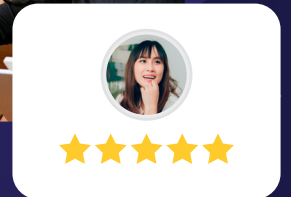
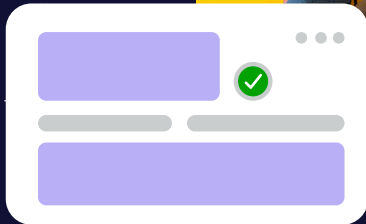
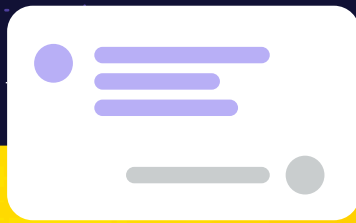




The *Definitive* Guide to Talent Engagement





Recruiters and hiring companies no longer have the upper hand. The paradigm has shifted and candidates are devoting their time and energy to the companies that are most responsive and respectful of their time.

The companies that have evolved from clunky job applications and slow and infrequent responses to fast and personalized hiring are keeping talent engaged from the moment they land on their careers site to long after they become an employee.

In this ebook, you'll learn everything you need to know to successfully engage talent in today's candidate-driven market, including:

- How to excel at each stage of the Talent Engagement Lifecycle
- The advantages of adopting a talent engagement strategy
- How to use AI and automation to engage talent at scale
- The talent engagement success metrics to track and analyze
- The quantifiable results to expect with a well-executed talent engagement strategy

01

Leading recruiting teams are succeeding at each stage in the Talent Engagement Lifecycle

Your next great employees are out there, but there is often a long journey before they become productive, happy team members. The Talent Engagement Lifecycle shows each step a person goes through as they evolve from a curious job seeker with multiple employment options to a committed employee.

Too often, progressing talent through the lifecycle is a long and arduous process, despite the fact that candidates are eager to land their next job and hiring companies urgently need to fill open roles. Making matters even more difficult, a potential employee can exit the lifecycle at any point should they have a poor experience or simply lose interest in the role.

Today's most successful recruiters are superstars at quickly progressing candidates through each stage — and keeping them engaged along the way.

Understanding talent mindsets and leveraging them to create better experiences is at the heart of a successful talent engagement strategy. Let's explore the stages in the Talent Engagement Lifecycle, the motivations people have at each one, and what it takes to engage them at each point in their journey.

Talent Lifecycle

Job seekers	Instantly answer questions	Connect them with the right roles	Provide a frictionless application experience	
Applicants	Instantly screen applicants	Schedule the first interview ASAP	Point unqualified applicants to relevant roles	
Past applicants	Send relevant job openings	Check in to keep your company top of mind		
Interviewees	Quickly schedule additional interviews	Send information post-interview	Check in during the interview process	Request Glassdoor reviews
Pre-hires	Check in as their start date approaches	Start the onboarding process		
New hires	Complete the onboarding process	Provide organizational & role-specific training	Ensure managers conduct regular 1:1s	Check in regularly during first 90 days
Employees	Continue to check in regularly	Provide career advancement opportunities	Make small gestures of appreciation	

AI CHATBOT	AUTOMATED MESSAGING	DATABASE REACTIVATION	JOB MATCHING	REFERRAL AUTOMATION
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Job seekers

Job seekers are open to new career opportunities but are often casually “window shopping” to get an idea of what’s out there. They’re searching job boards to see who is hiring and exploring company career sites. Before applying, they want to know what it’s like to work for the company and if the opportunity aligns with their wants and needs. Modern job seekers value other factors beyond compensation — like career growth opportunities, flexible work arrangements, and inclusive work environments — and they’re looking for companies that offer what’s important to them as an individual.

