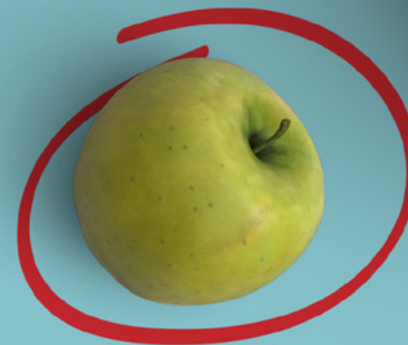
Your company mission

What goals does your company have? What kind of talent do you need to make those goals a reality? Why should that talent want to help you achieve them?

Your company values

What does your company stand for, and how does that align with the values of both your customers and your potential employees?

STAND OUT



Job Seeker Profile
THE MILLENNIAL

“I want a creative environment with flexible hours. However, I am more excited to see the word ‘benefits’ in a job post than I was five years ago.”

— Natalie, age 30, New York, NY, media producer



Job Seeker Profile

THE MILLENNIAL

MILLENNIALS ARE USED TO CHANGE

This group entered the workforce in an era of rapid technological change and economic volatility. They don't fear change and are more likely than other generations to move from job to job looking for the right fit. In fact, 26% of Millennials say a person should only be expected to stay in a job for a year before looking for a new position.¹

THEY WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Millennials often desire jobs that promote social causes. They don't want to work at faceless organizations, and they tend to seek positions that are innovative, creative and relevant to them and to their peers. They want to make a difference in the world, and they look for employers who make that possible.

THEY LIKE FLEXIBILITY

The youngest workers want to say goodbye to the traditional nine-to-five office schedule. Millennials seek flexibility in terms of hours and job location. They want to be measured by their output, not by the amount of time they put in at the office.

THEY CRAVE SOCIAL CONNECTION

Millennials are Internet natives. They've grown up online and are comfortable with social networks like Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Use these websites as points of connection to communicate with this demographic.

Stage Two

RESEARCH AND VALIDATION

At this stage, potential employees are aware of the companies that may want to be their next employer. Before they apply, however, job seekers tend to do extensive research on employers. On average, job hunters will look at 18 different sources of information when researching jobs.² Candidates also tend to look to social connections for information about potential employers.

Take this opportunity to engage with prospects and familiarize them with your organization, so that you're one of the companies they consider when they're ready to apply for a job. Make sure that information about your company is widely and readily available in multiple places, online and otherwise. Educate candidates about your company's culture and inform them of its benefits.

Start with a clear, concise website that's easy to navigate. Then use other media tools to ensure that your message is widespread and reaches as many candidates as possible.



MEDIA TOOLS THAT WORK

Rich media advertising

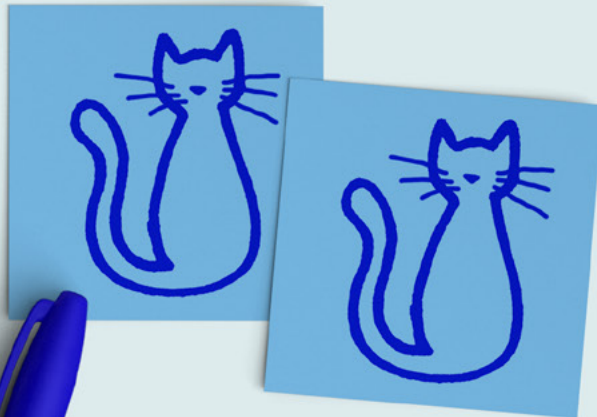
This is a form of Internet advertising that provides interaction with users. It may take the form of videos, ads that change when users scroll over them, or downloads that users can access instantly.

Native advertising

These are ads that match the form of the platform they use. For example, one form of native advertising may be stories that read and look like editorial content.

Re-messaging

This strategy allows you to target applicants who may already be familiar with your company. Re-messaging helps you direct ads to users who have already been to your site or interacted with an advertisement. Likewise, you can target potential employees based on keywords they've researched in search engines.





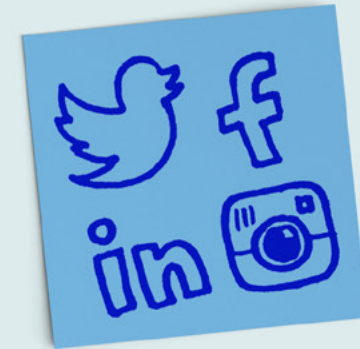
Display ads

To attract candidates, display ads should convey a strong, distinctive message that makes people want to learn more about the benefits of working for your company.



Search engine marketing

This form of Internet marketing increases the visibility of your website, often through paid advertising.



Social media solutions

Use social media to engage individuals or groups of potential candidates. For example, consider promoting your employer brand by posting original status updates and tweets, referring people to other content via links, and sharing photos and videos.



