RecruitCONSULT!
LEADERSHIP

The Corporate Talent Acquisition Leader's Field Book

Jeremy M. Eskenazi

STAR
STRATEGIC TALENT ACQUISITION ROUNDTABLE
PRESS

Copyright © 2011 Jeremy M. Eskenazi
All rights reserved.
ISBN: 0615487408
ISBN 13: 9780615487403
Library of Congress Control Number: 2011907636
STARoundtable Press, Long Beach, CA

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means including information storage and retrieval systems, without permission in writing from the author. The only exception is by a reviewer, who may quote short excerpts in a published review.

The information presented herein represents the views of the author as of the date of publication. This book is presented for informational purposes only. Due to the rate at which conditions change, the author reserves the right to alter and update his opinions at any time. While every attempt has been made to verify the information in this book, the author does not assume any responsibility for errors, inaccuracies, or omissions.

Contents

About the Author v
Acknowledgments vii
Preface ix
Introduction xi
The RecruitCONSULT Staffing Organization Maturity Model xiii

Chapter 1: Workforce Planning 1
Benefits of Workforce Planning 2
Analytic Workforce Planning 3
Translating Data Into Strategy 7
Developing Staffing Strategies 10
Case Studies 13

Chapter 2: Metrics and Economics 17
Practical Metrics 20
Funding the Staffing Function 23
Conclusion 27

Chapter 3: Building the Consultative Staffing Team 29
Talent Acquisition Skill Sets 30
Focus on Unique Skills, And a Word About Outsourcing 34
Structuring the Staffing Operation 39
Consultative Staffing Organization Structural Models 41
Recruiter Management 46
What Do the Best Staffing Relationship Managers Do? 49
Creating the RecruitCONSULT! Culture 50
Conclusion 51

Chapter 4: Leading a Proactive Staffing Function 53
The Balance Between Active and Passive Recruiting 54
Low Cost/No Cost Recruiting and Staffing Techniques 58
Mistakes to Avoid 63
Conclusion 63

Chapter 5: Organizational Politics 65
Manage Your Staffing Team's Internal Brand 73
The True Grit Between HR Generalists And Recruiters 77
Conclusion 84

Chapter 6: The Power of Relationships 85
Build Relationships With *All* Candidates 86
Proactive Relationship Building 89
Love Actually: The True Value Of Third-Party Recruiter Relationships 93
Interviewing Stories and What We Learn From Them 99
The Candidates' Perspective 104
Managing Your Employer Brand 109
Case Study: Idealab 111
Conclusion 113

Chapter 7: Change Management 115
When SARAH Meets SALY 116
Real Upside From An Inglorious Downturn 119
Change Management: Individual vs. Organizational 123
Change Plan Case Study: Trouble in Hollywood 125
Conclusion 127

Chapter 8: Business Is Global—Recruiting Is Local 129
When In Rome, Recruit Like the Romans Do 130
Historical Background of European Corporate Recruiting 132
Challenges to Staffing in the New Europe 136
Customized Strategies for Different Regions 142
Conclusion 146

Conclusion 149

Preface

When I was the head of Staffing at a large global media company, I noticed our use of third-party search firms was completely inconsistent throughout the company. It was driven by cronyism and individual relationships between the hiring managers and external Recruiters.

While attending a conference, I saw a presentation on a "preferred provider relationship" where the Staffing group used a consultant to help structure the arrangements. I was reluctant to use a consultant because, after all, wasn't that my job? But after speaking with this particular consultant, I realized he knew more than I did. I also realized that the culture shift I was shooting for was big enough (as were the cost savings) that I needed help. And if it worked, regardless of whether I used a consultant or not, we would all look good.

I lobbied my boss to spend a substantial amount of money to hire the consultant. I was met with some conflict internally, but I was willing to defend my decision to those voicing their doubts—no matter how loudly they cried. My credibility was at stake, but I believed in the idea, and this was a bet I was willing to take. I had pushed in my entire stack of chips.

My gamble worked. The consultant was worth every penny, and the experience was a highlight of my career. I can actually say that for a time, I changed the culture of a company. I stepped up and made my impact just as other senior leaders in the organization had.

The question is, when good things happen in Staffing/HR within organizations, why is it left to others, like consultants (i.e., me), to write this book?

Because we as Staffing Leaders don't always think we're legit. Because we don't have the confidence to let things go. But because our profession needs it, we do need to share what works with other Staffing professionals and share it in the right way.