How to engage job seekers:

Provide the information they’re looking for and make it easy to apply

- Answer specific questions instantly
- Help them find the perfect roles at your company
- Create a frictionless application experience

Applicants

Applicants have submitted job applications, but are still only partially interested in a role at your company right now. They’re applying to multiple companies under the assumption that most won’t respond to their applications and the ones that do will take weeks to get back to them.

How to engage applicants:

Respond quickly and keep them interested while showing your interest

- Schedule interviews for qualified candidates ASAP
- Point them toward more relevant roles if they’re not a fit

Past applicants

Past applicants previously applied to your company — and possibly interviewed — but weren’t hired. They didn’t accept an offer, weren’t quite the right fit for the role, or finished runner-up to other candidates. You can bring past applicants back into the talent lifecycle by reengaging them and suggesting they apply to other jobs they’re a better fit for.

How to (re)engage past applicants:

Stay in touch with them as new roles open

- Keep past applicants active by regularly sending them relevant job openings
- Regularly check in with exceptional past applicants to keep your company top of mind

Interviewees

Interviewees are so close to the finish line! They’re qualified for the role and have decided your company fits their needs and your job aligns with their professional goals. It’s time to arm them with the knowledge they need to make a career decision — like sharing insight into day-to-day responsibilities and tasks, team culture, and more. A positive experience here is critical. Poor communication or an otherwise negative experience leads to ghosting or interviewees removing themselves from consideration.

How to engage interviewees:

Provide an exceptional experience while determining if they’re right for the job

- Quickly schedule and confirm interviews
- Send additional information the interviewee requested (or additional information to “sell” them on your company)
- Continuously check in throughout the process to see how they’re feeling
- Ask happy candidates to share their experience on Glassdoor and other review sites

Pre-hires

Pre-hires have accepted an employment offer but haven't yet started work. Most pre-hires are committed to working for your company, but some will use your offer as a bargaining chip to get higher compensation from their current employers or other companies they're interviewing with. And some could end up second-guessing their decisions, ultimately deciding to stay where they're comfortable as the excitement from the interview process wears off.

The pre-hire stage can feel like celebration time but it's actually a major dropoff point in the Talent Engagement Lifecycle.

How to engage pre-hires:

Maintain communication to keep them excited about the role and your company

- Send messages to build up excitement as they wait to join (e.g., "Everyone is looking forward to you joining next week")
- Have the new hire get started on their onboarding tasks, reaffirming their commitment to your company



New hires

New hires are employees who haven't yet completed their first 90 days. While much of their first few months consist of training and onboarding, they're also forming an opinion of what life at your company is going to be like in the long run. New hires are at risk of exiting your company if the role, culture, or day-to-day reality isn't what they expected when they accepted your offer.

How to engage new hires:

Ensure they're happy and have the resources needed to succeed

- Make onboarding as simple as possible and answer any and all questions (ideally proactively)
- Provide organizational and role-specific training
- Ensure managers are conducting regular 1-on-1s to discuss expectations and challenges
- Ensure HR is checking in at the end of their first week, month, and 90 days to determine if they're happy and comfortable

Employees

Employees have been working for your company for 90+ days. They understand how the company and their teams operate, and the responsibilities of their roles. Employees are typically firmly committed to your company but could exit at any point should a great opportunity arise or their experience with your company change.

How to engage employees:

Ensure they feel appreciated and fulfilled in their work

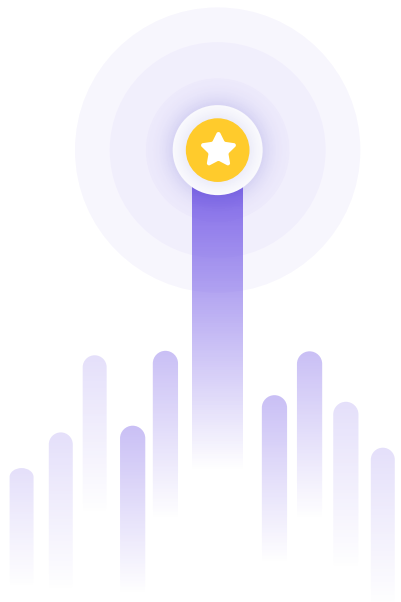
- Check in regularly to learn how they're feeling and if they're facing any problems that need to be resolved
- Discuss their career goals and recommend higher-level roles that may be a fit
- Make small gestures of appreciation to boost their happiness, productivity, and commitment to the company

