

The war for talent

By  Merle O'Brien

1 Mar 2016

There is a war for talent happening among multinational brands as the global divide widens in wealth, human competency, access to resources and social media literacy - making peak performance candidates highly sought after assets.



©Yuliya Tsyhun via [123RF](#)

To engage with top caliber talent, human resource management is becoming more innovative, creative and social to filter candidates who are both fit for purpose as well as brand culture:

- Recruitment channels, talent expectations and recruitment techniques are changing
- Social literacy is vital for successful engagement between brands and candidates
- HR management becoming more innovative, creative and social

We have identified three key areas where human resource trends provide new opportunities to achieve differentiation within the corporate recruitment space:

1. Recruitment channels.
2. Talent expectations are different.
3. Recruitment techniques are adapting to the Web 2.0 ecosystem.

1. Relevant recruitment channel trends:

- **Human brands.** This refers to brands that embody a transparent, empathetic approach to consumer engagement. They are characterised by products and services designed around the needs of their consumers, and communications that resonate with issues that consumers are concerned about. Human Brands successfully boost brand loyalty by proactively addressing issues consumers and staff are concerned about. For example, In June 2014, Starbucks launched its College Achievement Plan, a partnership with Arizona State University covering tuition fees for its employees (or “partners”) to complete their bachelor’s degrees. Since the start of the College Achievement Plan, Starbucks has substantially increased its recruiting and retention with 63% of new hires at Starbucks expressing interest in taking advantage of the tuition benefit.

- **User generated content.** This refers to people creating free content for companies on their websites and social media channels as part of social media campaigns which capitalises on the greater trust placed in the opinion of peers, family and friends than a company spokesperson.

L'Oreal, for example asked employees to share advice they would give their younger selves. The campaign proved successful, as thousands of people viewing the content, with many of them either following L'Oreal on LinkedIn or applying for a job at the company. Overall, the content above drew an average of 50,000 unique visits a month to L'Oreal's recruiting pages and fuelled the growth of the company's LinkedIn following, which now stands over 700,000 people. Additionally, it showcased L'Oreal as a cutting-edge, creative company, which matches their employee value proposition (EVP).

- **Gamification.** This refers to the application of game-design and gaming mechanics to better engage users or audiences with problem-solving, goal-achievement or tasks with social elements. It is a popular technique applied to creative engagement models, user-experience design of mobile and web apps, retail rewards, health-tracking and personal financial management.

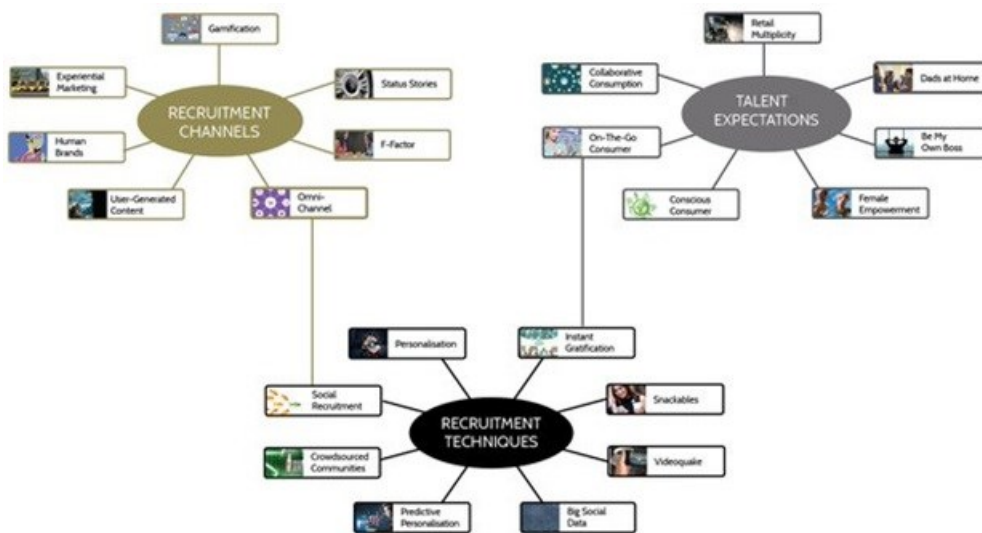
Recently, Ogilvy One launched the world's greatest salesperson campaign. Using a dedicated YouTube channel and targeted social media campaign they invited applicants to sell them a brick! Top contestants were given a chance to pitch at the Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival and the winner received a three month paid fellowship with the agency.

2. Trends rising to meet new talent expectations:

- **Conscious consumer.** Refers to that consumer who actively seeks out authentic and sustainable goods and services. They are willing to pay premium prices for what they perceive to be ethical brands as a way of expressing support, or investing in, a particular cause. The conscious consumer may also boycott brands believed to be harmful to society.

