

SUMMARY

How to Access High-Quality, Nontraditional Talent Pools

Targeting specific talent pools for recruitment enables employers to screen-in nontraditional candidates and meaningfully expand their potential applicant pool.

WHAT IT IS

Applicant tracking systems can reduce the time recruiters spend finding candidates and, thus, recruitment costs. However, they may weed out many qualified candidates in the process. Targeting specific talent pools for recruitment can offer an alternative for screening-in nontraditional candidates who often turn out to be high-quality employees. Selecting specific talent pools to target, understanding the barriers they face, and designing recruitment programs tailored for them can help companies address their skills gaps, improve diversity, and yield a strong return on investment.

Nontraditional talent pools can be an excellent source of high-quality candidates and an effective means of addressing the post-COVID labor shortage. However, employer hiring practices can inadvertently screen these potential candidates out. One key action employers can take to address this is rewriting their job descriptions to ensure that critical, specific skills (six to eight skills) are outlined clearly while stripping away excess experience or skills requirements. Widening the aperture of filters set in the Applicant Tracking System rather than relying on more narrow proxies can also be an effective way to avoid screening out talent from a targeted pool.

Once candidates have been screened in, employers can assess their skills effectively through pre-employment assessments as well as job auditions. Both of these approaches provide employers with objective data about candidates and how they are likely to perform. Providing nontraditional candidates chances to tell their stories through cover letters or video interviews can help connect the dots of their past and experience.

WHAT IT DOES

- Targeting specific populations can allow companies to customize training and accommodations to help get newly hired candidates from these populations up to speed more quickly. It also helps recruiters, human resource professionals, supervisors, and co-workers become familiar with these workers' needs.
- By concentrating on a limited number of sub-populations, companies can develop stronger relationships with nonprofits and other organizations that serve these populations and provide tailored programming to support these groups.

- Companies that target pools of nontraditional talent find that these workers often perform better and cost the same or less to hire and retain compared to traditional sources of talent. In other words, the return on investment is significantly positive, which moves this strategy out of the corporate social responsibility realm and places it among viable strategies to address a labor shortage or skills gap.

WHO USES IT

CVS	MasterCard (partner: LaunchCode)	Aon (Opportunity@Work)
JP Morgan Chase	Accenture (Opportunity@Work)	Chegg (Opportunity@Work)
Volkswagen	Amazon (Opportunity@Work)	Docusign (Opportunity@Work)
ID.me (Opportunity@Work)	ID.me (Opportunity@Work)	

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Eightfold.ai	Opportunityatwork.org	