For me, one of the wrong ways is when successful HR execs talk about what worked for them as "best practices." Let's get something straight. There are no best practices. To say something is a best practice assumes that what works in one environment will work in all others, which we know isn't true. "Success practices" are those approaches that have worked for one company and may or may not work for another.

I think it's important to communicate your successes—what you're doing that's working. There's some reticence in this area because of the war for talent. But the type of content in this book can't just be left up to the consultants. Time is a rare commodity, and you, the HR/Staffing professionals, are on the front lines, watching and urging innovation at every turn. Communicating what you're doing can help others.

Those in more established administrative roles, such as marketing, share information because they have confidence and an easy camaraderie that allows them to let things go. We need to have equal confidence in our roles, our profession. We need to stop the negativity and the self-flagellation. We *aren't* broken and we *are* legit. At the end of the day, companies and businesses are and always have been about people. Any decent leader will tell you that. Thus, we are the keys to the future. We need to believe that, in our bones, we can let things go and know it will help, not hurt, us. We need to have pride in the HR/Staffing profession!

—Jeremy Eskenazi

Introduction

Within companies, corporate Staffing has historically been seen as transactional, administrative, and sometimes less effective than external sources such as third-party search firms and agencies—"headhunters"—in attracting and managing talent.

Over the last fifteen to twenty years, that has changed immensely because of the professionalization of corporate Talent Acquisition. By the way, what do we call ourselves? There are so many different descriptors we use to define our profession: Recruiting, Staffing, Talent Acquisition, Employment, just to name a few. For the purposes of this book, I have chosen to use the word "Staffing" because it is a holistic term that means "any planned movement of talent in, out, up, down, and across an organization." This means that while many people in our profession like to use the term "Recruiting" to describe their title or team, Recruiting as a function really only means "attracting and hiring outside talent into the organization." Clearly we do much more than that.

There have been immense changes in the way the profession seeks talent through the use of electronic and social media. In the past, they relied on the passive Recruiting methods of placing advertising and waiting for the resumes or CVs to arrive and then administering the assessment of candidates and moving them through the process. Today, many organizations have built sophisticated Recruiting and Staffing organizations that leverage significant technology, tools, and Recruiting techniques to hire top talent into their organizations.

However, the role of the *leader* of these functions has been either slow to change or not sophisticated enough to really add value. Many leaders are placed in their roles simply because they were great Recruiters or individual practitioners. Like promoting a sales manager simply because he or she is a great salesperson, this often makes for bad leadership. Just because

you may have been great at Recruiting doesn't mean you can be great at leading Recruiters.

The job of Staffing Leader has gotten significantly more complicated with the advent of so manyRecruiting tools available on the market today—applicant and talent management technology, social media, online databases, online job marketing and job boards, and more—as well as the globalization of many large companies. Leaders are expected to know how to lead a Staffing function across vast and decentralized global enterprises. Also, organizations expect much more of administrators today; they expect true Talent Acquisition strategists who can really drive competitive value for the organization and win through talent.

In many developed economies of the world, professionals are thought-centric—we no longer *make* things; we *think* things. So talent is even more important to organizations, and the role of the Staffing Leader is critical.

To help move the Talent Management profession forward, this book will discuss the important issues facing our industry, including:

- Workforce planning—The concept of strategic workforce planning as a blueprint for future development of Staffing strategies and organizational structures.

- Metrics and economics of the internal Staffing organization—How to fund and pay for the resources for Staffing and Recruiting inside an organization, as well as how to develop and design metrics to measure success and to adjust where necessary.

- Organizing, leading, and managing a consultative Staffing team—How to find Recruiting and Staffing professionals and tips on how to organize the Staffing function, as well as tips on leading and motivating team members in a consultative Staffing environment.

- Leading a proactive Staffing function that *actually Recruits*, or "the RecruitCONSULT philosophy"—The philosophy of "Recruiting" (attracting and finding) top talent to an organization. There are so many Recruiting teams that passively post and pray. Active Recruiting is actively seeking out candidates by leveraging resume/

CV databases, performing web search, engaging social networks, using good old-fashioned direct sourcing/cold calling, and pursuing other headhunting activities.

- Organizational politics for the Staffing Leader—The reality of the role of a corporate Staffing Leader in what may be the most difficult part of the job: navigating organizational politics.

- The power of relationships inside and outside the organization—A discussion on the power of relationships as a key element of success for corporate Staffing Leaders (both internally as well as externally) as well as dealing with third-party resources (such as search firms and agencies), and other HR teams.

- Change management—A discussion on managing and leading through change in a corporate Staffing environment.