Job Seeker Profile
GENERATION X

“When looking for a job, I look for a supportive work atmosphere, flexibility, and for work that can enhance my personal interests.”

— Matt, 45, Kansas City, MO, sound engineer



Job Seeker Profile

GENERATION X

THEY'RE CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Gen Xers, like young Baby Boomers, are the sandwich generation—many are taking care of both children and aging parents. They want jobs that provide them with the income and flexibility that their family lives demand.

THEY LIKE MORE STRUCTURE THAN MILLENNIALS

Although Gen Xers are open to change in the workplace, they still prefer a structured work environment.

THEY'RE CAREER FOCUSED

This generation tends to be independent and goal-oriented.

THEY'RE TECH SAVVY

Gen Xers on the whole are well educated and in-the-know about technological trends. You can connect with Gen X online and through social media.



Stage Three

THE APPLICATION PHASE

Candidates at this point are actively looking for employment and ready to start applying for positions. As part of this process, they're comparing the relative merits of one employer versus another. If a candidate has already heard of your company, you have an advantage.

You are now looking to attract candidates to apply to your company. Use tools like job postings, display ads and search engine marketing to lead candidates to your website and applications. Ensure the process is as smooth and simple as possible, from start to finish. You want to make sure that your applications are straightforward and easy to complete online and through mobile devices.



FILL THIS SEAT




WHEN IT COMES TO APPLICATIONS, TECHNOLOGY MATTERS

Here are the top reasons why job seekers say they don't complete applications.

- 70% of applicants say they would like to apply for jobs with a smartphone, yet only 27% of companies offer this option.
- 20% give up if they can't complete an application on a mobile device.
- 60% are deterred by technological difficulties.
- 80% of applicants describe the application process as too time-consuming.³



Just offering a simple application process isn't enough. Provide a call to action in job postings and display ads that encourages potential employees to apply and denotes where and how to do so.



Job Seeker Profile
THE BABY BOOMER

*“I’m probably going to work past retirement,
especially if it’s for something I’m passionate
about.”*

— Joan, age 50, Portland, ME, public health specialist



Job Seeker Profile

THE BABY BOOMER

THEY'RE A DEMOGRAPHIC POWERHOUSE

There are 75.3 million Baby Boomers, according to the U.S. Census bureau. And though the first crop of Boomers started to hit retirement age in 2011, there are still plenty in the workforce. The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that by 2018, 25% of the workforce will be 55 and older.

THERE'S NO TYPICAL RETIREMENT

Baby Boomers are said to “live to work,” and true to that reputation, nearly 50% say they will likely continue working past age 66.⁴ In fact, one in 10 say they will never retire.

THEY STAY WITH EMPLOYERS

Unlike their younger counterparts, 41% of Baby Boomers expect to stay at a job five years or longer.⁵

OFFLINE INTERACTION IS IMPORTANT

Boomers look for job opportunities online, but value personal interaction above all.

Stage Four

AFTER HIRING, SPREADING THE WORD

Many recruiters don't maintain contact with applicants once they make a hire. In this case, they may be missing out on an opportunity to build loyalty and get referrals. "Your best recruiters, and your best advertisers, are your current employees," says says McDonald, senior executive director with Robert Half, an international human resources consulting firm.

In fact, 78% of recruiters find their best-quality candidates through employee referrals.⁶ Make sure that you stay in touch with current employees, as well as past employees, to help build a pipeline of high-performing candidates. Boomerang employees—employees who worked with you once and may be interested in returning—provide another often-overlooked pool of talent.



HOW TO RAMP UP REFERRALS

- Make sure that current employees are aware of your open positions.
- Ask them to recommend candidates from their social networks, and have them spread the word on social media.
- Gather testimonials from current employees in written or video form and post these to social media, as well.
- Consider an incentive program that rewards employees when you hire referrals they've made.

REFERRALS ARE ABOUT
BEING SOCIAL





WHY REFERRALS WORK

Your current employees are one of your most valuable resources. Asking them to refer strong job candidates offers these benefits:

Cost savings

Half of recruiters say that it's cheaper to hire via referrals than other processes.⁷

Faster screening process

With referrals, you can process fewer applications and resumes than with other candidate screening methods.

Increased tenure

47% of referred recruits stay at their job for more than 3 years.⁸

GET STARTED

Take advantage of new technology and a broad mix of recruiting strategies to find and attract talent and build a pipeline of great prospects. As your local recruitment resource, Alabama Media Group experts understand the job search habits of local candidates and can ensure you have the tools and industry insights you need to be successful with your hiring efforts.

OUR SOLUTIONS

- Job Postings, Distribution & Optimization
- Social Media Optimization
- Search Engine Marketing
- Custom Career Website Development
- Display (Digital and Print) Advertising
- Direct Mail

Learn more about your recruiting options by contacting your Alabama Media Group Recruitment Advertising Representative at 205-325-3174 or recruitment@al.com.



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