

Attracting Top Talent in Competitive Markets: A Guide for SMEs

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It is a candidate's job market. Globally. In all sectors. Without exception. Seasoned employers are acutely aware of this already and have been for the last 4 or so years.

From Covid and generational factors, wars and the atrocities world wide, the last 5 years has tested humanity let alone the workplace. As Recruiters we have seen a sharp shift in the employee-employer relationship. A power imbalance and a new friction in response to the instability and quite frankly, in my view, collective PTSD resulting from the pandemic. We have seen employees place increased value on well being and work life balance, lose their money driven ambitions and be more concerned about environmentally humane workplaces and ethical business. In contrast we have seen risk averse hiring, ad hoc recruitment and panic layoffs, stricter payroll budget controls – employer side.

Hence the friction and never the twain shall meet or so it seemed. Employers however have begun to pivot, to meet the employees halfway.

Large branded companies with internationally renowned business, from Amazon all the way to Tesla have experienced an alarming issue with Recruitment and Retention and also rose to the occasion trying to accommodate employee wishes and attract top talent. It has become essential to brand one's self, to brand the employer identity in order to compete on the job market for top talent

For SMEs though, this can all be particularly daunting – if the Big Four are struggling, how on earth will the smaller venture attract and retain talent? Here's how:

- ☐ Embrace your size and agility that only small businesses can mark up – celebrate being small, being familiar, being personable
- ☐ Brand yourself – what kind of employer do you want to be? What does your legacy and story celebrate you for? Make sure your current teams and those you hope to attract know the values you stand for and those that got your business through the pandemic
- ☐ Emphasize and champion faster career progression based on merit
- ☐ Leverage the value and recognition your employees can enjoy as being part of a small size firm, the chance to shine and really be part of something
- ☐ Listen – offer the intangibles: the psycho social benefits that are really being asked for. The understanding, the flexibility and the human investment in your staff and prospective team members.

Happy to chat about any of these issues and drill down on the many options open to fellow SMEs wishing to recruit and retain good people and needing help to do that.

Here's to 2025! Check us out on www.hrinnovate.org



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