Leadership is global, but Recruiting is local—how do leaders leverage their resources in a global environment, and what are the unique issues in Recruiting across a global footprint?

The RecruitCONSULT Staffing Organization Maturity Model

Before we begin our journey, I would like to share and discuss the RecruitCONSULT Staffing Organization Maturity Model, which charts the four general stages of development of an organization's Talent Recruitment function. I will show the costs of the earlier stages and the increasing benefits as the organization moves from Stage I (hit-or-miss decentralized Recruiting) to Stage IV, which is planned and profitable strategic Recruiting.

Stage I: Decentralized Recruiting. The most inefficient operational model. Individuals and business units Recruit independently, following a

generic process that is loosely defined and without structure. There is a reliance on passive Recruiting (where we are passive and the candidates are active).

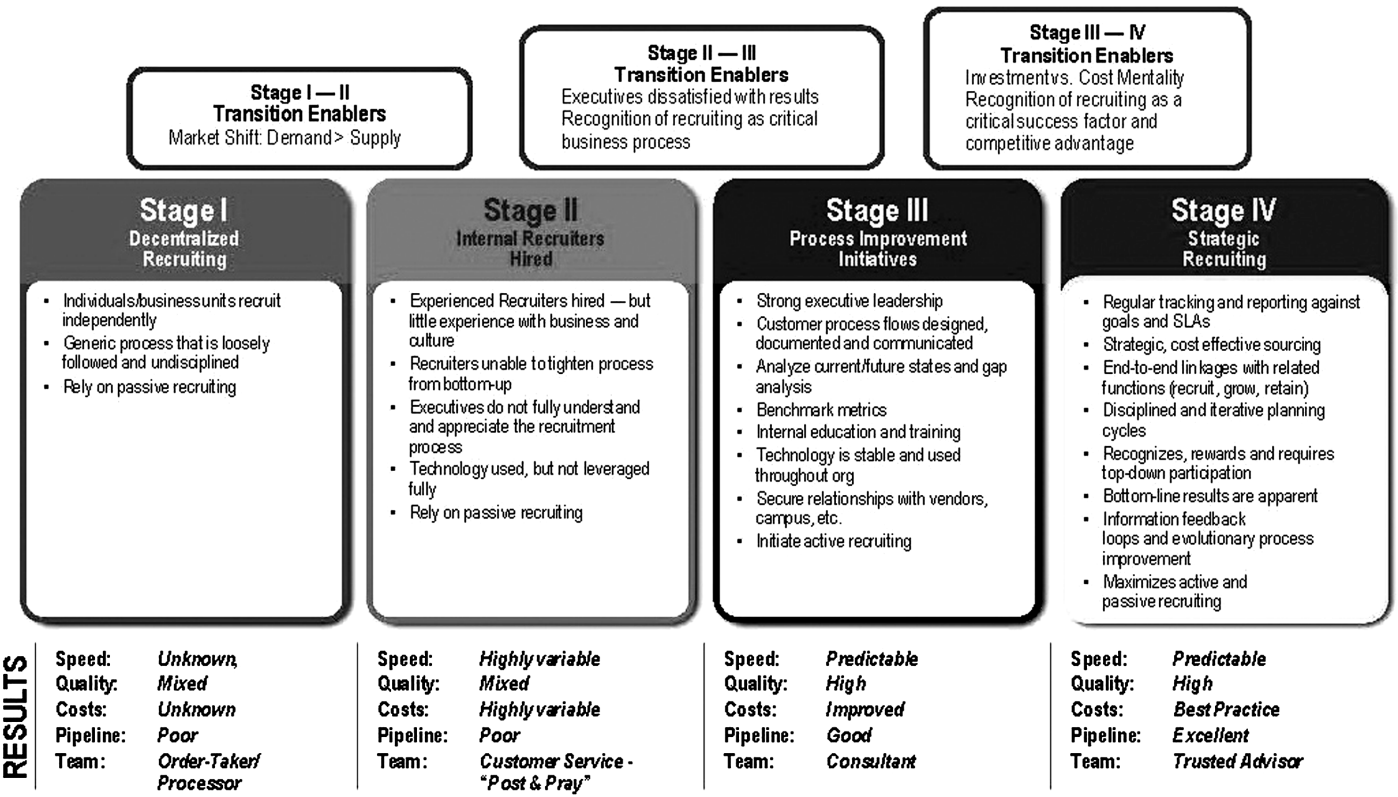
Stage II: Internal Recruiters Hired. Experienced Recruiters are brought on board, but they have little experience with our business and culture. Because of a lack of structure, Recruiters are unable to tighten the process from the bottom up. Executives who could provide guidance do not fully understand or appreciate the Recruitment process. Technology is used but not leveraged fully. There is continued reliance on passive Recruiting.

