The Doctor and Patients Medical Association conducted a June 2012 survey of 36,000 doctors in active clinical practice and found 83% of the respondents thinking of leaving the profession for a variety of reasons.

Using Social Media to Find and Attract the Best Healthcare Talent

In order to fill the 5.6 million healthcare job openings to occur between now and 2020, high-performing healthcare employers will need to recruit in ways that ensure that their organizations engage candidates, create a positive candidate experience, leverage candidates' interest and enthusiasm, spur applications and stand out from the crowd.

A LOOK INSIDE

Social media is a good platform to help accomplish these goals. Although recruiters have been slow to adopt social media as a recruiting channel, evidence says that the activity is trending upward with healthcare recruiting in third place among industries using social media. Those organizations not electing social media as a channel are finding it more difficult to keep up with the fast pace of the online recruiting world. Social media is cost-effective, fast and targeted and the participatory nature of social impacts the candidate experience.

Social recruiting messages are fast to place, refresh and respond to. Once a recruiting message is designed, it is delivered with a click. It is pushed to the audience. The message can be easily adjusted to meet changing needs. Most importantly, responding to feedback, questions and comments allows issues to be quickly addressed, miscommunications diffused and successes shared. This is particularly valuable when interacting with candidates. A large number cite time-of-response as an indicator of an organization's culture and a driver of the acceptance decision.

Targeting the right audience is a communication tenet and social media is no exception. Most social media platforms have built-in targeting tools allowing recruiters to deliver messages to candidate audiences that are relevant to

the jobs they need to fill. In an age of "what's-in-it-for-me," social recruiting gives organizations a way to communicate in a more personal way.

A Different Way to Communicate

Social media is a participatory medium. Viewers have the opportunity to comment on postings and dialogue with other users. Monitoring feedback on social media provides insight into candidates' and employees' mindsets and gives an organization the opportunity to strengthen the employer brand. The participatory nature allows current employees to share information and opinions which is especially valuable given that employee referrals remain the number one method of recruiting strong candidates.

Social Media Channels and Healthcare Recruiting

The largest social media channels today are Facebook, Linked In and Twitter. Google+ and Pinterest are rapidly rising in terms of users but as of now, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter rule social media.

Investigate which social sites are most used by your target candidates

Facebook released its first quarter 2013 user statistic as 1.1 billion users. The size of the network alone makes Facebook worth consideration as a recruiting channel. While Facebook is often perceived to be a

13%
of newly licensed RNs changed jobs after just one year.

more social site than a professional one, there are compelling reasons to create a recruiting presence on this channel. Facebook's social nature plays off of our desire to connect with people who share our interests and passions. Smart social recruiters will use this to cultivate relationships with both active and passive candidates.

With a smaller user base of 225 million, LinkedIn maintains the most usage among recruiters. Recruiters tend to favor LinkedIn in increasing numbers. 64% used only LinkedIn in 2012, compared to 48% in 2011. Jobs posted on LinkedIn receive more job views than those on Facebook and Twitter combined. LinkedIn's reputation as a professional's network greatly increases the likelihood that professional candidates have LinkedIn profiles.

Twitter reports 500 million users. These users create more than an estimated 3 million tweets daily. Twitter presents unique challenges for recruiting due to character limitations. However, succinct targeted messages get noticed more than lengthy text, making Twitter appealing to younger, more social media savvy candidates. Recruiters cite the ability to quickly tweet a job opening as a positive when using this channel.

Although only 12% of recruiters use more than one social media site, this practice ignores one of the proven rules of marketing and communication. That is, know and target your audience. If the desired candidate is more likely to be active on Facebook and Twitter, it makes sense that recruiting messages be placed on those social media sites. Three-fourths of the respondents to a 2011 survey conducted by Healthcare IT News chose Facebook as their most favored social media site for career-seeking opportunities.

