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"Dear Candidate" approach is impersonal. Articulating the alignment of the candidate's skillset and experience with the organization and its growth plan helps drive ...

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Differentiation. It is the race employers are experiencing to attract and secure optimal talent for their organizations' current and future needs. Exacerbating the challenge brought by today's candidate-driven job market are the following realities:

- Plethora of employment options (e.g., gig economy, traditional roles, consulting, remote)
- Speed of technological advancement is significantly faster than the growth of professionals with the specific expertise and proven experience

- Increase in professionals who care about companies that offer flexible work

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Learn from the competition on your path to being intentional. What are they doing to retain their best employees? Those companies that invest the time to truly engage current and potential employees have a clear competitive advantage that will pay off for years to come. One crucial yet simple step is to encourage internal teams to identify key takeaways for optimizing their talent management and recruitment initiatives.

Proven successful and simple to implement, the following improvements can close your organization's talent gap.

Recruiting

Be as specific as possible when emailing or contacting prospective candidates. The "Dear Candidate" approach is impersonal. Articulating the alignment of the candidate's skillset and experience with the organization and its growth plan helps drive candidate interest and their visualization of fitting well within the company. Additionally, providing a concise job description, versus a four-page list of responsibilities, will prevent the candidate from feeling that the company has unrealistic expectations or does not care about work-life balance. However, the job description must list key qualifications and attributes to ensure it is attracting optimal talent.

Culture

A company that says they invest in their culture and those that do are two very different things. If your organization is one that fosters professional growth as well as personal growth, then you are on the right track. All too often, leaders forget what it is like to be out of the loop on company initiatives. Communication and sometimes over-communication are critical to employees feeling included in company plans and, therefore, invested in the company's success. We all want the type of employees

who strive for excellence and ask for more responsibility. Then, give them a reason to

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Employees want a roadmap for success and to secure an understanding of their fit in the organization's long-term strategy. They want to know what it takes to be successful and have access to leadership curriculum or development programs. Knowing that they can grow within their roles and be promoted into other positions leads to emotionally engaged employees and, therefore, strong retention. Providing coaching is as important as encouraging the opportunity to innovate, excel and, within limits, fail in a safe environment. If we aren't pushing the boundaries of our skillset, then how can we determine opportunities for development?

Process and Technology

Nothing is more frustrating to employees than using dated technology or archaic processes. Employees expect system interfaces that enable self-service. They also want the ability to improve efficiency and conduct meaningful analyses in real time. An investment in new technology will help demonstrate that your company is strategic about its future and the success of its people. Staying abreast of the technology utilized by other successful companies and your industry's upcoming technology will help drive your company's competitive strategy for employees, as well as customers.

Talent management transformation is no longer an option. It is a necessity to compete in today's candidate-centric market. Companies must be magnetic by proactively addressing improvement opportunities for recruitment and retention.

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