Stage III: Process Improvement Initiatives. Strong executive leadership results in movement toward professionalization and investment. Customer process flows are designed, documented, and communicated. Internal education and training is put into place. Recruiters analyze current and future states and gap analysis, and they benchmark metrics. Technology is stable and used effectively throughout the organization. Secure relationships are created with vendors, campuses, and others. Active Recruiting is initiated (we actively seek candidates, who themselves may be passive).

Stage IV: Strategic Staffing. This is where every organization needs to be. Top-down participation is recognized and rewarded. Bottom-line results are apparent in disciplined and iterative planning cycles. There are both strategic, cost-effective sourcing and end-to-end linkages with related HR functions (Recruit, grow, retain). There is regular tracking and reporting against goals and service level agreements (SLAs). Information feedback loops and evolutionary process improvement keep the program moving forward. A mix of active and passive Recruiting maximizes return on investment.

In the chart below, I discuss the *transition enablers* with each stage that need to be in place for the organization to move up from its current stage to the next and ultimately to Stage IV: Strategic Staffing.

RecruitCONSULT! Staffing Organization Maturity Model



I bring these concepts together in a practical, down-to-earth field guide that incorporates the stories and authentically direct language style that I have used in my many articles over the years for *ERE.net*, *The Journal of Corporate Recruiting Leadership* (http://www.crljournal.com) and our own blog, "Insights from the Riviera" (http://rivieraadvisors.com/blog/).

As a new or experienced Staffing Leader, you can leverage these concepts and practices immediately into your organization.

Chapter 1: Workforce Planning

If professionals in the Staffing profession could predict what positions, roles, functions, and skills would be needed by organizations in the future, could they be more successful? The answer is absolutely.

Why then do many Staffing professionals feel as if they are always operating in a reactive mode? Usually the reason is that true workforce planning is not being accomplished *inside* the organization.

What is workforce planning? Workforce planning is the process of assessing workforce content and composition to respond to future business needs. It is the key to strategic Staffing and Recruiting.

Simplified, workforce planning is a systematic process to analyze the gap between what organizational talent a business has and what it needs in the future. Often workforce planning adds an additional important component: an assessment and plan for addressing the gaps that were identified.

Organizational success depends on having the right employees with the right competencies at the right time. Workforce planning provides managers the means of identifying the competencies workers need in the present and in the future and then selecting and developing workers with those competencies.

Instead of starting over each time they get a requisition or a request to fill a job, Staffing professionals using workforce planning will have already developed plans and sourcing for their needs.

Some components of workforce planning, such as workforce demographics, retirement projections, and succession planning, are familiar to managers. Workforce planning provides focus to these components and more refined information on changes to anticipate, the competencies that retirements and other uncontrollable actions will take from the workforce,

and key positions to fill. This in turn allows managers to plan replacements and changes in workforce competencies.

To most Staffing professionals, this whole idea sounds great, but the reality is that many will question why a Recruiting professional should spend time and energy on developing plans when the common view is that Recruiting is *reactive*. If change is constant in our world, why bother making long-range Recruitment plans?

Benefits of Workforce Planning

The why of workforce planning is grounded in the benefits to managers and the planning and strategy cycles of the business as a whole. Workforce planning provides managers with a strategy for making human resource decisions. It allows them to *anticipate* change rather than being surprised by events and to provide strategic methods for addressing present and anticipated workforce issues.

Experience has taught us that the costs associated with planning are more than offset by the savings incurred from hiring the best possible person for a position. The resulting benefits of lower employee turnover, higher productivity, and the creation of an effective internal succession pipeline far outweigh the initial investment. Here are a few of the benefits of workforce planning:

- It lowers the cost of unplanned Recruiting and boosts a company's profitability through improved productivity.

- Shifts in the labor market make planning for workforce needs essential; organizations can no longer afford to accept short-term solutions and then be forced to respond when conditions change.

- The labor pool does not dynamically expand in direct correlation to most companies' talent needs. For example, while there may be a large number of workers who have been affected by layoffs, organizations may be seeking workers with specific skills that are not readily available.

- Companies in a growth mode are increasingly challenged to acquire critical talent required to achieve business objectives over the long term but with specific milestones in the short term.

