



REQUISITE
TALENT PARTNERS



6 Ways to

Improve Candidate Experience &
Attract Passive Jobseekers



The labor market has changed drastically over the past decade, and hiring managers are now facing new challenges when it comes to finding the right people to fill positions and make an impact.

In-house talent acquisition teams are stretched thin, grappling with a shrinking talent pool driven by demographic shifts such as an aging workforce and declining birth rates. At the same time, the abundance of options available to candidates makes attracting and retaining skilled talent increasingly difficult.

As the competition for talent continues to increase, how can hiring managers ensure they're reaching the candidates they need and providing job offers that are enticing? In this whitepaper, Requisite Talent Partners will explain who businesses need to reach and how to attract them.



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🎯 The Current State of the Talent Market

Overview of the Current Talent Market

The current talent market is broadly divided into two main groups: active job seekers and passive job seekers. Understanding the difference between these two groups is key when it comes to finding the best talent and hiring effectively.

Active Job Seekers

Active job seekers make up about **20 to 30% of the total talent pool**. These are the candidates who are actively looking for new opportunities. They're either actively employed and unhappy with their current position or unemployed and looking for work.

What to Know About Active Job Seekers:

- **Visibility:** They're easy to find, often posting resumes online, listing themselves as "Open to Work" on LinkedIn, or submitting applications to job boards.
- **Engagement:** They are typically connected to recruiters and responsive to outreach.
- **Proactiveness:** These candidates initiate job searches and often consider multiple roles simultaneously.

The Bottom Line:

Because active job seekers are openly looking for work, they're more visible and accessible. They're most likely applying to several roles at once and are much more likely to be in touch with recruiters.

Passive Job Seekers

The **majority of candidates (about 70 to 80%) in the talent market** are passive job seekers. These are people who are not actively looking for a new job but might consider a move if the right opportunity comes along.

Most of these candidates are employed and fairly content in their current roles but are often open to hearing about a great opportunity. They're also the candidates you **want and need on your team**.



Who Are Passive Candidates and Why Do You Need Them?

Passive candidates are typically ones that can come in and make an immediate impact in your organization. Because you're the one pursuing them and not vice-versa, they usually have most – if not all – the qualifications you're looking for in a candidate and will require less training and skills development.

These job seekers are highly valuable and make up the majority of the talent market, so it's important to know who these candidates are, what drives them, and ultimately – what attracts them.

What to Know About Passive Job Seekers:

- **Harder to Reach:** Passive job seekers aren't posting their resumes online or actively applying for jobs. They're satisfied with their current role overall and aren't looking to change jobs quickly.
- **Selective:** For a passive candidate to even consider a new job, the offer needs to be compelling. They may not bother engaging with a company that isn't offering them a better opportunity, higher pay, a more senior position, or a role that aligns more closely with their long-term goals.
- **They're Selectively Engaged:** While they're not actively looking, passive candidates will engage if the right opportunity comes along. This means you need to be careful with when and how you approach them.



The Bottom Line:

Passive candidates are harder to find because they're not publicly searching. But they represent a large pool of untapped talent, and reaching them requires a more targeted approach, like building relationships or networking.

We'll go more in-depth on some of the qualities of passive job seekers and the best way to approach them in the following pages.

⊕ What to Keep In Mind With Passive Candidates

Working with passive candidates requires a unique mindset and methodology. Unlike active job seekers, they are often in a position of strength, and your approach must reflect their specific needs and concerns.

Key Considerations for Engaging Passive Candidates:

Transition Time

As they are typically employed, passive candidates need ample notice to exit their current roles responsibly.

Confidentiality

They expect discretion throughout recruitment to avoid jeopardizing their current positions.

Counteroffers

Passive candidates are more likely to receive counteroffers, making it crucial to articulate the long-term benefits of your offer.

Strategic Outlook

They evaluate opportunities based on alignment with their career aspirations and future plans.

Leadership Roles

Many passive candidates are in senior positions, adding more selectivity to their decision-making process.

Flexibility

Some candidates may be retired or semi-retired but willing to engage in project-based roles that match their expertise.

