RECRUITING, TALENT, TECHNOLOGY

Best Practices for IT Staffing

By Ajay Kaul, Managing Partner, AgreeYa Solutions Jul 28, 2021 Recruiting, Talent, Technology

Updated: Jul 28, 2021

Information technology (IT) staffing shortages can have a tremendous impact on businesses. Between missed deadlines, lower worker morale, and reduced productivity, both product and service quality can suffer when staff are unable to access or fully utilize the technology tools that are part of their daily responsibilities. Organizations need to make sure their IT staffing and recruiting efforts are running at full speed; however, there have been pronounced challenges with bringing in top IT talent. While there are best practices that can help with IT staffing, it is first important to understand the current challenges.

Top Challenges in IT Recruiting Today

The pandemic has greatly affected and amplified IT recruiting. Because every industry needs IT professionals, the IT hiring cycle has always fluctuated with these widespread trends—and the pandemic was no different. To start, there have been huge swings in industries letting people go and hiring, with e-commerce, supermarkets, business software, and online learning seeing waves of hiring and others such as restaurants, bars, theaters, and manufacturing companies seeing a downturn. This fluctuation has made it difficult, as recruiters typically start workforce planning months in advance so they can maintain a balance of resources and candidates.

Beyond recruiting, landing a candidate can be challenging during this time, as most hiring is taking place via remote video interviews. This makes it hard to convey company culture to candidates when they aren't attending in-person interviews and also means that staff oftentimes don't have the opportunity to see the physical workspace or meet the other employees before accepting an offer. Therefore, businesses need to put a lot of effort into maintaining a positive candidate experience virtually. Also, now that IT professionals have become accustomed to working from home, many candidates are only looking for a remote option.

Gain an Edge in Recruiting Quality Employees

The first step in gaining an edge in recruiting quality IT employees is for organizations to develop a comprehensive and well-structured recruiting and selection program. Accurate job descriptions and candidate profiles need to be created, and then ads should be placed on popular mediums, job portals, and social media platforms. Then, suitable screening questions and assessments need to be applied, including the incorporation of online screening tools, to complete comprehensive evaluations of skills in a virtual setting. Companies will want to adopt agile recruitment for high-priority vacancies and short-notice requirements, which might include asking current employees in good standing to recommend friends or past coworkers. Finally, once hired, organizations need to do their best to create a good employee experience to reduce attrition so they can retain top talent, making recruitment and new hiring only an occasional need.

7 Best Practices for IT Staffing

There are some best practices for IT staffing, and following these guidelines can help recruiters ensure they hire the right candidates for their company.

- *Data-driven approach*—Analyze best performers and most effective recruiting strategies, and use the resulting data to further fine-tune your recruitment practices.

- *Take help from assessment tools*—Especially in this virtual hiring setting, assessment tools can greatly assist in identifying the best candidates in the sourcing and screening process.

- *Candidate pools*—Develop and maintain strong candidate pools. This will help you have the right references ahead of demand. Even in a crisis, you will be able to quickly fill pressing positions.

- *Maintain string referral program*—Employees can be a fantastic source for the next great hire. Establish a strong employee referral program to make sure employees are excited about bringing in their friends and former coworkers as talent.

- *Decide and follow service level agreements (SLAs)*—SLAs make communication easier, improve results, and help to build strong and lasting relationships.

- *Continuously train your recruiters*—Growing and developing recruiters will make them more effective in their position and provide dividends in the quality of the talent they recruit.

- *Focus on employer branding*—Employer branding is an essential element of marketing to candidates. Your careers page and job listings are as much a part of your brand's online presence/reputation as the rest of your website and social media presence.

Get IT Right

By utilizing these best practices, recruiters and organizations can make sure they have the best chance of hiring quality IT professionals. Looking at the challenges recruiters currently face, it's vital that workforce planning be a central part of their strategy. In order to gain an edge and place the best talent, a strong recruiting and selection program should be put in place. Once these best practices have been implemented, companies will be able to hire excellent talent, as well as reduce attrition. This will ensure teams can work to their maximum ability, utilizing all IT tools as needed.

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