02

Why talent engagement is critical to hiring success

Recruiting today presents a host of new challenges that seem to get more apparent by the day. But that means new opportunities are emerging as well. The companies that prioritize talent engagement have the potential to overcome the hurdles they face and bring multiple advantages to their hiring processes.

Let's explore the different benefits leading recruiting teams are experiencing after implementing a talent engagement strategy.



Beat the competition

Hiring is more competitive than ever before, and companies that effectively engage talent are attracting more candidates and keeping them interested throughout the hiring process. Job seekers are applying to up to 12 jobs at once and 30% of applications are submitted after hours when recruiters are offline. Additionally, about 40% of applications are abandoned before completion due to poor user experience, according to Indeed.

Companies that offer a quick and seamless application process and respond instantly to qualified candidates stand out to increasingly-discerning talent. They convert more job seekers into applicants and interviewees — kick-starting a healthy Talent Engagement Lifecycle and getting a leg up on the competition.

Talent Engagement Platforms drive

3X more candidates hired

66% YoY increase in hiring



Lower recruiting costs

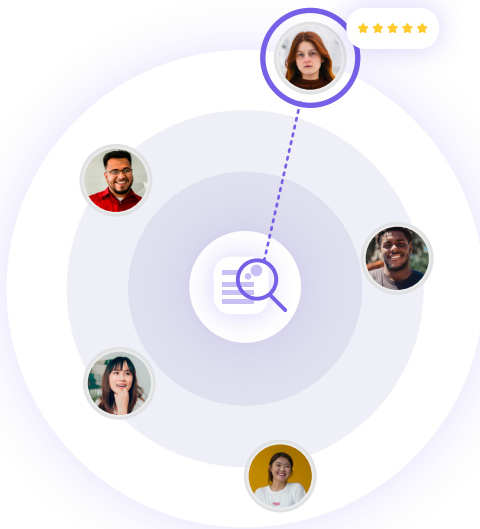
As hiring has gotten more competitive, companies have responded by increasing their job board spend and hiring more recruiters. The average cost per hire in 2022 is \$4,700 which has been steadily growing year over year. Additionally, the average recruiter salary increased by 14% from 2020 to 2021, which is one of the highest compensation increases of any profession.

Today's hiring landscape is different from even a year ago, and throwing money at the problem isn't a sustainable solution. It can be tempting to keep up the numbers, but it does little (or nothing) to get to the heart of what makes talent apply and decide to work for your company.

Leading companies are using recruiting automation to effectively source and engage candidates, reducing reliance on job boards and increasing the efficiency of their recruiting teams.

20% reduction in job board spend

3,000 recruiter hours saved



Quickly hire top talent

Progressing quickly through the hiring process is crucial to keeping talent engaged. Multiple studies show that average time to hire can exceed 40 days depending on the role and industry and, naturally, many interested candidates shift their focus to other opportunities during that time. A survey from Robert Half revealed that 62% of candidates lose interest in a job if they don't hear back from the employer within two weeks.

Today, time-consuming tasks like screening, responding to messages, and scheduling interviews can be completely automated — removing bottlenecks in the recruiting process and helping companies quickly hire top talent.

Talent Engagement Platforms drive

75% reduction in time to offer

23 days Average time to hire



Increase candidate happiness

People simply want to be treated with respect when job searching but if you scroll through LinkedIn or Twitter on any given day, you'll encounter plenty of candidate horror stories. Talent Board research found that 23% of applicants don't receive any response two months after applying for a job and 40% don't even receive an automated "thank you" message after submitting their application. Unsurprisingly, 11% of candidates who withdraw from consideration said it was due to poor communication from the company.