Recruiting passive candidates requires patience, precision, and a deep understanding of their priorities.



The Key to Engaging Passive Candidates

The biggest thing to keep in mind when talking to passive candidates is you need to develop a relationship with them and make them want you – like a sales conversation. This takes time and requires a strategic process with consistent, dedicated effort.

Speed is Key

You need to move quickly when approaching passive candidates. They will often have multiple opportunities available, and getting to them before someone else does requires efficiency. A fast, streamlined recruitment process not only captures their attention but also positions you as someone who values their time.

Understand Their Motivation

Before reaching out to a passive candidate, it's critical that you research and personalize your approach. Understanding their background, industry trends, and common pain points lets you tailor your message to resonate with their unique situation. Remember that everyone has different reasons for considering a change.

Craft a Compelling Message

Your message to a passive candidate needs to be personalized, clear, and compelling. Avoid generic outreach and take the time to reference specific aspects of their background or achievements. Include what makes your opportunity unique, specific benefits that align with their needs, and success stories of others who successfully made similar transitions. Storytelling can make the opportunity feel more tangible and less risky.

Build Relationships

Building a relationship with these candidates requires patience and consistent effort. Start by engaging with them in a way that's not immediately focused on a job offer. You could discuss industry trends, share valuable content, or offer insights.

Engaging without pressure helps develop a rapport over time and increases the likelihood that they'll consider your offer when the timing is right. Stay connected through occasional check-ins that offer value (without being intrusive) so you remain top of mind for future opportunities



Leverage Referrals and Networks

Passive candidates might be more willing to refer others than consider a move themselves. Asking for referrals can help you expand your reach within the passive job seeker market. You can also network (in person or online) to connect with passive candidates organically, building relationships that may lead to future opportunities.

Use a Soft Approach

Approach passive candidates with a mindset of exploration, not pressure. Frame the conversation as an informal chat to explore the opportunity rather than a hard sell, showing acknowledgment and respect for their current role and situation. This softer, low-pressure approach makes candidates more comfortable and open to learning more about opportunities.

Offer Confidentiality and Flexibility

Make sure the candidate you're talking to knows that your conversations are discreet and confidential, again acknowledging their current employment. If a candidate is hesitant to leave, offering flexible work options, like remote work or flexible hours, can make the position more appealing and alleviate some of the concerns about making a change.

Highlight Long-Term Benefits

Passive candidates often seek opportunities that offer long-term growth. It's important to emphasize the career development potential and skill-building opportunities the role offers. It's also important to showcase your company's stability and culture. Passive candidates want an environment where they can make an impact, grow professionally, and feel valued, so highlighting these aspects will make your opportunity more attractive.

Follow Up Thoughtfully

Follow-up with passive candidates is crucial but should be thoughtful and provide value. Sharing relevant industry news, new opportunities, and other insights will keep you top of mind without seeming pushy. A consistent, considerate outreach with regular, non-intrusive check-ins helps maintain a connection without overwhelming the candidate.

All of These Contribute to a Positive Candidate Experience

Creating an exceptional candidate experience is ultimately the key to engaging passive candidates. By building rapport, personalizing your approach, moving quickly, and providing real value, you create an environment where passive candidates are not only open to your offer but eager to engage with it.

REMEMBER: Passive candidates don't need you. You need to make them want you.

The Importance of Candidate Experience



Offering a great candidate experience is important, regardless of what kind of candidate you're trying to engage. But if you're trying to attract and retain a passive candidate who needs extra motivation to leave their current position, candidate experience could make or break your efforts.

What is Candidate Experience?

Candidate experience refers to all the interactions you have with a potential employee – from the application process and interviews to negotiations and onboarding. The term describes how candidates feel about the experience they've had interacting with a company's brand.

Why is it So Important?

Offering a good candidate experience is important to all candidates but could be the ultimate deciding factor if you're trying to hire a passive candidate.

Keep in mind that these job seekers aren't actively looking for a new opportunity and are content in their current role. They need a good reason to leave their employer or consider other opportunities. If you don't offer a passive candidate an exceptional experience, they may not feel enticed enough to join your company.