- Workforce planning enables *relationship* Recruitment rather than *incident* Recruitment. That is, you can understand what specific types of people, competencies, and skills you will need in the future and can develop relationships with sources of that talent well before you have to fill a role.

- HR and Staffing professionals are viewed more as strategic business partners by the businesses they support.

- Shifting from a short-term transactional mode to a consultative model provides greater breadth and depth of Staffing management and long-term improvement to an organization's bottom line.

- New business developments and changes are more easily incorporated, and priorities are adjusted on the basis of collaboration with the business.

As a Staffing professional, if you lead or participate in a workforce planning initiative, you will be placed squarely into the strategic business planning process for your organization. You can align your daily Recruiting tasks to the strategy the business will be using (learned through your workforce planning). For Staffing professionals, as well as generalist human resource professionals who have responsibilities for Recruiting, I have identified a few great reasons to do workforce planning.

Analytic Workforce Planning

Many Staffing professionals like the idea of workforce planning, but often it gets pushed aside in favor of more reactive work (like filling requisitions). Few really understand how to "do" workforce planning.

Whole books have been written on workforce planning. This chapter is solely meant as an introduction to the concept. Hopefully it will create interest and curiosity within your own organization to learn more.

The analytic workforce planning process is really a process of coordination. Often the single most daunting task is getting the data necessary to analyze the workforce. To gather the data, the solution is straightforward: you interview managers of individual workgroups inside your organization, and then you consolidate and analyze that data. You'll create a set of standard questions to ask each manager.

Here are a few key components in workforce planning:

Current Workforce Supply Assessment. Take a look at the competencies of the organization's current employees to achieve business objectives.

Future Workforce Supply Assessment. Review your current supply and add in any known variables (prior demand, known openings, attrition, performance review data) and unknown variables using your past experience, or industry trends (transfers, terminations, competitive factors).

Demand Forecast. Determine what competencies or employees will be required to achieve business objectives for a specified time in the future.

Gap Review. The gap is a comparison of current and future supply to demand forecasts. Gaps can be filled by transfers, external talent acquisitions, outsourcing, or contracting.

Here are some specific actions you should take if you are going to lead a workforce planning effort:

Planning

Take a look at your organization and break it into chunks. Look at your organizational structure, go down to the most basic workgroup level (such as division, department, or team), and determine who the leaders are. You'll then need to create a list of standard questions to ask them about their business and their workgroup. Here are some examples of questions to ask:

- What are the key business goals and objectives for the next year? Two years?

- What is our competitive environment like, and how will it impact your ability to meet these goals and objectives?

- What are the critical processes that are needed to meet those goals? What are the key success factors for achieving future outcomes?

- What are the key work activities associated with these success factors?

- What are the barriers to optimal performance of the work activities?

- What talent pools can affect those barriers?

- What features of your current talent pool may impact your ability to achieve success in the future?

- What people capabilities are needed to deliver on those critical processes?

- What are the most critical people issues (including availability of the skills you need and the cost of these skills) you currently face?

- What do you think the most critical people issues will be in one to two years?

- Which positions and capabilities are most critical to your business?

Prepare Workgroup Leaders

Make sure you prepare the managers you'll be interviewing. You may want to call, visit, or send an e-mail and let them know the purpose of the interview you'll be having with them. Perhaps you can even send them some of the sample questions you'll be asking them in your interview. You

will also want to gather a list of all the employees in each workgroup and bring that to your interview with each workgroup manager.

Conduct Workgroup Leader Interviews

During your interview you'll want to clearly identify the future business state for the workgroup: what will need to be done in the workgroup in the next one to two years (or longer)? What are the goals and objectives of the workgroup, and more importantly, what skills and competencies will be required of the team? You will then review each of the current employees and assess them based on the skills and competencies needed in the future. This should be a quick assessment. You will then discuss the perceived gaps in the business needs and the competencies of the current workgroup.

Analyze Outcomes and Develop the Demand Analysis

After you gather all of the information from the interviews, you'll want to track what you learned on a simple spreadsheet that will identify what your workgroups told you about what they have, what they will need in the future, and what their future demand requirements will be for talent.

Gap Analysis

You can then review the information you have learned from the exercise and create your assumptions. You can make a good guesstimate of what types of positions, people, and competencies will be needed in the future.

Building Plans

Now you will be able to plan on how gaps will be addressed. Will you "build or buy"—will you develop talent internally or go out and attract new talent with the right skills and competencies you need? You'll now want to plan your execution of the Staffing plans and align the resources you will need.