While responding quickly is important to talent engagement success, so too is maintaining that communication throughout the hiring process. A survey from IBM found that a positive experience makes candidates 38% more likely to accept a job offer — indicating that companies that quickly schedule screenings/interviews, maintain communication during the process, and answer questions are keeping talent engaged throughout the lifecycle.

47% increase in candidate satisfaction



Make your company attractive to talent

Providing a positive candidate experience isn't just the right thing to do — it impacts your ability to attract talent for future roles. According to Glassdoor, 86% of job seekers look at a hiring company's ratings and reviews before deciding to apply. Additionally, a LinkedIn survey found that 27% of candidates who had a negative experience would "actively discourage" others from applying for a job with that company.

Companies that are responsive, proactively provide updates to candidates, and value their time have built a respected reputation that is appealing to top talent. And candidates who had a positive experience with your company are more likely to leave positive reviews on Glassdoor, Google, and other sites — even if they're not hired!

Talent Engagement Platforms drive

35%

increase in positive
Glassdoor reviews



Prevent top talent from falling through the cracks

Well-known brands typically attract more applicants than the talent acquisition team can effectively engage. A 2018 study found that recruiters spend only 7.4 seconds reviewing each resume. In other words, they're so overwhelmed with applicants, some qualified candidates are likely being unintentionally removed from consideration during the screening process.

Companies that land top talent are now using AI to instantly screen applicants. Qualified candidates are identified the moment they apply and immediately scheduled for interviews, ensuring 100% of top talent is engaged.

4X

more applicant conversions



Expand the hiring funnel

Smaller companies face the opposite challenge of their well-known counterparts — they don't have enough qualified applicants for open roles. Numerous post-COVID surveys have found that attracting talent has become one of the top challenges facing recruiters.

A smart approach to talent engagement generates more applicants and keeps them invested throughout the hiring process. Companies that reengage past candidates, generate referrals, and offer a positive candidate experience bring in more qualified talent to engage.

Talent Engagement Platforms drive

100+ referrals in two months

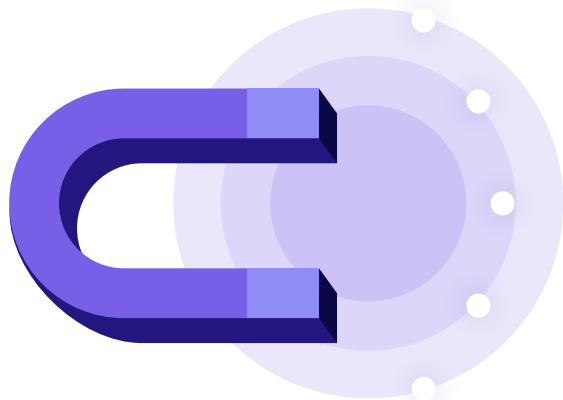


Reengage silver medalists

Many companies tell strong candidates who interview but aren't hired (let's call them "silver medalists"— they were great, just not right for their initial role) that they'll reach out if another role opens. But few deliver on that promise. Not only does that create a negative impression of your company, it also leads to a stagnant database of talent.

Modern recruiting technologies empower companies to find past candidates in the ATS who are qualified for new roles. This brings already-interested candidates back into the Talent Engagement Lifecycle — enhancing their experience, removing the need to source new candidates, and lowering hiring costs.