Remember, the opportunity needs to be **perfect** for a passive candidate to make a move – and if they don't feel satisfied throughout the engagement, interview, and offer process, they likely won't consider the move worth it.



How to Create a Great Candidate Experience

Creating a great candidate experience involves more than optimizing the application and interview process. You need to take every opportunity you have to present your company in the best light possible and foster a meaningful relationship with your candidate.

Here are six key strategies you can use to enhance your candidate experience, from job posting to onboarding.

1. Provide a Clear, Transparent Job Description

A job description will likely be one of the first impressions a candidate gets from your company and the role, so it's important to get it right. Being transparent about the role and what it entails helps candidates self-assess their fit, reducing misunderstandings later in the hiring process.

- **Outline the Exact Responsibilities:** Directly and clearly state the day-to-day responsibilities of the job and be honest about the skills and experience needed.
- **Set Clear Expectations:** Highlight the primary goals of the position and the type of candidate you're looking for. Avoid using vague language that can confuse applicants. The more specific you are, the easier it is for candidates to decide if they're right for the role.
- **Acknowledge Challenges:** If there are aspects of the role that may be difficult or challenging, mention them upfront. This will help ensure your candidate is prepared, avoiding any surprises down the road.

2. Make the Application Process Seamless

A complicated or frustrating application process can discourage top candidates from applying or completing their applications.

- **Minimize Unnecessary Steps:** Streamline your application forms to only ask for the most essential information. Eliminate steps that you don't find useful and avoid having candidates go through tedious processes like answering the same question multiple times.
- **Keep it User-Friendly:** Ensure the application process is mobile-friendly and accessible on all devices. A complex or lengthy application form can lead to drop-offs, so make the process as simple as possible.
- **Respect the Candidate's Time:** Make sure candidates understand the time commitment upfront and keep the process as efficient as possible. If you need any additional information or documentation, make it clear why it's necessary.



3. Timely, Direct Communication

One of the most common complaints from candidates is a lack of communication during the hiring process. Being transparent and timely in your interactions can create a better candidate experience and leave a positive impression.

- **Acknowledge Applications:** Always follow up when you've received a candidate's application, resume, or other documents. An acknowledgment email assures candidates that their application was submitted successfully and is being reviewed.
- **Set Clear Expectations:** Communicate expected timelines clearly so candidates know when they can expect to hear back. If there are delays, be honest and keep candidates informed rather than leaving them in the dark.
- **Be Transparent About Next Steps:** When you move candidates through the hiring process, clearly explain the steps that follow. Let candidates know when they can expect to hear from you, what the next steps are, and how long the decision-making process will take.

4. Streamline the Interview Process

The interview process is more than a chance to assess a potential employee's fit – it's an opportunity to give candidates a clear sense of your company's culture and values.

- **Focus on Meaningful Questions:** Use your interview time wisely. Ask questions that will give you deep insights into the candidate's skills, work ethic, and cultural fit. Avoid overly generic or irrelevant questions.
- **Give Candidates Time to Ask Questions:** Interviews are a two-way street. Give the candidate enough time to ask questions about the role, your company, and your expectations. Expecting these questions and answering them thoughtfully is essential to creating a positive experience.
- **Avoid Unnecessary Rounds:** Scheduling excessive interviews can frustrate candidates or drag out the process. If multiple interviews are necessary, make sure each one has a purpose – and try to schedule them in close succession to keep the momentum going. Long delays between interviews can make candidates lose interest or feel they're being dragged through an endless process.





5. Properly Showcase and Sell Your Company

Throughout the candidate experience, it's critical you show why your company is the right fit.

- **Highlight Your Company Culture:** Share what makes your company unique. Discuss your values, mission, and how your team collaborates. Candidates want to know they'll be joining a company where they fit in and can thrive.
- **Talk About Benefits and Perks:** Be sure to talk about benefits like health insurance, retirement plans, vacation time, and remote work options. If your company offers unique perks like wellness programs, flexible hours, or team-building activities, you should mention those, too.
- **Emphasize Growth Opportunities:** Passive candidates are often enticed by roles that will challenge them and help them grow. Provide information about professional development opportunities, mentorship programs, or career advancement paths within the company.
- **Be Honest About Expectations:** The candidate should understand what's expected of them in the role and how performance is measured. Transparency here will help set expectations and avoid future misunderstandings.

