

THE FOUR P'S OF HIRING: HR TAKES A LESSON FROM MARKETING

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Are you concerned about recruiting and retaining top tourism and hospitality talent?

In my experience as a recruiter, I have found that many companies have great things to offer potential candidates - they just don't promote them well. If you want to win the war for talent, you have to make this fundamental move: get HR to start behaving more like sales and marketing.

Everyone's familiar with the four Ps of marketing--product, place, promotion and price. My advice is to apply those four Ps to attract the fifth P: people. Here's how.

PRODUCT

As an employer, what are you selling? To articulate what makes your organization great and convince candidates to work for you, review the following questions:

What's at the core of your culture? Promote your organizational vision, values and mission by clearly articulating them in your career ads, on the career page of your website and in interviews. What is your employer value proposition? Your EVP is the set of characteristics that make your company a more attractive employer than all the rest. Why would a talented person want to join (and stay with) your organization?

PLACE

You show up for a job interview, the receptionist is too busy to help you, the interviewer is late, unprepared, and takes a call during the interview. Not good. Candidates form their opinion of an employer before, during and after the interview process. To ensure a positive recruitment process, identify candidate touch points during the recruitment process - when you receive a resume, when candidates show up for an interview and any follow-up calls you make after the interview. What impression you are making - what story are you telling about what it's like to work for you?

PROMOTION

Placing classified ads is rarely the best use of your time or money, since passive job seekers (i.e., people who are happily employed) are rarely looking at career ads. I believe finding the right people is about building relationships and a pipeline of qualified candidates. Apply customer relationship marketing techniques to your candidates and stay in touch for future vacancies.

PRICE

When it comes to pay, think "what's in it for the candidates" and sell yourself to them. Develop a clear statement outlining base pay, incentives, benefits, employee recognition, training and career advancement opportunities. And don't forget to describe the culture. Many companies cannot afford to pay the highest base salary, it is important to remember that base pay is rarely the reason good people leave. They leave due to poor leadership, lack of communication, insufficient training and limited career growth opportunities.

By applying the four traditional Ps of marketing to your human-resources strategy, you will soon attract the fifth P: people, your best source of competitive advantage. That said, a word of warning: if you promise applicants something you don't deliver, you will lose them - and their referrals - forever.

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