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5 Marketing Strategies to Boost Recruitment Success

As the competition for talent increases and candidates pay more attention to organizational culture, basic marketing savvy becomes increasingly essential for association employers looking to recruit the team they need.

By Michael Cummings

To attract great candidates, associations need to apply great marketing skills to the recruitment process. No matter your organization's size or budget, you can incorporate these five marketing strategies into your recruitment efforts to ensure that you catch the attention of the most qualified candidates.

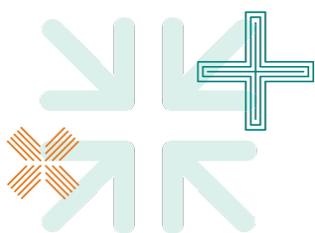
1. Think like a marketer. To act like a marketer, you have to start by thinking like a marketer—in terms of objectives, products, and audience.

- **Objectives** are the ideal solution to a business dilemma. Before launching into a project, define your objectives. Your objective could be as simple as: “Attract more qualified candidates to apply through the association's website.”
- The **product** is what you want to “sell.” It could be a specific open position or the perception of your organization as a great place to work.
- Your **audience** is composed of the people you are trying to reach—in this case, qualified candidates.

2. Create a marketing plan. While essential, your marketing plan doesn't need to be overly complicated: It can be as simple as a one-page document or a basic spreadsheet.

Every marketing plan should include a description of the activities that you will engage in to meet your objectives and the costs associated with them. Costs may include job-posting fees, “best place to work” application costs, and hours spent by your staff.

Your marketing plan should also include a detailed timeline for executing on the identified activities.



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3. Create effective messages. To write effective messages, you must first understand your audience so you can tailor messages to them. For an audience of potential job applicants, instead of advertising a laundry list of your organization's various features, emphasize the benefits of working there. If you want to attract millennials to a particular job posting, for example, you might highlight the ways your organization supports work-life balance and makes mentoring opportunities available, if applicable.

While you want to appeal to your target audience, don't try to fool them. Your organization can't be all things to all people, and that's OK. What's important is that you don't inadvertently create a retention problem by recruiting with messaging that doesn't reflect the actual experience of working at your organization.

4. Deploy tactics. Tactics are the activities that you engage in to achieve your objectives. For recruitment campaigns, tactics could include building out a talent recruitment page on your website, strategically posting jobs on external sites, or creating social media campaigns to highlight job openings and key reasons your organization is a great place to work. You might also employ tactics that involve existing employees: obtaining testimonials from current employees, training staff on how to effectively interview candidates, or creating a process for current staff to refer candidates for open positions.

5. Identify practical metrics. To achieve your goals, you have to be able to consistently measure progress. Metrics are the markers by which you measure success. Your metrics could range from the number of resumes received to the amount of time it takes to fill an open position to the traffic that your job postings bring to your organization's website.

From the job description to the candidate interview experience to a new hire's first weeks on the job, every milestone on the recruitment timeline is an opportunity to convey your authentic employer message and attract the staff your organization needs to fulfill its mission.

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