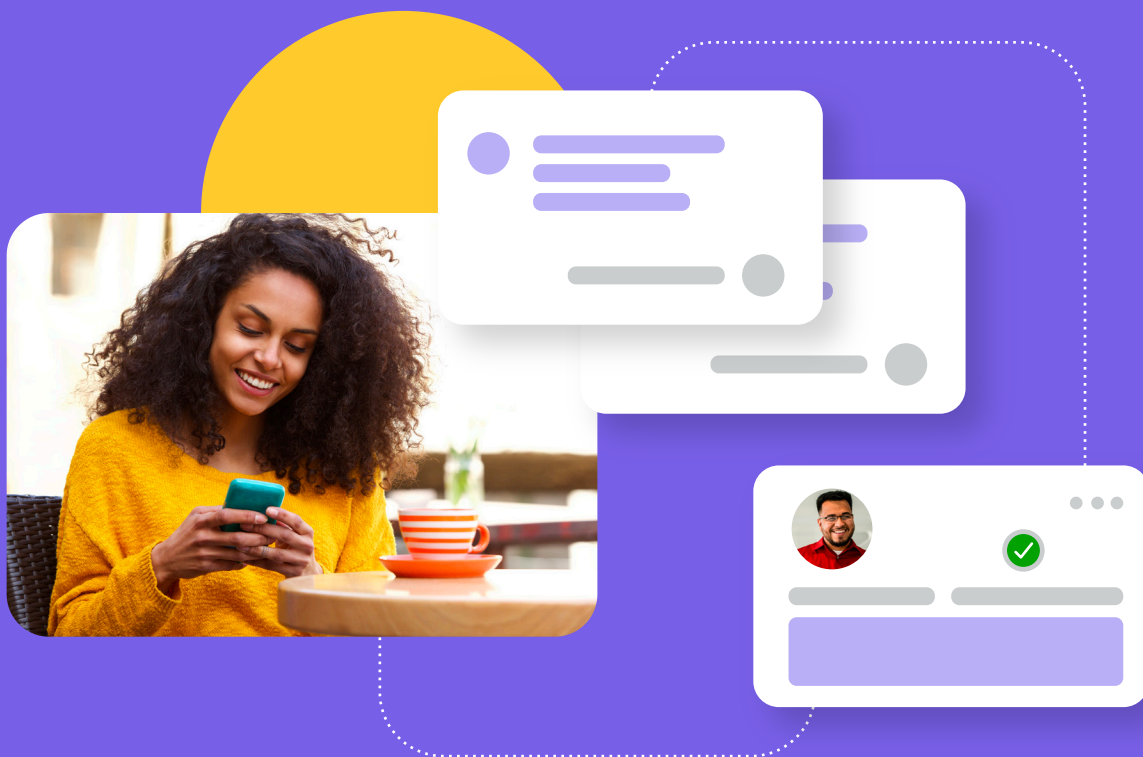
28% hire rate of past candidates



Attract and retain customers

While talent engagement primarily impacts hiring and retention, it can also affect your company's bottom line. Many people apply to companies that they know of or have an affinity for as a consumer. And the experience they have as a candidate can determine if they become or continue to be a customer. In fact, a 2016 study by Talent Board found that 41% of applicants who had a poor experience decided to avoid buying the company's products going forward.

Even if a candidate isn't hired, a positive experience shows that your company values the people they work with and is worthy of doing business with in the future.



03

Using AI and automation to engage talent

As hiring gets more competitive, the most successful talent acquisition teams are leveraging AI and automation to work faster and more efficiently. A Talent Engagement Platform is essentially a “digital recruiter” that uses millions of data points to make accurate decisions and actions, while providing candidates with a conversational and intelligent experience.

The right Talent Engagement Platform dramatically impacts your recruiting operations by making the benefits outlined in the previous section a reality. Let’s explore how you can use AI and automation to provide fast and personalized talent engagement at scale.



Automated communication

Candidates have long been demanding better communication from the companies they apply to but it has simply not been possible for recruiters to respond to everyone in the talent lifecycle in a timely manner. Using a Talent Engagement Platform, you can send automated emails, text messages, and other communications to candidates so they receive important updates about their job status and stay interested in working for your company.