The mechanics of social media sites make it easy to share messages and postings, further widening reach. As messages are read, a simple click sends or "shares" the message to others in a network, further widening the candidate pool and increasing the chances that a candidate will read and apply

for a position. Shares appear in Facebook updates meaning that even more people view the item. The same principle applies to "liking" an item or post. On average, one Facebook user has 130 friends. Sharing or liking instantly reaches those friends who in turn can share and reach their friends and so on. Reaching a broad audience grows easily and exponentially.

Using Social Media Effectively in the Recruiting Process

Recruiting via social media puts a healthcare organization ahead of the competition Social media recruiting does require thoughtful planning, careful implementation, measurement and continual attention.

Planning

With social media's ease of delivery and fast pace, it's tempting to skip the planning step and jump right into posting job opportunities on social sites. Doing so is an injustice to the power of social and can negatively impact recruiting efforts and may damage an organization's reputation. Following a structured and organized approach through implementation allows an organization to leverage social's ability to showcase the organization's appeal and maximize the "30 second window" of connection.

Organizations implementing social recruiting programs **increase** employee referrals by **31%** while **reducing** time to hire by **20%**

When incorporating a social recruiting program, aligning the organization's overall recruiting efforts with the employer brand is a key step in ensuring that it delivers. The planning process should identify employer brand attributes that are attractive to candidates as well as those that that don't hold up. Remember that the vast audience viewing messages on social media has the power to champion or derail best efforts.

It is important to create targeted messages that will resonate with your audience. Understanding audience segmentation – and knowing which social media channels best suit each audience – is also an important part of the planning process. The planning stage lays out all the key messages needed.

The planning phase should also include setting realistic success measures to evaluate the success of a social campaign. Benchmark data is often available online or within an organization's archives. Building from an established benchmark lets recruiters know quickly if a current campaign is successful or needs to be modified. The key is to use the planning process to align a social recruiting program to specific and measurable outcomes typically found in other recruiting campaigns. Increase the candidate pipeline, improve quality of candidates, reduce time-to-fill: these are examples of measures that will add validity to a social recruiting program.

Implementation

Going live requires the design of both the look and words within a message to fit the social site. For example, photos that work exceptionally well on Facebook may blur on Linked In. One size does not fit all. Consideration should be given to character limitations, size of graphics and links to an organization's website or application process. The wording should be concise and the call to action must be clear.

Establishing a test group for messaging is a pre-implementation step that is a worthwhile endeavor. Setting up a test or focus group with current employees adds insight and authenticity to the final copy.

Implementation requires content delivery timing that hits candidates without bombarding them. Some experts believe that once or twice a week is fine for LinkedIn but that Facebook and Twitter require more constant updating.

Once finalized, going live includes posting the messages, setting up any frequency options, linking to an organization's website or page on the selected channel(s) and monitoring early results. Most action is taken within a short time frame of a posting so early watchfulness is key.

Measurement

Measuring results is not difficult in the social media arena. All of the channels contain usage reports that are easily found and simple to read. Some channels provide more detailed information on a fee basis and third-party vendors can help interpret the results. Regardless of the level of social recruiting measurement employed, measuring is critical for success.

Plan
Implement
Measure
Adjust

In social media, contributing to and monitoring feedback engages candidates, and employees, and can be measured to indicate engagement. More conversation equals greater engagement. Vigilance pays dividends in real time. Respond to feedback as soon as possible and share successes with your social media fans and employees regularly.

Get Started

As the healthcare landscape changes dramatically, it's time to start using social media as part of a successful recruiting strategy. Some healthcare organizations have already discovered the value of aligned messages and integrated approaches to expand recruiting efforts. Being proactive now will help candidates select your organization as their employer of choice.

TAKEAWAYS

- Social recruiting is a cost-effective and highly targeted way to reach an audience that is looking to engage and participate.

- Use of social media channels as a vehicle for recruiting is increasing. High-performing social recruiters know which channels apply to the talent they need and they are tailoring their messages to those talent audiences.

- Successful social recruiters use a program framework that includes three distinct phases: planning, implementation and measurement.

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