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Recruiting Passive Talent in the Great Resignation

How to turn passive candidates
into new employees

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The Great Resignation has completely reshaped the talent landscape. As more people leave their jobs, organizations are in fierce competition to hire for their open roles.

According to iCIMS [“2022 Workforce Report,”](#) job openings increased 86%, hires increased 46%, but applications dropped by 11% from Q1 2020 to Q4 2021. What does this mean? Simply posting a job opening and hoping qualified candidates apply is no longer a viable recruiting strategy. These days, recruiters have to think and act more like marketers, leveraging best practices, proven techniques, and technologies to land the next candidate.

The Great Resignation has also been described as the Great Aspiration. Now more than ever, people are thinking long and hard about what they want in their career. Many people believe the right opportunity is out there but aren't actively applying to jobs. This segment of the talent landscape—called passive talent—is open to new opportunities, even if they aren't actively looking.

Engaging passive talent can help you overcome today's hiring challenges. Instead of waiting for candidates to come to you, you can proactively pursue qualified candidates, learn what they want, and share how your opportunity aligns with their values.

In this guide, you'll learn how to meet your hiring goals with a passive talent engagement strategy and what it takes to land passive talent.

Pre-engagement: Provide a positive employee experience

[A survey from Harris Poll and CareerArc](#) found that 32% of people considering leaving a job just haven't found the right opportunity yet. Since passive candidates are already employed, they're not going to take just any job. They'll only move forward with the opportunity that is right for them.

Numerous studies indicate that compensation is not the only factor in determining if someone is willing to accept a new role. People also value work-life balance, flexible work options, career advancement opportunities, and inclusive work environments, depending on the talent segment.

So how can you communicate to passive talent that your organization checks all the boxes that matter to them? As a recruiter, you may already understand how important it is to have an employer brand that highlights the benefits of working for your organization. Before you engage passive talent, you should be clear on your employee value proposition and include that messaging on your careers website and other public pages that candidates may visit to learn more about your company.

But more importantly, your organization needs to deliver on those promises.

Why? Passive talent places far more trust in the employee reviews on Glassdoor, Indeed, LinkedIn, and social media than in your employer brand messaging.

Before they commit to an interview, they want to get a sense of what it is really like to work for your organization and they look to your current employees for that insight.

Your employer brand—and the employee experience that supports it—are the foundation of your passive talent outreach. Before you consider engaging passive talent, work with your leadership and people teams to ensure the employee experience is meeting expectations and run an internal campaign to increase positive reviews on employee review sites.

Pre-engagement: Understanding your passive talent audience

Every talent segment you recruit is different from the next. Start by analyzing talent data to learn who makes up your talent audience and what makes them tick. Use this data to create a profile of your ideal candidate and craft messaging that piques the interest of the talent you engage.

There are three types of talent data you should analyze—talent market data, talent sentiment data, and internal talent data.

Talent market data

Talent market data provides an overview of the candidates who make up the talent segment. Examples of what you can learn about candidates from talent market data include:

- How many match the role requirements
- Where they live
- The different job titles they have
- The companies they currently work for (aka your talent competitors)
- The companies they previously worked for
- Their educational background (majors, degrees, universities attended)
- Diversity representation
- Their years of experience
- Their years in current role

Use this data as the framework for your ideal candidate profile. What skills does your ideal candidate have? How many years of experience do they have? What's their educational background?

This data will help inform your ideal candidate profile but make sure to think through what skills, experience, and education really matter, so you don't introduce bias as you start the engagement process.

Talent sentiment data

Talent sentiment data provides insight into the talent segment's values and behaviors. Takeaways from talent sentiment data include:

- Compensation requirements
- Secondary factors they value (e.g. work-life balance, career growth, diversity and inclusion, etc.)
- Industry-related websites they visit
- Online communities they participate in
- Terminology they use
- The future outlook of the profession (e.g. emerging skills and technology)
- Challenges, concerns, and opportunities for the profession

Use this data to fill in your ideal candidate profile with pain points and goals. What will it take for a candidate to change jobs? How is their profession evolving and how can you help them prepare? How can you speak their language and show them you understand and value what they do?

