

## BEST PRACTICES FOR MANAGING OFFSHORE RECRUITING TEAMS

### THE VALUE OF OFFSHORE RECRUITING TEAMS

Corporate recruiting departments and staffing firms have a continual need to lower costs while increasing recruiting productivity – and some recruiting organizations have turned to outsourcing. Outsourcing can take many forms including retaining a US-based recruitment process outsourcing firm, sending job orders to staffing agencies, participating in split-fee recruiter networks, or hiring US-based contract sourcers and/or recruiters.

A less expensive solution being implemented by progressive US companies is partnering with an offshore recruiting firm. Most offshore recruiting firms have recruiting operations in India. The cost of an offshore sourcer or recruiter is generally about one-third to one-half the cost of a US-based contract sourcer or recruiter. Offshore recruiting firms allow US-based in-house recruiters to offload time consuming, but important tasks, such as candidate sourcing and screening. With the additional time in-house recruiters can work on and close more open positions, focus on complex tasks requiring the greatest skills, provide a more positive experience for candidates, and delight hiring managers by presenting higher quality candidates.

### YOU CANNOT OUTSOURCE YOUR PROBLEMS

Offshore recruiting is not a magic tonic. A dysfunctional recruiting department will not suddenly have success by outsourcing – whether the recruiting functions are outsourced to a US-based or an offshore firm.

Like with any partnership, management should pay close attention to make sure the relationship with the offshore firm gets off to a good start. Unarguably, success requires that the offshore firm be run professionally and consistently deliver high quality work. However, management should be aware that if things go wrong the problem could be internal. In-house recruiters will virtually never tell their management if they are responsible for poor performance when it is easy to blame an overseas firm.

### HOW TO MANAGE AN OFFSHORE RECRUITING TEAM FOR SUCCESS

The keys to having success with an offshore recruiting firm are the same as the keys to having success with most US-based outsourced recruiting partners.

### HIGH QUALITY JOB ORDERS

If the recruiting organization sends its “near-impossible-to-fill” positions to the offshore team, it is unrealistic to expect the offshore team to submit the same number or quality of candidates as the in-house recruiters who are working on highly “placeable” positions. The in-house recruiters should work as partners with the offshore recruiting team. The offshore team should receive urgent-to-fill job orders with a complete position description including the behavioral characteristics (as defined by the hiring manager) of the ideal candidate.

### COMMUNICATIONS AND MOTIVATION

Working remotely, especially when you are half way around the world in India, can be lonely. Furthermore, cultural differences between the US and India can lead to misunderstandings. Therefore, the best way to achieve a high performance end-to-end recruiting process is to treat the offshore team members like you would treat recruiting assistants who are company employees.

When the offshore team does good work the in-house recruiters should express sincere appreciation. Most Indian offshore recruiters are very dedicated, committed, and care deeply about how they are viewed by their American clients. As a result, a little bit of praise goes an exceptionally long way in motivating offshore recruiting teams to work extra hard.

The in-house recruiters should provide prompt and detailed feedback on candidates submitted by the offshore team so that the offshore team can learn and improve. Frequent communication is especially critical during the initial phases of the relationship until the styles of in-house recruiters and preferences of hiring managers are understood by the offshore team.

Before starting work develop a detailed end-to-end recruiting process and decide what tasks will be performed by the offshore team. Both parties should diligently follow the agreed upon work process. If the offshore team makes a mistake, give them an opportunity to improve just like you would with an assistant working for you in your company.

### **EFFECTIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH HIRING MANAGERS**

The level of success achieved by recruiters is directly related to how well they understand the needs of and are able to work as partners with hiring managers. Because offshore recruiting teams often work as assistants to US-based recruiters, success requires in-house recruiters who can work effectively with hiring managers. The in-house recruiters should create complete job orders and get detailed feedback regarding what the hiring manager liked and did not like about submitted candidates. Getting the offshore team involved in discussions with hiring managers will help close communications and improve results.

### **ABILITY TO CLOSE CANDIDATES ON THE OPPORTUNITIES**

Another critical element of in-house recruiters' job is to build strong relationships with candidates. Even if the candidate is not hired, the impression left by the recruiter can enhance or detract from the company's brand. In-house recruiters should promptly get in touch with the candidates submitted by the offshore team, address concerns that cannot be resolved by the offshore recruiters, keep the candidates interested in the positions, and inform the candidates about what to expect at each stage of the hiring process. Because working with candidates can be very time consuming, the offshore recruiter and the in-house recruiters should work as a team to address candidates' needs.

### **THE IDEAL US-BASED RECRUITER FOR WORKING WITH AN OFFSHORE TEAM**

An effective partnership with an offshore recruiting firm can dramatically lower recruiting costs and increase recruiting productivity. However, achieving these results is not automatic. In most cases the best results will be achieved by pairing the offshore team with senior recruiters.

Offshore recruiters usually work as assistants. Senior recruiters will know how to select the proper job orders to send to the offshore team, communicate with and motivate the team, work effectively with hiring managers, and close candidates on the opportunities. Senior recruiters will appreciate and be able to take the greatest advantage of the time that is freed up through working with the offshore team.

Conversely, junior recruiters often perform many of the same tasks as offshore recruiters and an offshore relationship could possibly be seen as threatening – especially if the offshore team has better sourcing or other recruiting skills. Few junior recruiters will have developed the recruiting and managerial skills necessary to make the most of an offshore partnership.

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