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It has never been easier to find the right person for a job. Countless digital platforms enable employers to post job descriptions with the touch of a button, reaching thousands and thousands of willing employees who may be actively looking for a job.

There is no doubt that with the technology that we have today, hiring can be a breeze. The question is, when do you employ a headhunter and how do you conduct your hiring online?

I will be the first to say that I am an advocate for technology. In fact, my own staffing firm relies on a complex IT infrastructure that has the capability to increase our recruitment efficiency manifold.

Using technology also makes for faster candidate delivery. However, I also take the stance that nothing digital can fully replace the human factor, which is the very DNA of recruiting companies and headhunters. The final touch is our human element.

In a Forbes article written by Meghan M. Biro, she notes that we should 'remember the human dimension'. She argues that the best human resources (HR) practitioners know their organisations and culture on an extremely deep level.

While she agrees that finding talent can be made a lot easier by the amazing technology out there, finding the right fit goes beyond technology. In short, HR management jobs are likely not to go out of style for a very long time.

### RECRUITMENT PARTNER

As a company looking to hire, employing a good headhunter can save you time and cost. In fact, industry-specific headhunters often play the role of a business partner (or recruitment partner) where the headhunter provides detailed advice to the company.

Simple things like re-aligning the reporting structure or deciding to hire a multi-skilled candidate can go a long way in saving additional HR expenses or opportunity costs.

The key here is to ask probing questions, i.e. the right questions.

As a headhunter, your job is to be on the constant lookout for how to save your clients' time and cost. Imagine how much cost you can save if a headhunter can find you a candidate who can do the job of three freelancers.

Only a headhunter would be able to suggest streamlined processes to help your business.

# THE HEADHUNTING ERA

## EXAMINING THE NEED TO BOOST YOUR RECRUITMENT EFFORTS



### TALENT POOL

Another important point to note when deciding whether to employ a headhunter or conduct your hiring online would be the pool of candidates. Potential candidates are usually divided into two categories – active and passive.

Active candidates are on the lookout for a new job for a variety of reasons, whereas passive candidates are most likely contented with their jobs and uninterested in finding something new. Active jobseekers are mostly freelancers, as their work is governed by projects with charges that go by the hour.

Those in the creative field such as graphic designers and writers are more likely to sign up with freelance marketplace portals such as Upwork. These platforms are specifically meant for project-based work.

Then there is LinkedIn, a widely-used professional networking platform which hosts a variety of jobseekers. Their research shows that 75% of their users are considered passive candidates. This means that only 25% of LinkedIn users are actively looking out for a new job.

While it is safe to assume that those in the passive category are definitely not looking for new opportunities, what if

they did know of an amazing opportunity? This is where headhunters come into the picture.

More often than not, headhunters would be looking to target the passive pool where they are likely to find the most talented professionals in any given industry. If you hire a headhunter, they have access to that 75% of passive jobseekers that you may not be privy to.

Assuming that you only rely on online job portals to find your talent, you would only be tapping into 25% of the talent pool.

### CRITICAL INFORMATION

Another thing to consider is that senior management talents from the passive pool are unlikely to send in their resumes to online job portals. It would benefit them greatly by partnering with headhunters who know the industry landscape better than anyone else.

Also, if you're looking for a more senior position such as Head of Finance, there is a low chance that you would hire freelancers for the job.

Freelancers are not governed by HR policies, thus opening up your organisation to vulnerabilities especially if the role deals with critical company information.

Roles suitable for freelancers are more often consultative or advisory in nature.

### MOVING FORWARD

I believe that headhunters need to be more adaptable to changes by constantly increasing their industry knowledge. Even though there are many things that cannot be replicated by a machine, we are living in the 21st century.

You need to know what is happening out there. You also need to understand emotions, because a headhunter's job deals solely with humans.

Skill sets and knowledge can always be learnt but if the attitude matches the opportunity, it may just be the right 'fit'. As a headhunter, it is imperative that you recommend someone not only based on their past, but the potential you see in them. As a fellow human being, you are able to sense the burning desire from within. I don't think there is any digital device that can gauge that.

In an ever-changing world like ours, embracing technology is not only the key to survive, but to thrive. As Darwin once said, "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change."

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■ Coming from an engineering background, Low realised his true passion for people by diving into the headhunting business and later setting up his own recruitment firm. To learn how to create a winning team attitude in your organisation, email us at training@leaderonomics.com

## BUILDING A THRIVING ENVIRONMENT

By **DAN ROCKWELL**  
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STRUCTURE trumps talent. Badly designed organisations sabotage their best performers.

### 4 STRUCTURAL SABOTEURS:

- 1. Overlapping domains:** Managers with overlapping territories are paid to compete with one another. *The stronger the talent, the more intense the in-fighting.*
- 2. Conflicts of interests:** Managers can't both innovate and keep things running smoothly. *You can't go in two directions at the same time.*
- 3. Impossible jobs:** Don't expect talent to excel on multiple fronts at the same time. *People can only*

*be "world class" at one thing at a time.*

**4. Disempowerment:** *You can't hold staff accountable for results if you disempower them by telling them how to do their jobs.* If things go wrong, who's at fault? The employee, or the process you imposed on them?

### BUILDING ORGANISATIONS THAT WORK

1. Eliminate overlaps with clear boundaries.
2. Ensure that every gap is filled with needed competency. Every technology, discipline, and service is somebody's job.
3. Cluster similar lines of business under leaders who know how to manage each specific profession.

### WHERE TO BEGIN

Define jobs as businesses within your business – entrepreneurs with clear products or services that serve internal and external customers to excel.

1. "Engineers" sell and support solutions.
2. "Service Providers" keep things running. They buy solutions and use them to sell ongoing services.
3. "Sales and Marketing" link to customers, be they external or internal.
4. "Coordinators" help people come together on plans, policies, and standards.

And to bring together just the right specialists on each team and define their individual accountabilities, build an explicit team-formation process.



**Successful leaders create environments that empower talent and enable teamwork.**

How have you seen situations where organisational structure hinders staff?

■ Dan Rockwell is a coach, speaker and is freakishly interested in leadership. He is an author of a world-renowned most socially shared leadership blog, *Leadership Freak*. Not sure when to bring it up or when to let go? Write to us at editor@leaderonomics.com