Internal talent data

Internal talent data shows how well your organization aligns with the values of the talent segment. Here are examples of what you can learn about the team you're recruiting for:

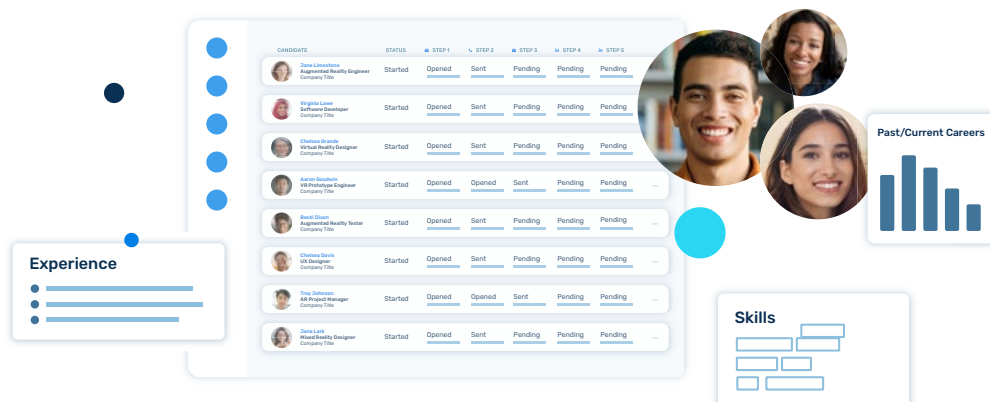
- The flow of talent in and out of your organization
- Promotion rates
- Employee engagement survey results
- Glassdoor ratings
- Exit interview feedback and trends
- Diversity representation

Use this data to uncover the advantages and disadvantages your organization will have when engaging a passive talent segment. Are you providing career growth opportunities? Do your employees feel like they have work-life balance? Is the team and its leadership diverse?

Combine all three types of talent data to learn who your ideal candidate is, what they value, and how you can communicate that you have the right opportunity for them.

Engagement: Build relationships with passive talent

The key to success in the Great Resignation is to have an always-be-recruiting mindset. That requires creating a pipeline of qualified candidates, emailing them captivating content, and continually nurturing the relationship.



Create a talent pipeline

Start by mapping out the roles/teams you regularly hire for. Then follow these steps to build a talent pipeline and email campaign for each segment:

- Use advanced search capabilities to surface all the candidates who meet your role requirements.
- Break the candidate pool down into groups of 100 to include in automated email campaigns (this group size ensures you have enough time to speak with the candidates who respond, assuming you get about 10 responses per group).

- Create 3-5 emails to send over a two-week period.
- Include a call to action in each email to schedule time to learn more about the opportunity.
- Remove candidates from the sequence who schedule a call while continuing to email the candidates who do not initially respond.

Write captivating emails

In order to get passive talent interested in your opportunity, you need to include captivating content in your emails. Here are tips for creating emails that capture their attention:

- Include the candidate's name in the subject line and greeting.
- Include data to show your organization provides a positive employee experience (e.g. "We value gratitude, 85% of our employees say they feel appreciated for the work they do").
- Highlight what the talent segment wants and how your organization provides it (e.g. "Is career advancement important to you? 60% of the team's leaders are internal promotions").
- Highlight the work they'll get to do and the benefit it will bring to the organization. (e.g. "Here's an example of a recent project from the team that increased revenue by 20%").
- Spotlight a team leader or peer to get them excited about the colleagues they'll work with (e.g. "Check out this interview with our director who is a thought leader in the profession").
- Personalize emails to reflect why you think the candidate is a fit for the role or your company.

Nurture your relationships with talent

Many of the passive candidates you engage will be interested in learning about your opportunity but won't immediately be willing to accept an offer. You'll need to stay in touch and build a relationship with them until they're ready to move forward with your opportunity. Here are the best times to reconnect to keep your organization top of mind:

- When a role they may be more interested in becomes available. (e.g. "We're hiring for a senior manager role that I think you would be a great fit for").
- When they're likely reflecting on their career (e.g. their work anniversary, birthday, and New Years).
- When there is relevant news about their employer (e.g. "What does your company's acquisition mean for you?").
- When there is positive news about your organization to share (e.g. "We just made the "Best Companies to Work for" list").
- When there is positive news about their potential team to share (e.g. "We just hired a new team lead, I would love for you to meet them").



Don't wait for your next great hire to find you

People are no longer settling for a job that only pays well. They're looking for an opportunity that meets all their needs—and they have plenty of options to choose from in today's market that favors candidates.

If you hope to successfully hire in the Great Aspiration, you need to be proactive by engaging passive talent. Learn who makes up your talent segment and what they want, then communicate why your organization is the right choice.

To learn more about how you can use SeekOut to engage passive talent, [schedule a demo today](https://seekout.com/requestdemo) (seekout.com/requestdemo).



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SeekOut is the Talent Platform for Enterprise Talent Optimization that companies use to quickly hire, grow, and retain talent while focusing on diversity, technical expertise, and other hard-to-find skillsets. SeekOut helps great companies and great people grow together.

[Request a Demo](#)

Required Skills

Data Structures X AWS X

JavaScript X

Years of Experience

2 — 7

Matching Scorecard

- ✓ Required Skills
- ✓ Degree/Years of Experience
- ✓ Preferred Skills