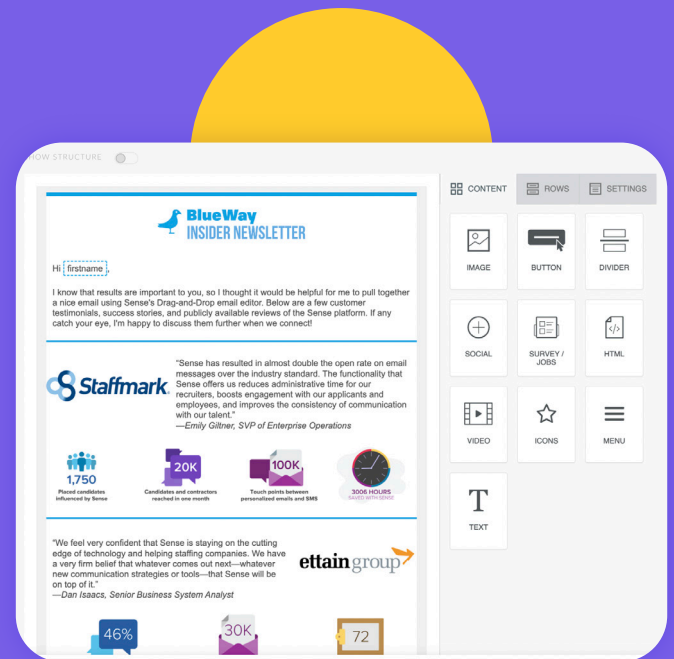
Omnichannel engagement

Phone and email are no longer the only communication channels for interacting with candidates. In fact, text messaging has shown to have higher and faster response rates than email, and recruiting automation is expanding to include other channels candidates are active on like WhatsApp. A Talent Engagement Platform helps recruiters engage candidates across different channels (without relying on their personal phones) and ensures all communication is recorded in a centralized repository for auditing, compliance, and recordkeeping purposes.



Automated journeys

Candidates have different questions, concerns, and motivations depending on where they are in the talent lifecycle. Entering them into the right Talent Journey allows you to send a series of relevant, automated messages that keeps your company top of mind and moves them forward in the hiring process.





Conversational AI chatbot

Capturing a job seeker's attention the moment they land on your careers page is critical to starting the Talent Engagement Lifecycle on a positive note. An AI-powered chatbot answers their questions instantly, recommends relevant roles they should apply to, and collects their application details — sparking their interest in working for your company.



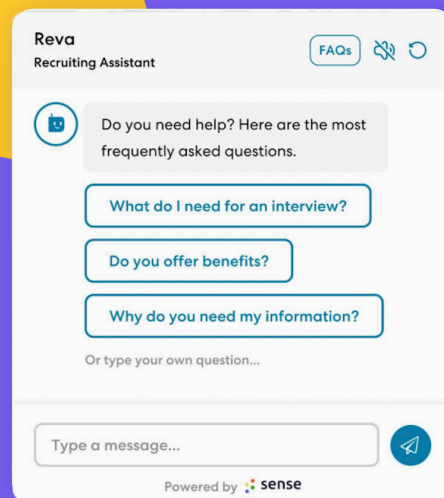
Referral automation

Successful hiring starts by generating applicants from multiple sources. A Talent Engagement Platform makes it easy for employees and existing candidates to submit and track referrals and automatically syncs referred talent to the ATS. The entire referral process (including sending payments and generating 1099 tax forms) is completely automated — saving recruiters time and reducing hiring spend.



Text-to-apply and QR code

The easier you can make the application process, the more candidates you'll attract. A Talent Engagement Platform allows candidates to apply using simplified methods like text messaging or scanning a QR code. Taking either action will prompt them to answer a few questions, making for a frictionless application experience.





AI-powered applicant screening

Manually reviewing resumes and applications is prone to human error and significantly extends the hiring process. An AI-powered chatbot intelligently screens applicants the moment they apply, ensuring every qualified candidate advances to the interview stage, and those who aren't qualified get redirected to jobs they're a better fit for.