Translating Data into Strategy

Once you have accomplished the action steps of planning, working with your leadership teams, and analyzing the supply/demand of your talent needs and pools, what are your next steps?

The data gathered from your leadership interviews should provide you with the strategic direction of the business moving forward. Questions that should be answered during these discussions include:

- What is the revenue growth potential? Will this translate into additions to staff or will the current human capital resources be sufficient in current numbers to support this growth strategy?

- How will competitors react to your Staffing needs and how will you be able to differentiate your employment brand succinctly enough to attract the right mix and caliber of talent to meet this need?

- Where can talent be developed from in-house (bench strength) and when will it be necessary to seek such talent and skills from the external environment? What will be the timing of each? It's important to understand the current demographics of the in-house workforce in terms of turnover, projected retirements, and skill sets and competencies both today and in the future to meet these business demands. It's also important to note what the full-time/part-time/contractor mix is in terms of an effective Staffing model.

- Where are the most lucrative yet cost-effective sources for the talent/competencies that will be required? Timing and competitive pressures here need to be considered.

The labor market, both internally and externally, should be reviewed and carefully correlated with the business demands so that the talent pool availability can be adequately assessed. Understanding the components and drivers of the talent pool are critical. Some key questions that will need to be addressed include:

- Will the talent be readily available, or will competition for the skill sets needed be intense?

- What will motivate such a talent pool to join your company or even the industry?

- Are the skills needed readily available, or will there need to be an investment of training and development?

Once you have mapped the business needs to the talent pool analysis you can then begin to build Staffing plans that include Talent Procurement strategies. It is also critical to build in measures of effectiveness for each source that is used to attract the needed talent. These sources can include print or electronic advertising, Recruitment events, employee referrals, image advertising, campuses, trade and industry sources, or even customer referrals of available talent.

Contract and Temporary Labor

One source that should not be overlooked is the contract or temporary ("contingent") labor pool that can be an effective feeder into the regular work force. Frequently this temporary labor pool can be a viable source of talent "audition"—that is, a way for both the employee and employer to determine whether or not the employment experience is a good fit for either party. The trend toward a master/vendor agreement where there is a sole source master provider (with subcontractors managed by the master vendor) for contingent Staffing allows a company to realize cost savings. At the same time they will be able to explore the labor market potential through the outsourced vendor who bears much of the employment burden.

Timelines and Projections

On a spreadsheet where you have captured the organization's needs based on your leadership interviews and analysis of the current and future workforce, you will need to add the talent pool projections and sourcing strategies with appropriate measures incorporated at every stage of execution. It is also important that the appropriate timelines be incorporated both on a short and long term projection.

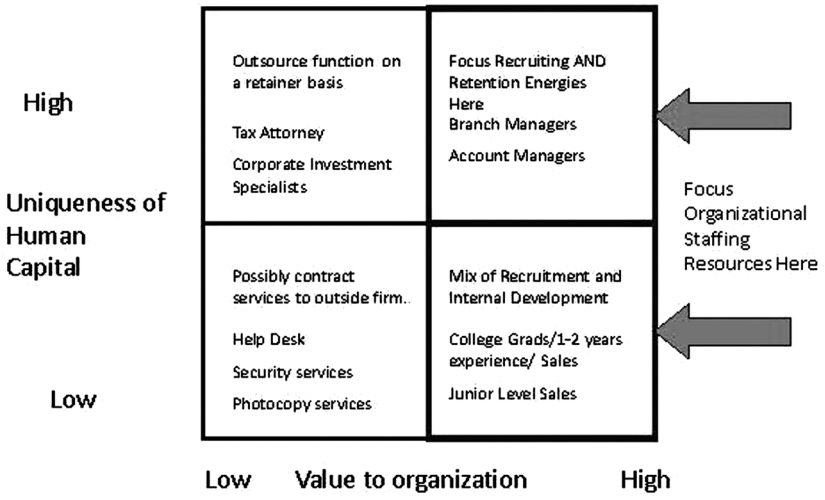
Many organizations that choose Analytic Workforce Planning are highly structured, organized, and numbers driven. The types of organizations that I have seen do the highly analytical workforce planning process really well typically have many of the same types of employees and have solid historical business patterns. For example, airlines know how many flight crews they need and what the business historically was on any given day or season. As a result, they can predict demand effectively. They also have many of the same types of employees (flight attendants, pilots, reservation agents). Other types of organizations that can do this perhaps more effectively than others include utility companies, hotels, cruise lines, theme parks, and retail stores. However, not all organizations want or need this highly structured process. They can accomplish what I call "Anecdotal Workforce Planning."

