



7 MOST COMMON SOCIAL MEDIA RECRUITMENT MISTAKES

7 most common social media recruitment mistakes

Whilst not yet being embraced by every recruiting team, social recruiting is increasingly accepted as a mainstream part of the modern recruiting strategy. The trouble is, many recruiters are embarking on social recruiting initiatives for the very first time – and so inevitably are learning the hard way some of the mistakes that can trip you up on the road to social recruiting success.

7 most common social media recruitment mistakes I see recruiters making today:

1. Failing to plan
2. Failing to secure adequate resources
3. Failing to make a consistent time commitment
4. Failing to leverage your team
5. Failing to add value
6. Failing to engage
7. Reverting to treating social media as an advertising channel

Let's look at each social media recruitment mistake in turn – and note how “failing to plan” commands more space than all the others. If you get this wrong at the outset, you're doomed to social recruiting mediocrity!



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Failing to plan

Once you start dabbling on social networks, you'll very quickly get swept along by the waves of interaction and the endless possibilities to try new things. Yet social recruiting will only work for you if you are very clear about what you want to achieve and how you are going to go about achieving this. Before you start establishing your social presence, try to answer these questions:

What is our objective? You may think this is obvious – to make hires! But there are variants on the theme that completely transform the way you'll then choose to roll out your social recruiting strategy. Maybe you're an employer that simply wants to build its employer brand in a particular sector and geography? Maybe you want to drive relevant candidates to your corporate careers pages? Maybe you want to make candidates in your sector more receptive to receiving recruiting calls from you and your team? Maybe you're looking to build awareness of your recruiting blog? Maybe you want to drive up the proportion of referral hires you make? Your answers here will determine which social recruiting activities it does and does not make sense for you to pursue.

Which social media can we use to reach our target audience? This may surprise you, but even with hundreds of millions of users the likes of Twitter and LinkedIn have huge blackspots of coverage – in terms of geographies and sectors where people are simply not using them enough to make them a credible recruiting tool. Too often the decision about which platforms to embrace is taken based on what the recruiter likes using (or worse still, is a historical accident that simply reflects which ones they tried out first). Do some research on the places your target audience can be reached before you get sucked into investing time in platforms that are likely to deliver a poor return.



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What can we learn from those who are already successful in our market niche? Given that you're unlikely to be first to market in your geography and sector, take some time to research the activities of those recruiters already active on the platforms you've identified you want to use. What are they doing that is generating strong results? What are people doing that seems to be falling flat? Then be sure to learn from these mistakes and insights and pass on this social recruiting advice to your team!

Failing to secure adequate resources

If I were to ask you why you aren't posting your jobs on every free job board in your sector, I can guarantee that the answer I'd hear back is that it may be free to post your jobs... but using these free boards still comes at a price. The time it takes to put jobs on the sites, to deal with the resulting candidate interest – that's a not insignificant cost in terms of the resourcing needed to leverage them.

The exact same argument holds true for social recruiting. It may well be true that lots of activities can be undertaken via social networking sites without the need to pay any upfront fees for subscriptions. But that doesn't mean they are free to use. The time investment needed to build up and maintain a credible presence on social sites is significant – and if you can't commit that resource then frankly you're better off having no presence at all. If you're embarking on a social recruiting strategy hoping people will find time in their days to cram it in, you're probably setting yourself up to fail.



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Failing to make a consistent time commitment

A lot of success in social recruiting comes down to being responsive. Being able to act upon opportunities, queries and interest as they arise. This can only be realised if the team members involved in your social recruiting strategy are able to carve out time each and every day to be able to react and respond to these opportunities and enquiries quickly. If you can't make this commitment as a team, there's a real danger that your social recruiting activities backfire on you and that the company reputation is actually tarnished rather than enhanced by your move into social recruiting.

Failing to leverage your team

Whether you're looking to grow the readership of your recruiting blog, or increase the reach of your referral hiring scheme, your results can quickly be multiplied if employees are brought on board as willing participants. Find ways to alert your staff to the key messages you are putting out on social media and having them share these with their networks too. The impact you see will grow exponentially the more you can involve the wider staff base in these activities.

Failing to add value

Too many social recruiting initiatives are undermined by recruiters thinking about what they want to achieve with their presence on social media, rather than by putting your audience first. What insights, resources, links, downloads, interviews, tools and tips will help the people you want to engage with do their jobs more effectively? What burning questions can you answer for them that will help them to further their careers, irrespective of whether that ends up being by joining your company? You want your individual recruiter profiles and your corporate pages to



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be seen in the industry as things that professionals consider it essential they follow in order to accelerate their careers (irrespective of how appealing your own jobs may be in the industry in which you operate). If you can achieve that status, whatever else you want to achieve with your social recruiting strategy then becomes a whole lot easier.

Failing to engage

It's the small things that make a tremendous difference on social media. A retweet may or may not get you noticed. A retweet where you've complimented the content or added your own thought to the RT will almost always produce a reaction. Similarly, interacting with people on Google+ or LinkedIn when they comment on your posts has a huge impact building your relationships. If failing to plan is the single biggest shortcoming I see amongst recruiters, failing to engage (and instead solely broadcasting) must come a close second. I would go so far as to say that you should try to act on every opportunity to engage that presents itself to you. Engage with someone just once or twice and they're likely to be avid followers (and sharers) of your content for many months to come.

Reverting to treating social media as an advertising channel

This one seems so obvious to anyone who already "gets" social media and social recruiting. But actually huge swathes of recruiters still act this way, so I think it very much needs stating here. So often I see recruiters embark on social initiatives with good intentions and the right approach. Then they get disheartened by the lack of quick results to show for their work. Before long, they've reverted to filling their social streams with a monologue of job adverts. Worse still, they're not even posted in a way that encourages any social interaction whatsoever. They're a jobs-by-email alert transported onto your social media channels. Well guess what, only



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desperate candidates welcome yet another source of job alerts – and if you’re only interested in reaching desperate candidates with your social recruiting endeavours then I can think of far lower cost routes for you to achieve those aims!