



THE 10 STRATEGIES TO ATTRACT TOP TALENT



Introduction

In today's hyper-competitive recruitment markets, hiring the best candidates is sometimes referred to as, "the war for talent!" And it can certainly feel like that at times, as all businesses have one thing in common: the need to recruit and retain the best people.

In all major infrastructure, engineering, and construction sectors (including Government) there are well-documented skill shortages. It has also been a turbulent 18 months, and this has exacerbated these shortages and the demand for top talent for many reasons, including, the lack of access to international talent pools and the pipeline of current, and accelerated, infrastructure projects.

Candidates

When it comes to the candidates, many are risk-averse about moving positions during difficult times, even if they are not completely fulfilled, valuing their job security. Whilst others are seeing opportunities to make good money on short-term contracts.

There is no silver bullet to answer the many questions that arise from how companies recruit and retain top talent, but intangibles can often make the difference. It's a balancing act of alignment, goals, remuneration, project work, advancement, training, fit, and so on. It can be easy to assume that money alone will attract top talent, but that isn't always the case.

The strategies

So, how can businesses attract top talent? To a certain extent, it's subjective – it depends on what a business needs, their leadership, if they can spot and develop talent, what a candidate needs to thrive, and culture. As such companies need to determine and deploy several strategies and tactics in-line with their overall recruitment plan(s).

Since setting up CGC over 10 years ago, we have helped many businesses identify and secure top talent. Of course, there are many ways to do that, however, we have found that largely speaking there are 10 key strategies.

1) Having and communicating a clear vision for the company

For example, you may want to be at the forefront of digital innovation, or customer satisfaction, or specialise in a specific engineering discipline/skill, or you may want to focus on building your brand globally, etc. Whatever this vision is, current and future employees should get excited about it and want to be a part of it.

This may, of course, be polarising for some candidates but it will also be incredibly authentic for others. And they will seek out opportunities to work with their preferred employment brands.

2) Differentiate your employer brand.

Consider what makes your business different and special to staff – current and future – and how you want to be perceived. This can include culture, the way you treat people, or the difference you make in the world.

Whilst this sounds easy it can be difficult and may require working on your brand in different ways and with marketing specialists. Even companies that perform well in this area – like Apple and Google – make a conscious effort to constantly work on their employer brands with internal and external specialists.

3) Being open and honest

A culture of transparency and openness makes staff feel part of the organisation and makes them feel they can raise any issues that may be important to them. Empowering them to talk straight and deal with any issue transparently.

This also means being honest about who you are as a business/brand. As with your vision, this might not be for everyone, however, those aligned to your employer brand values should experience higher levels of engagement. We often see this with top professional services firms, and it's one of the ways they entice top candidates from other sectors.

4) Ensure the remuneration is attractive.

Whilst it's not the only consideration, if you want the best, you need to pay toward the top of your industry scale, or at least better than your competitors.

There are always candidates who display huge amounts of integrity and pay is lower on their priority list. However, we often find that an attractive salary/package will get candidates interested in a role. And it can also be a deciding factor, in our experience when candidates evaluate competing and very similar offers, it can be the package that will push some over the edge.

5) Supporting diversity

Whilst there have been significant improvements within the infrastructure, engineering, and construction sectors – some could suggest there's still a lack of perceived diversity in certain areas. This of course limits us, both in terms of the talent companies are losing out on but also the benefits diversity brings to the industry.

Of course, this is not just a gender issue and relates to all areas of diversity. Businesses are waking up to the need to improve diversity both on and off-site. Far from being a 'nice-to-have', bringing in and promoting diversity can help win more projects and boost capabilities.

6) Being a good corporate citizen

Doing something good in the world has a huge impact on certain talent pools. The rising generation of millennial professionals has already emerged as a force of positive change, both in terms of the companies they work with/for, and who they do business with. The corporations that have recognised this and have authentically woven social responsibility into their businesses stand to benefit the most. In the infrastructure, engineering, and construction sectors this can, of course, relate to projects but it can also go further and encompass giving back days, staff salary sacrifice, LGTB, sponsorships, community outreach, faith-based programs, and so on.

