How to Succeed in the War for Talent

By Dan White, President, Strategic Workforce Solutions, AMN Healthcare

Demand for healthcare professionals has changed dramatically in the last few years, and healthcare organizations are challenged as never before. They're dealing with shortages of physicians, nurses and allied professionals as the industry grows rapidly through millions of new patients — thanks to the Affordable Care Act (ACA), a wave of consolidations, an aging population that needs more care, and new services and specialties to accommodate the industry transformation from volume to value.

To fill positions quickly with quality candidates, you have to think about talent — acquiring it and retaining it — in a different way. And you have to be agile, especially if you want to stay competitive.

One way to do that is with an integrated talent model, in which you supplement your recruiting team with an external provider. It's referred to as recruitment process outsourcing (RPO), but I prefer to call it recruitment process *optimization*.

The word outsourcing can conjure images of jobs outsourced to other countries, but that's not what RPO does at all. A healthcare RPO team doesn't have to replace your entire recruitment team but rather works with you to vastly improve your recruiting process.

For an RPO team to effectively partner with a healthcare organization's HR department, it has to learn about the organization's internal recruiting programs and processes, understand its capabilities, and ultimately help it accomplish its goals. The alignment between internal and external teams must be so seamless that job candidates are never aware that they're interfacing with an external recruiter.

An RPO team also brings a combination of clinical expertise, personalized service, and management know-how to help today's healthcare facilities create the workforce solutions needed to succeed in the long term.

One area of expertise is candidate engagement, especially in terms of communication. Millennials are beginning to dominate the workforce, and they are acclimated to texting and social media for communication. To build relationships with this important demographic requires a technology-focused team that's agile enough to quickly adopt and execute the changing tools of social media.

An RPO team can do that. It can also help as healthcare organizations scale up and down, whether you're opening a new clinic or hospital, or filling a seasonal demand, such as a pharmacy during flu season.

A good example of this is a major pharmacy chain that we've worked with, which increases hiring at the end of the year. A few years ago they needed to fill more than a thousand pharmacy technician positions nationwide in a highly competitive environment. An RPO team from AMN Healthcare reduced their time-to-fill-positions by 20% and their cost-per-hire by 25%, while ensuring candidate and hiring manager satisfaction was at an all-time high. And we continue to support them.

Healthcare providers don't need to be expending their energy and resources on the war for talent underway in our industry. Most do not have the expertise or capacity to succeed in this incredibly competitive environment. We do. We use the most advanced tools in the healthcare industry for sourcing, recruitment and onboarding of quality professionals. That way, healthcare providers can concentrate entirely on their patients.

We've earned
The Joint Commission's
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