
White Paper

Candidate Care, The Path to Workforce Excellence

ContractRecruiter.com

Give us a call at (800) 797-6160

The Path to Workforce Excellence

A 3-PART PLAN FOR TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS
BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE INTERVIEW.

Poor Candidate Care is Bad Business

From an HR point of view, it almost seems insulting—or at least silly—to start a publication like this one with an explanation for why your company needs to take great care of its candidates.

Your company's largest asset is its people. Right? Of course.

Hopefully, you'll have no problem convincing the CEO and everyone that works there of this universal truth. If doing so poses a problem, you really should consider moving on.

It's always smart to begin with the problem.

What happens when the company doesn't care? Dissatisfied applicants share their experiences with others and bad news spreads fast. Candidates can, and will, use social media to debase your company.

- You can lose applicants.
- You can lose employees.
- You can lose customers.

The benefits of stellar customer care are compelling.

Why is candidate care such a big deal? Why did you download this piece? Why might you share it with everyone you work with? These are easy questions to answer.

- Candidate care is one of the easiest and least expensive ways to build your brand.
- Candidate quality will rise.
- Referrals will increase.

"Even when a candidate isn't qualified for a position, treating him or her as a customer goes a long way in making sure the experience is a positive one. This is key as a growing percentage of candidates are customers long before they apply. Job seekers are also increasingly social media savvy and won't hesitate to share their experiences about you as a potential employer."

Jessica Miller-Merrell, CEO, Xceptional HR

So what are we talking about here?

In a nutshell, candidate care is a part of the process (perhaps a less tangible part) your company

The Path to Workforce Excellence

A 3-PART PLAN FOR TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS
BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE INTERVIEW.

relies on to grow a staff of productive and valuable employees—to achieve workforce excellence. The process begins with the announcement of a job opening, extends to all stages of the hiring process, and throughout the lifespan of employment.

We're talking about the connection between recruiting talent and corporate marketing—at every level.

Companies that don't get it pay a steep price. Undoubtedly, a competitor will identify the weak link in your chain that is poor candidate care and exploit it.

Is candidate care strictly an HR function?

Definitely not. To believe candidate care begins and ends with HR is dreadfully short-sighted. While you do indeed need to ensure your interviewing and follow-up processes reflect your commitment to a great new hire experience, effective candidate care extends across every aspect of your company.

These are pressing problems.

Recent research from CareerBuilder finds:

- 75% of people who apply for jobs never hear back from the company.
- 22% percent tell others about a poor candidate experience.
- 42% will not consider applying again.

When candidates come to you by way of a recruiting firm and then have poor experiences, you can rest assured the recruiting firm will not be as willing to work with you in the future. This could diminish your access to some of the best talent in your industry.

Common complaints from candidates include:

- The black hole. 29% of applicants say the company did nothing to acknowledge the receipt of their applications.
- Never hearing about a decision. 60% of candidates stated they were never contacted after an interview.
- The position was poorly described. 43% reported discovering the company was offering a completely different position from what was advertised.
- Bad experience. 39% say company reps weren't knowledgeable. 34% said they had a negative view of work experience at the company.

The Path to Workforce Excellence

A 3-PART PLAN FOR TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS
BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE INTERVIEW.

Your candidate care action plan.

Stop wasting the candidate's time

Candidates invest substantial time applying for positions at your company. Show them you appreciate their commitment by:

- Improving candidate service. Place yourself in the shoes of the candidate. Will you waste their time or communicate coldly? Will they suffer from these common contributors to negative experiences?
 - A frustrating interactive voice response menu
 - Overly complicated application processes
 - Unnecessary wait times
 - Cold, impersonal automated emails, questionnaires and rejection letters
- Recruit smart. You need to review and refine the critical requirements for the position and clearly present them in the job description. Understand what it takes to succeed in the position—and not strictly from a skills point of view. Factor in corporate culture. Smart recruiters bring in people based on their resumes.
- Interview smart. Don't waste anyone's time with redundant interview processes and unfocused interviews. Commit to careful pre-screening practices.
- Consider unemployed candidates. A passive candidate is not automatically more desirable than an active candidate. Remember this and hire the applicant most qualified for the job instead of assuming currently employed people are more desirable.
- Move it along. Most candidates feel the process takes too long and it typically does. Refine your processes. Cut the fat. Follow-up promptly. Make every step meaningful and maintain an appropriate pace.

Build relationships with candidates

Recruiting expert James Gilmore, of Strategic Horizons, states that memorability is the most important aspect of a positive candidate experience. You need to establish a positive rapport with your applicant to ensure a memorable encounter.

- Get to know the candidate. Remember, you're looking at more than a job description. Ask questions to help establish if the candidate is a fit within your company's culture.

The Path to Workforce Excellence

A 3-PART PLAN FOR TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS
BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE INTERVIEW.

- Be approachable. Everyone who talks to candidates must be courteous, friendly and capable of answering questions. They should communicate positively and reflect positively on the company.
- Keep your commitments. "We'll let you know" is the call sign of a gutless recruiter. Tell the candidate how you will contact him or her, and then do it. Establish fast and efficient processes designed to acknowledge each step. Templates need not be cold and impersonal.
- Ask for feedback. Ask applicants, both those who will and won't hire, to rate their experience. You'll learn a lot from their answers and they'll appreciate you asked.
- Create ambassadors. Treated with care, job candidates become spokespersons for your company, especially at the executive level. Remember this and act accordingly.

Deliver value

Candidates should feel they received something in return for their investment. Are you delivering something of value to your candidates?

- Provide useful resources.
 - 86% of applicants use your company's website for research before a job interview. Make sure that your career web page is easy to navigate and full of useful information.
 - Examine how you're connecting via social media. 56% of candidates will look for you on Facebook, and 69% will conduct research on LinkedIn. Don't forget to also think about your candidates' social media experiences.
- Offer advice. How many candidates wonder, after they don't get a job, what factors made the interviewer decide against them? Provide them with advice about retooling their resumes, improving their interviewing skills and developing a career strategy.
- Provide referrals. Maybe an applicant isn't right for your company, but you know of another hiring manager elsewhere who is looking for someone similar. Share these opportunities. Your efforts will be appreciated and your network will grow more valuable.
- Thank candidates. Treat a candidate the way that you would want to be treated. Send a personal note or e-mail thanking the person for his or her time. A small thank you token will go a long way to retaining customers and earning applicant loyalty.