Retailer H&M recently used this trend to highlight their values in a US Recruitment drive. The campaign featured 50 employees telling their personal success stories and talking about H&M's benefits and commitment to diversity and sustainability.

- **Collaborative consumption.** Also known as the sharing economy, it refers to the fundamental shift from ownership to access. Driven by the economic downturn, the rise of Web 2.0 and an emphasis on community by millennials, collaborative consumption is an emerging movement that sees industries being disrupted by entrepreneurs who seek to generate value through communities of shared, under-utilised assets.



[click to enlarge](#)

For example, Elance - oDesk is an online staffing platform based in Mountain View, California that provides an online resource that makes 8 million freelancers and 2 million businesses part of the mainstream.

- **On-the-go consumer.** Refers to the rise of consumers who are time-constrained and always on the move. These consumers are unlikely to walk into a store or sit down at a restaurant, and would rather opt for products, services and technologies that have been specifically designed to facilitate life on-the-go.

For example, Jobbatical (a neologism made from 'job' and 'sabbatical'), is a platform connecting employers in far-flung corners of the globe with travel-hungry millennials who want to start saving for life's big purchases. The jobs board features short-term job offers for teams from 39 countries, including opportunities such as a computer vision and graphics designer for a posting in Bangalore and a Ruby on Rails expert in Vietnam. The service is tailored towards programmers and designers as domain expertise is in great demand in developing countries.

3. New trends in recruitment techniques:

- **Personalisation.** This refers to methods brands use to customise products and services to suit consumers' specifications. It generates more sustained customer engagement by catering to growing consumer desires to express their individuality as well as the status acquired by tailoring a brand to their needs. For example, Dubai ad agency FP7 recently placed mobile phones inside fake ad industry books and mailed them to creative professionals that they wanted to poach. The phones were also programmed with a single number, the number of FP7's executive creative director. This was a way to attract creatives from the country's top companies and also demonstrate what a 'fun agency they are to work for'.

- **Social recruitment.** Refers to companies using social networking sites to review job applicants' profiles and candidates actively using their social media channels like Facebook, Twitter, Xing and LinkedIn to search for opportunities.

In China the big three HR online channels ChinaHR, 51Job and ZhaoPin have dominated the Internet recruitment market for nearly 10 years, but things are now moving towards Sina Weibo, Renren and other social tools. Symantec China leverages social to recruit their talent. Their micro-blog account has 5000+ followers, receives 10 messages per week that translate to 3-5 candidate interviews each month. Finally, Symantec hires 1-2 candidates per quarter leveraging Chinese social networks.

- **Crowdsourced communities.** Refers to the growth of social networks and peer-to-peer groups that connect individuals around the world to solve problems, generate ideas or exchange knowledge on similar topics, collectively. They include special-interest groups on Facebook, Reddit and LinkedIn.

ReferralMob is a new Crowdsourced Recruiting App that was recently launched to capitalise on the positive impact that referrals can have—and moreover, make them easier to facilitate by leveraging the power of crowdsourcing. It makes sure that people get paid for referring successful hires. After you refer a colleague, friend or acquaintance to a job, you can split up the check once they land the position. The average reward is \$6,000. And even if their referrals aren't hired, active app users can still score points and win prizes.

- **Predictive personalisation.** Predictive personalisation is the result of successful data-mining and analysis, where brands are able to deliver targeted offerings to individual consumers. This has applications beyond retail.

For example, Jobandtalent is a leading job matching platform that matches jobs with talents like an online headhunter. Its algorithm acts like a virtual recruitment consultant that analyses hundreds of thousands of jobs and suggests suitable vacancies taking into consideration their candidates' preferences and professional profiles.

We believe that social literacy will become increasingly important for brands and candidates to integrate their virtual persona with written CVs and marketing material as well as live interviews.

Social literacy is a person's ability to interact, maintain and build relationships with others. It involves knowing and being able to express one's own emotions successfully in various forms - verbal, written or symbolic design such as the use of emojis. Since social literacy is a vital dimension of teamwork, collaboration and authenticity, the ability of a user to connect with the precise meta-emotion being conveyed within an organised structure speaks volumes for their awareness and appropriate response within a given context.

L'Oreal recently also used emojis and selfies to transform its hiring process by having their recruiters take selfies with the hires that stood out to them. After collecting more than a dozen, L'Oreal put them all on a webpage, where visitors were encouraged to follow the company on LinkedIn for more content like it. Along with generating more followers, it humanised the company's recruiting team, and made L'Oreal feel like a place where people really care about each other – a brand of smiling faces.

ABOUT MERLE O'BRIEN

Merle O'Brien is Head: Foresight and Innovation Thought Leadership, at Lacuna Radar, a boutique innovation consultancy based in Berlin, Cape Town and London, that helps global brands to sustainably innovate new products, services and business models by combining trends, insight and commercial expertise in one place.
» [Future of Work] The war for talent - 1 Mar 2016

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>