Hiring and Retention Tips for 2022

By Mike "Batman" Cohen

As we move into 2022, we all understand that things have changed for everyone, everywhere. And just as our personal and professional lives have changed, so must our approach to hiring and retention.

Authenticity

Let's first define *authenticity* for the sake of this discussion. Webster's dictionary defines it as *true to one's own personality, spirit, or character.* What does this have to do with hiring talent in 2022? Everything. We are living in a world where communication is primarily digital, and the job market is the hottest we have seen in almost 15 years.
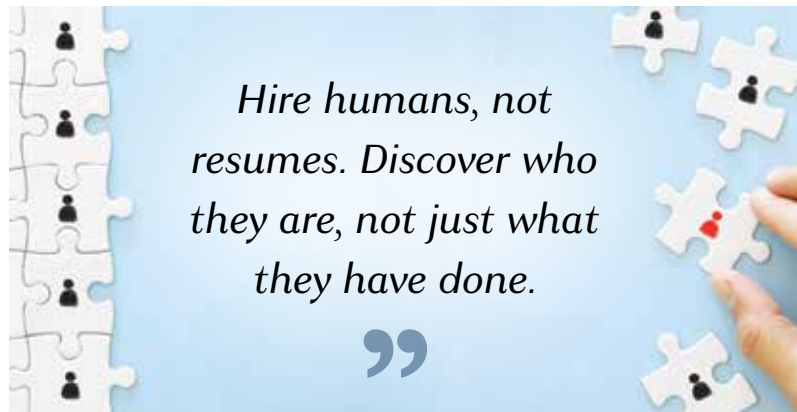
The days of talking about the company's culture, the family-like organization, and cool ping pong tables and foosball are gone. That is not what is essential to most job-seekers today. Over-used terms like *good culture* or *family-like* have no meaning in today's environment. What does ring true? Knowing the people that the candidate will be working with; *truly* knowing. Not the professional version of someone, but the actual, true-to-form, human behind the job title. Who you are as a person outside of work is now just as important as who you are in the workspace. The days of "keep your home life at home" are gone. Embrace who you are and what you bring to your organization. Remember, you work at the company, meaning that you make up a piece of the corporate culture. Be yourself. Let the candidate be themselves. And both of you decide whether it makes sense to commit to one another.

Humans vs. Skillsets

Next, it is important to define to what degree you hire humans, skillsets, or a combination of the two. Many of us are used to hiring people because of their skills. It makes sense on the surface, right? Yes, it does, but only on the surface.

Find ways to connect with your candidates on a human or personal level – of course, they need to know how to do the job, but what do you think has a more significant impact on your organization: someone who needs a little training on the skills involved in the job, or someone who does not fit in or feel at home? You can usually train people to do a job; you cannot train people to feel like part of a team, as in belonging and connecting to the group. A great attitude that promotes synergy in a team always has more impact than someone who has good skills. A positive attitude, team player, and generally enjoyable person can make everyone more productive and efficient. A skillful employee will add their skills to the production.

Ask yourself, "out of 100%, how important is the candidate's skill set versus their ability to join as an integral part of your culture?" If someone adding to your culture is important at all to you or the organization, then answer a follow-up question, "what are you doing in your interview process to assess this?" Hire humans, not resumes. Discover who they are, not just what they have done.

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> "

Building Work Relationships:
https://bit.ly/3eW7ocu

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Self-Complexity Theory

The third tip for 2022 revolves around a psychological study called the *Self-Complexity Theory*. The self-complexity theory says that we all have multiple aspects to our self-representation, or how we view ourselves in our own minds. Those aspects include context-dependent social roles, activities, goals, and relationships.

(Visit **https://bit.ly/3G6Pv6U** for more information.)

The general idea is that, as technology and social media increase, the world becomes smaller. Not just externally, but internally as well, which means that the areas of our lives that used to be distinctly separate ("work-life at work, home-life at home," etc.) are now all a part of the same cosmosphere. As we continue to evolve socially and professionally, we must allow people to blend the different aspects of their lives. It is okay to share something difficult you are going through in your personal life with your colleagues. Relating to *authenticity* (above), we need people to be true to themselves and act with integrity, compassion, and empathy. The only way to do that is to realize we are the same person at work, with our families, and with our friends. No need to be different people.