Automated interview scheduling

Scheduling interviews no longer requires days or weeks of back-and-forth emails to collect everyone's availability. After the chatbot screens an applicant and determines they're qualified, it provides them with available dates/times for interviews, so they go from job seeker to applicant to interviewee in mere seconds.





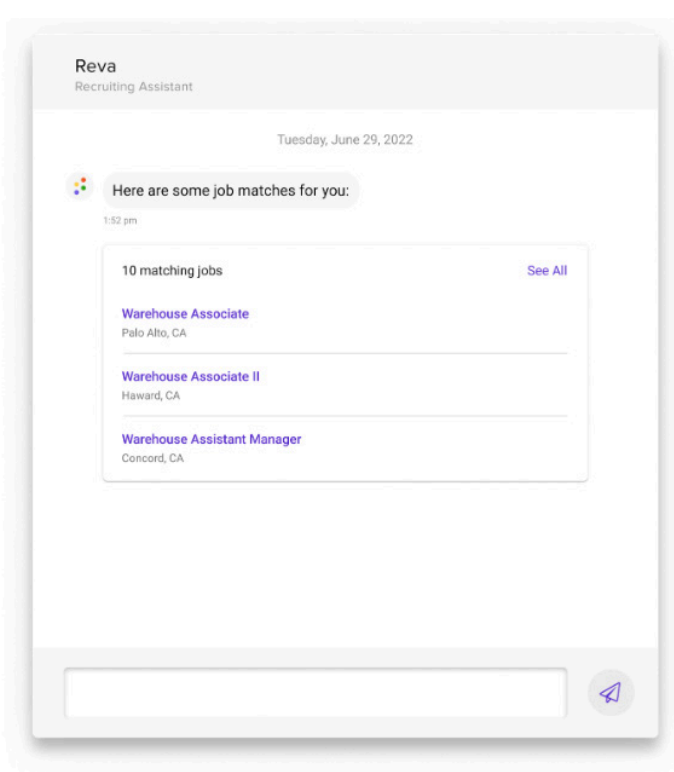
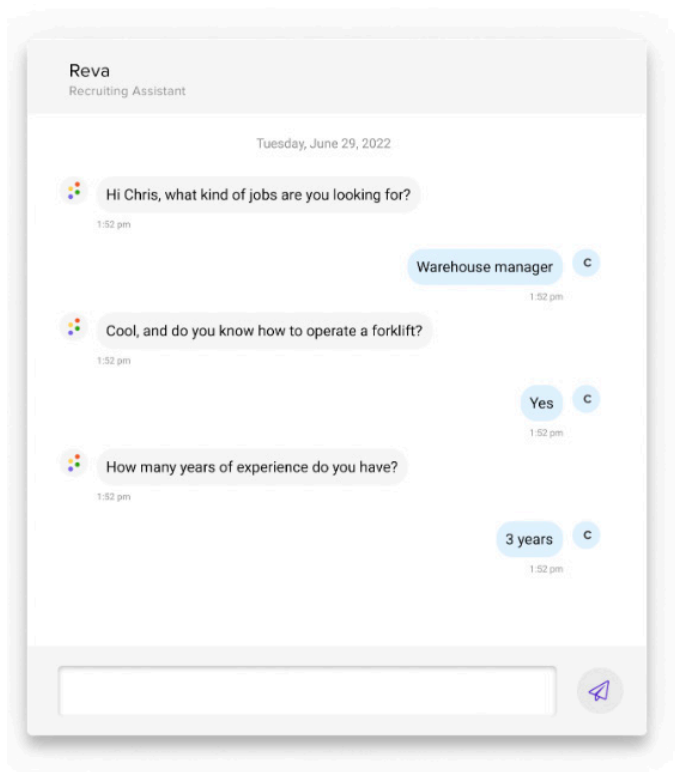
Job matching

Many companies fail to bring past candidates back into the Talent Engagement Lifecycle simply because they don't have an effective way to search their database. A Talent Engagement Platform integrates with your ATS/CMS and uses AI-powered search to find past candidates in the database who are qualified for new roles, expanding the talent funnel and providing silver medalists with a great candidate experience.