Whilst we're only considering this through the recruitment lens, this can lead to more committed talent and, ultimately, more loyal customers.

7) Build a team of like-minded people.

People who have similar or the same values and principles should be on the same page when it comes to work and projects. Whilst that isn't always the case, high-performing teams will tend to work well together.

It's not uncommon for a team member to sit in on interviews so they can help a candidate get a feel for the team environment, as-well-as providing their opinion on team fit to the hiring manager post-interview.

8) Provide support to achieve goals.

For leaders and people managers, plans will help get the best out of your staff and improve the success rates of departments and the organisation as a whole, keeping high-performing teams/people on track. And for individuals, a plan helps them focus on what they need to do to achieve agreed goals and track how they are performing.

This process can go further than that and also help with training, coaching, and development opportunities. After all, some of the best ways to create high-performing teams are to identify and nurture potential talent early.

Having good career planning and development programs in place can be a key deciding factor for top talent as they'll often have very clear goals of their own that they'll want to achieve.

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9) A genuine work-life balance

In the current climate of working from home, it is increasingly challenging for businesses to ensure employees have a healthy work-life balance. In today's world, work-life balance is more accurately called work-life integration.

High performers will undoubtedly take on more work, so leaders need to manage this to ensure they don't get burnt out, suffer health issues, or feel taken advantage of. This also leads to the final point...

10) Flexible working arrangements

Flexible and remote working is not going anywhere and being able to embrace this will be a big attraction for top talent now and in the future. It helps with providing a genuine work-life balance/integration, diversity, and demonstrates a lot of trust.

Leaders, however, need to carefully consider and manage culture and support, in the context of flexible working. For example, what secondary equipment is required to work from home, is the environment appropriate, what are the oncosts, what support is required, etc.

Conclusion

Attracting top talent to your business is critical in building a cost-effective, efficient, and high-performing team – these candidates, however, are hard to attract and even harder to keep. It requires a subtle mix of alignment, goals, remuneration, project work, advancement, training, fit, and so on. So, business leaders and recruiters must be careful they're hiring the right people for the right reasons, after all just because someone is considered a top talent in one business doesn't mean they are a good fit for another. Whilst there are many strategies to attract top talent, which will depend on an individual business's needs, a multi-prong approach is best.

So, what is your business doing to attract the best fit and high-performing candidates? Print and fill in the below to create an action plan for your business:

1) Communicating a clear vision for the company

| Current activities | What else could you do/do better | Next steps |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| | | |

2) Differentiate your employer brand.

| Current activities | What else could you do/do better | Next steps |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| | | |

3) Being open and honest.

| Current activities | What else could you do/do better | Next steps |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| | | |

4) Ensure the remuneration is attractive.

| Current activities | What else could you do/do better | Next steps |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| | | |

5) Supporting diversity

| Current activities | What else could you do/do better | Next steps |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| | | |

6) Being a good corporate citizen

| Current activities | What else could you do/do better | Next steps |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
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7) Build a team of likeminded people.

| Current activities | What else could you do/do better | Next steps |
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| | | |

8) Provide support to achieve goals.

| Current activities | What else could you do/do better | Next steps |
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9) A genuine work-life balance

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10) Flexible working arrangements

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At CGC Recruitment, our highly-motivated team of experienced consultants specialise in the engineering, construction, and infrastructure sectors. We help our clients throughout Australia deliver major projects by bringing in the best candidates and talent. We also understand the big recruitment issues, and this depth of insight can give both our clients and candidates confidence to make the right decisions.

If you're looking for the right team member, or just want to discuss your current recruitment situation, get in touch with CGC and one of our experienced consultants will be happy to help - [contact us](#).

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