Working From Home and Work Schedule

While exclusive from one another, the following two tips do go hand-in-hand. They are *working from home* and what a *work schedule* looks like. Let's touch on the big one first–working from home. Between the pandemic affecting people's ability to work in an office and the new year (2022), it is time to let go of the mantra that *we have to be face-to-face.* If you think that being face-to-face helps build camaraderie and relationships with each other, there is a lot of information out there to the contrary (*see the sidebar for a few resources*).

If you think that face-to-face is better for collaboration, again – nope. Here are two quick tests to drive this home for your organization.

First Test – the Data

How much productivity did you lose between 2020 and 2021 as it relates to collaboration?

There are only 3 answers:

1) Based on "X" data, we lost "Y" productivity.
2) We did not lose any productivity based on "X" data (either remained flat or increased productivity).
3) Or, probably for many companies/readers: We have no data, but we have always worked face-to-face, so we should keep doing that because we know it works. Not to be "that guy," but with that logic, we would still be looking for ways to make horses faster. You ride your horse. I will drive my car. Let's see who gets there first.

Second Test – The People

Ready for this? Crazy idea here…. Ask your employees what they want. They are the ones you worry about collaborating with, so ask them.

Easy tip: Unless you have a job that <u>requires</u> you to be on-site for something (medical research, chemical engineering, construction, etc.), let people work from home if they want to.

As far as the *work schedule* goes – keep it simple. The idea of 40 hours a week is dead. It is an irrelevant number. Why not 42 hours? Why not 37 hours? Because 8 hours is ⅓ of the 24 hours in a day and we should be working ⅓ of the workweek? And why the 9:00 to 5:00 routine? This is where we are heading (some readers will not like this but take a deep breath because you do not have a choice) – how many hours people work and the specific hours when they are working do NOT matter.

People have a job. They have things to do. They have to get their job done. And they have to attend meetings when it is necessary. Everything else is moot. Expectations: #1 – be in the meetings you need to attend, and #2 – get your job done when it is due.

Let people work when they need/want to, and you will get more and higher quality work from all of your colleagues.

Metrics

Metrics is a big one, so pay attention. As leaders, it is vitally important to keep track of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to understand the pulse of the state of your business/team. It is also essential to hold your team accountable to particular metrics as leaders. However, these things should <u>not</u> be the same. While KPIs are a metric, they are treated differently for this conversation. Just as we still call a square a square, not a rectangle (yes, they are the same, but we still refer to them differently), there is a reason for that.

KPIs – get the pulse of where things are at with your business. Are you on target to hit your goals? What numbers are not on target? What part of the pipeline is struggling? All super important, but none tells the story of WHY these particular indicators are happening. It is like an EKG monitor; the monitor rapidly speeding up tells you there is a problem, but not what is wrong. Super important to monitor the EKG, but when you see it start to increase rapidly, it does not tell you what you have to do to fix it; it just tells you where you need to look. That is also true for KPIs. Metrics are the controllable, tactical facets of the jobs you can hold your colleagues/employees to.

A quick tip: most metrics have the word "versus" or a percentage sign in them. Metrics should talk about the efficacy/efficiency of the work being done, not the quantity. Great example: The author is a recruiter. Many companies look at a recruiter's performance and

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hold them to "metrics" like Messages Sent, Candidate Submissions, or Interviews Set Up. Seems pretty reasonable on the surface, but those are KPIs, not metrics. How do we know? Because if Recruiter A sent 200 messages this week and Recruiter B sent 50 messages this week – which is better? Naturally, you would want to say Recruiter A, right? But what if Recruiter A had a 10% response rate, and Recruiter B had a 50% response rate? (20 responses versus 25 responses, respectively). Who is doing better? Recruiter B would be, in this example, because they received more responses with fewer messages (more output with less input).

If that is too confusing or in the weeds, look at it this way: KPIs are used to see how much is being done and if little is being done to hit targets. Metrics are used to see why those numbers are not being hit and if they can be optimized. KPIs tell you where to look. Metrics tell you the story.

If you hold people accountable to KPIs, they will work hard enough to hit the numbers, but never harder because there is no reason to. Take the idea of someone being paid hourly. What is their motivation if they can do a 40-hour job in 20 hours? If they do it in 20 hours, they get paid half as much! So they want to take up the time and do the minimum required of them because there is no other incentive.

If you hold people accountable to metrics, their goal becomes to work as smart as possible to reduce the amount of work they have to do to generate the output they need to get. Once they optimize the efficiency, incentivizing them to "work harder" becomes straightforward.

Hopefully, this helps give some perspective on where professional industries worldwide are heading as we progress technologically and socially together into the future.▪

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