Candidate scoring

Even the most well-intentioned recruiters can be influenced by unconscious biases when evaluating candidates. A Talent Engagement Platform removes subjectivity from the evaluation process by scoring candidates based on how well their experience and preferences align with role requirements. Candidate scoring ensures recruiting teams focus on the most qualified candidates from the application stage onward.



04

Talent engagement success metrics

We've established how a commitment to improving your Talent Engagement Lifecycle — and choosing the right Talent Engagement Platform — will bring major benefits to your company's hiring efforts. Let's conclude by highlighting the quantifiable metrics to track to determine if talent engagement is making a difference in your company.



Cost per hire

Monitor and reduce the money spent on job boards, hiring additional recruiters, and other recruiting costs. AI and automation increase hiring efficiency so top talent is acquired at lower costs, allowing your company to allocate your recruiting budget to areas that have a higher return.



Response rate

Monitor candidate response rate and adjacent metrics like text/email open rate, click-through rate, and application submission rate. All these metrics should trend up as you keep candidates interested in working for your company by responding fast with relevant messages.



Time to hire

Strive to decrease the number of days it takes to fill an open role. More specifically, the number of days to screen applicants and schedule interviews should decrease significantly with the help of an AI-powered Talent Engagement Platform.



NPS & Glassdoor ratings

Collect survey feedback from candidates, keep an eye on Glassdoor ratings, and analyze other candidate experience-related metrics. You should see an increase in sentiment as you quickly progress candidates through the hiring process, answer their questions, and provide frequent updates about their job status.



Quality of hire

Ensure you're hiring the best talent available and they're doing outstanding work once they're on the job. An effective talent engagement approach results in 100% of qualified candidates being identified and few, if any, choosing to exit the hiring process — allowing your hiring managers to extend offers to highly-talented candidates with impressive backgrounds.



Recruiter productivity

Track the number of hours it takes recruiters to complete their core responsibilities while learning if they're bringing greater value to the business. Automation should nearly eliminate the hours they spend screening applicants and communicating with candidates, freeing them up to focus on more impactful tasks like creating a long-term hiring plan, building relationships with talent, and developing a diversity strategy.



Application abandonment rate

Track the number of applications that are abandoned before being submitted. Using an AI-powered chatbot to quickly and seamlessly collect candidate information and suggest open roles should provide a major boost to the number of applications you generate.



Talent referrals

Monitor your talent pipeline to see if you're generating more referrals and candidates from other inbound sources. Improving your candidate experience results in positive word of mouth that leads to current and prospective employees happily referring people in their network.

Talent engagement results

What do results look like? Here are a few benchmarks to strive for based on successes from Sense customers.

- Hire more candidates, faster (3x more hires)
- Reduced cost per hire (up to 30% reduction)
- Maximized ROI in recruiting technology (reactive 70% of dormant talent in the ATS/CMS)
- Increased application completion rate via text/chatbot (up to 65%)
- Increased candidate response rate (up to 55%)
- Faster candidate responses (3x faster)
- A better candidate experience (2.5x increased NPS scores)
- Increased positive Glassdoor reviews
- Increased recruiter productivity due to automation (up to 30% increase in productivity)

Ready to experience the benefits of talent engagement?

The Sense Talent Engagement platform is designed to help companies excel at each stage of the talent lifecycle. With cutting-edge AI and automation, your recruiting team can accelerate hiring, lower costs, and provide an outstanding candidate experience — all while overcoming hiring challenges and exceeding your recruiting goals. Find out why 700+ organizations including Amazon, Dell, Kelly Services, Kindred Healthcare, and Sears rely on Sense to engage talent.

Request a demo at:
www.sensehq.com