6. Don't Forget Onboarding

The candidate experience doesn't end once you've made the hire. Think of onboarding as the cherry on top that pulls the entire experience together.

- **Create a Welcoming Environment:** Make your new hire feel welcome from day one. Ensure their workspace, equipment, and access to necessary tools and resources are ready in advance.
- **Establish a Clear Onboarding Schedule:** Plan an onboarding schedule that includes introductions, training sessions, and any necessary compliance activities. Having a clear plan will help new hires feel organized and prepared.
- **Provide Ongoing Support:** During the first few weeks, check in regularly to ensure your new employee has everything they need to succeed. This could include one-on-one feedback sessions, mentorships, or additional resources to help them acclimate.
- **Foster a Sense of Belonging:** Introduce your new hire to the team and make sure they feel connected to their colleagues. Encouraging team bonding and providing a social element to the onboarding process can improve employee retention.

Following these steps to create a streamlined, transparent, and welcoming candidate experience will make your company more attractive to top talent and ensure new hires start their journey with a positive impression and a strong foundation for success.

Leveraging Partnerships to Create a Great Candidate Experience

Candidate experience can make or break your talent acquisition efforts and, as we previously mentioned, requires a significant amount of time and effort. That investment and commitment can sometimes be overwhelming for internal talent teams.

If you know your internal team doesn't have the resources necessary to provide an exceptional candidate experience, or even if you're unsure, it's best to take advantage of external talent acquisition solutions. Working with outside experts can boost your talent efforts – but only if it's the right fit.

Let a Trusted, Knowledgeable Partner Optimize Your Candidate Experience

Having an experienced partner who is skilled in talent acquisition and candidate experience can help ensure your hiring process is smooth, efficient, and effective. The **right partner will know exactly what candidates want** and **how to position your company** as an ideal employer.

However, having the wrong partner can cause long-term damage to your brand and cost you top talent. It's important to evaluate your partners carefully to ensure they align with your goals and can deliver the best possible results.

Consider the following when evaluating your partners:

- **How are they positioning your company and the opportunity in the marketplace?**
A skilled partner knows how to highlight your company's strengths and tailor messaging to appeal to the right candidates.
- **What metrics are they tracking with the search?**
Are they monitoring key performance indicators (KPIs) that align with your recruitment goals, such as candidate engagement, time-to-hire, and quality of hire?
- **What marketplace insights can they provide?**
A knowledgeable partner should offer insights into current trends, salary benchmarks, and competitor activity, helping you stay competitive and relevant in the talent market.

Choosing the right partner will help you optimize your candidate experience, enhance your recruitment efforts, and attract top talent to your organization.

Why Choose Requisite Talent Partners?

At Requisite Talent Partners, we specialize in helping organizations find the right talent to drive success. With a strong network of passive candidates and a deep understanding of the talent landscape, we know what it takes to reach the right candidates and how to engage with them.

Why Work With Us?

— Knowledge

Requisite Talent Partners knows what candidates want and how to position your organization to make it as attractive as possible to talent.

— Wide Talent Pool

We have a deep talent network that's full of passive job seekers who are open to hearing about the right opportunities.

— Enhanced Candidate Experience

We offer expert guidance on improving your candidate experience to attract top talent, enhance your brand, and win over passive candidates.

— Experience

We have a combined 40+ years of experience forging powerful, long-lasting connections between talent and clients.

— Flexibility

Requisite Talent Partners offers a wide range of custom talent solutions that can scale and flex to meet your needs as they change.

— Bottom Line

We can help you break through your talent ceiling by finding the right candidate to move your organization forward.

Ready to Reach Your Full Potential?

Get in touch with our team: [Contact Us | Requisite Talent Partners](#)