Instead of a long-term strategy developed and published at the executive level, Anecdotal Workforce Planning is more fluid and responds to changing conditions. For this approach to work, the keys are *communication* and *simplicity*.

- It's all about the dialogue. Break down hiring managers into work units and ask for estimates, hiring plans, budget plans, and other planning tools to be prioritized with managers.

- Keep it simple. Still use a standardized questionnaire as I have already discussed. Workforce planning must be used to drive organizational and sourcing design. Design a template to ask the same questions of managers and conduct interviews. Design a Staffing strategy around the prioritization grid, and then plot the positions/jobs. Review the prioritization grid with the business leaders and hiring managers. Execute using internal and external resources as planned. Review and repeat this process on a regular basis to recalibrate (quarterly is suggested).

Prioritization Grid Example



Adapted from The Human Resource Architecture: Toward a Theory of Human Capital Allocation and Development, Lepak & Snell, Academy of Management Review, 1999.

Developing Staffing Strategies

Now that you understand workforce planning and can map out your own plans using the prioritization grid, a well-developed game plan should be formed. This is what I refer to as a Staffing strategy. The purpose of this strategy is to meet the hiring goals of an organization using business objectives gathered during your workforce planning. You will then come to an agreement that the plan is in fact what the organization needs. By reaching this agreement with business leaders, you have established a map that will provide direction to your team and help drive the organization proactively forward, both from a cost and tactical perspective. The Staffing strategy can also act as the basis for any business cases you may need to develop in order to secure the resources you will need to make the right hires.

No two strategies will be identical, but I've come to see a few execution levels that have been effective. The level at which you devise your Staffing

plan will depend on a number of factors unique to your work environment and needs. These considerations are:

- Timelines of the hires required
- Additional information required in order to meet the business need
- Reputation and credibility of the Staffing team
- How information and progress will be shared and communicated with leaders

With this information and understanding of the more immediate needs you can choose from three levels of Staffing strategies: organization, function, or job._

If the *organization-wide* Staffing strategy is going to be the best fit, it should encompass a minimum of six months and maximum of three years. However, with the change-filled times we are in, eighteen months may be as far out as you can plan and still be realistic about execution. This strategy is often driven by the senior Staffing Leader but could be developed by anyone in HR or Staffing. The objective is to ensure that both replacement and new-hire hiring needs are based on forecasted numbers across organizational units and job families. Keep in mind your sourcing channels when Staffing at the organization level. This could include social media, campus Recruiting, and employer branding initiatives. When working at this level it will also be important to promote your team and its services to your business leaders. Many companies do have the internal talent to work with agency swiftness and professionalism, and one way to demonstrate this is through the development of a charter. The charter should outline the Staffing principles and philosophies of the team to provide context to hiring managers when working on hard-to-fill or critical priority hires. Now the business will better understand why you may request four interviews for some roles and how their patience and faith in the process will yield the best-fit candidates the team needs.

Taking the scope down a level, you may want to work on a *functional* Staffing strategy (or organizational unit). By using your workforce plans and

leveraging the relationships formed when deriving your Staffing strategy, this level is driven by a Staffing Leader in partnership with the department heads, hiring managers, and HR team within a department. There will be very specific resources provided to execute the final plans, which will often involve an element of prioritization. The last ingredient recommended for success at the functional level (but really should be considered regardless) is communication. Being transparent, open, and clear about what you are working on and the progress and status of hires-to-plan will only add to the confidence in the Staffing strategy; try to develop or use existing mechanisms to deliver updates, be it weekly or monthly.

The most micro-level approach is the *job* Staffing strategy (or individual requisition). At this detailed level you are often looking for a specific set of skills and will need to employ a different strategy than at the organizational or functional level. The strategy for job Staffing is unique as it requires consideration for critical skills, where these skills are in the market, and what the "carrot" is for this type of candidate. Developing an action plan is a good idea to help keep focus as you source, evaluate, and sell these candidates to hiring managers. Keeping to your action plan will help with the time-to-fill guideline from your charter. While a Staffing Leader should have an overview of job Staffing strategies, at this level it is often developed and executed by the Recruiter in partnership with the hiring manager (or HR support partner depending on the support model of the organization). Information and updates should be shared regularly, especially once you get into selling the front running candidates.

These three areas seem pretty straightforward in theory, but in the middle of the action you may need additional guidance before deciding which level will be most beneficial. Type of candidate, resourcing, and measurement are often good indicators of which Staffing strategy you will want to proceed with.

It can be a challenge to make the time to create a Staffing strategy, but with the right level, the plan will maximize your continued success. Here are just a few of the many benefits you will realize if you use a Staffing strategy. Once you have been through this process a few times, it will become second nature.

Outcome	Hiring activity plan	Sourcing strategy	Process alignment to hiring goals	Communication plan
Benefits	Show detailed goals and progress for interviews	Source-of-hire targets for each job/category (primary and secondary)	Resource alignment as process established	Identified ownership of updates and schedules
	Map offer presentations and acceptances	Update sourcing strategy to meet role needs	Establish an SLA between the recruiter and hiring manager	Milestone planning and recognition
	Calendar of start dates	Exposure to new areas for potential future sourcing	Focus on efficiency and repeatable process	Matrix of which stakeholders require updates to keep all informed at the right times
	Access to detailed information by category and priority roles	Bring more strategy to the role and move towards a consultative model	Ease of training and onboarding for new staffing team members	Increased credibility and customer-focused staffing

Case Studies

Here's how workforce planning has been implemented in two real organizations.

Company X is a large, U.S.-based, billion-dollar company involved in design, manufacturing, and marketing of specialized medical devices with approximately eight thousand employees worldwide. It was growing by about 5 percent to 7 percent per year in sales when it implemented a workforce planning process.

The company decided it needed to better understand where to leverage the limited resources it had to spend on Staffing costs. After an exhaustive review using some of the same tools described within this book, the company identified that the key strategic areas for the company's future success were research and development engineering and manufacturing engineering. Although other parts of the organization were very important (such as sales, marketing, and support functions), these two areas were most critical.

Instead of building a Staffing function to support all areas of the organization, this company determined they would build a Staffing strategy

that would solely focus on these two critical areas and outsource the rest. Specifically, this company would build a highly specialized Staffing team that would focus only on building deep expertise in research and development engineering and manufacturing engineering.

The company wisely chose to invest in building the right talent for the team with Staffing professionals who had solid expertise in developing and maintaining relationships with this specialized pool of talent.

The remaining Recruiting needs of the organization were managed by a small group of project management-oriented Staffing professionals who managed vendor relationships with search, research, and other outsourced Recruiting professionals. The sole focus of the company's investment was in the critical functions.

Company X's results have been excellent. Since building the specialized Staffing function, the time it takes to fill the most critical roles in the company is very low. This is because the organization is consistently Recruiting and building/maintaining relationships with prospective candidates at all times in the critical functions. They have a solid pipeline of talent in the areas they know they'll need in the future. In addition, manager and candidate satisfaction levels are higher than in the past.

Company X's experience shows that even with limited budgets organizations can shift their focus and spending to cover the most critical areas of need rather than try to do it all.

Company Y, a five-billion-dollar global manufacturer and marketer of industrial and consumer goods, decided it wanted to consolidate all of its internal and external Recruiting processes into a single "shared service" environment. There was significant duplication in the amount of work each of the many separate business units and locations conducted in this area, and the company determined that by consolidating these functions it could significantly improve service and lower costs. In order to do this effectively, the company had to go through a very significant workforce planning process to determine how they would build this new consolidated Staffing organization. The company recognized that if they did not know what the future would look like in the next few years they could not effectively design and build a more streamlined Staffing operation.

Company Y took on the process of workforce planning in a very structured way. They developed a simple workgroup leader interview template and then did a train-the-trainer session for its HR leaders. The HR leaders went out into the businesses and conducted many interviews across the organization. The result was significant trend data from hundreds of managers leading workgroups on talent needs, gaps, and issues. It also provided an anecdotal workforce future forecast. This data was consolidated and provided the blueprint for the new Staffing organization.

The company was able to use the workforce planning data to drive the design of the Staffing function (including how many Recruiters it needed, how much would it outsource/insource, and how much internal development was necessary on the current employee population). With the data in hand, Company Y built its new Staffing function with much more rigor and data-driven decisions and that new function has been successfully operating for several years. An additional benefit of the workforce planning exercise was that the organization development team now also had access to the workforce planning document and has been able to use it in its own development of curriculum, training, and other developmental decisions.

Conclusion

Using the information you gathered through the workforce planning process you will be able to develop a clear sense of the people needs of the organization today and in the future. And by taking the time to collect it, you will have built a relationship with the business that makes you much more of a strategic partner rather than a human resources executor. The information in a workforce plan can then lead you to build broad sourcing and other Staffing programs that address the future needs of the organization while allowing your team to focus on the execution of individual searches.