

## **Recruitment 2.0 - Cultural Learnings of Recruitment for Make Benefit Glorious Functions of Human Resources**

What you are about to read may take you by surprise. It will likely be shocking to you and leave you with nightmares. It is definitely not material intended to be viewed by those under the age of eighteen – those under the age of eighteen that is, who may be seeking employment at your company in the next 3 – 5 years.

Still reading? Let me set this up. I've been out job hunting recently as I will be leaving my current company towards the end of the year due to a restructure. This article is an adaptation of a blog entry I made on my site where I thought I would take the opportunity to share some of my own thoughts a macro level about what has been happening and will continue to happen with labour market trends.

However, the basis for the article is to share some experiences to bring things down to the micro (candidate) level for you. You see, for the past many years I have operated on the employer side of the big recruitment "machine", and it has been very eye opening for me recently to be on the other side. But, before we talk about how you may be scaring away top talent, let's first look at the state of the industry – some of this may be repetitive to some of you, but bear with me while I set the groundwork for the rest of the article.

The ominous "they" are saying that we can expect a labour crunch (crisis, shortage – many words could describe this) by the year 2010. The main reason attributed to this is the bulk of the baby boomer generation retiring in that timeframe, combined with limited immigration and slower population growth over the following generations – that is to say that boomers did not have as many kids as their parents and the X'ers and Y's are not having nearly as many as the boomers. Voila! Fewer new workers to enter the market.

You say "why not just increase immigration"? Well, the main reason being that most industrialized nations in the world are experiencing the same demographic trends as Canada and the US, and in some cases are trying to attract our workers as much as we are trying to entice immigration from their countries. It's a compounding problem that has been on the radar screen for a couple of years now. The US is expected to have a shortage of 10 million workers in 2010, while Canada's rate is in the hundred thousands. There is LOTS of additional reading on this topic and plenty of pretty graphs out on the internet, so I'm not going to go into any more detail here. What is my point and where am I going with this?

I have had a full range of experiences recently in my new found role as a job seeker. I have spent several minutes on some corporate websites trying to navigate to the Careers pages. I've spent upwards of 15 to 20 minutes typing my way through applicant tracking systems for companies, pasting and re-pasting repetitive data just to submit a resume – some of the systems have generated automated responses, some nothing, and in many cases I've still not heard anything back from some of these companies. There have been one or two positions posted that I have pursued to find out that it has been cancelled for one reason or another. I've had a telephone interview with one company only to be told that I would probably hear back within two weeks if we were proceeding further, but if it takes longer than that, then they are probably not proceeding and I should get some sort of acknowledgement of that within six weeks (authors note : I think it's been about that long now from this particular company, and still nothing).

I've been lucky enough to have most of my past careers find me. This is truly the first time that circumstances have sent me actively looking for employment. And oh boy, the things I have realized! Let me also point out that I consider myself a pretty smart cookie. Technologies available to candidates today can lend themselves to employees being able to track the activities of companies – yes, that's right, candidates are assessing your responses and actions. For example, I could name for you at least a few companies that took the time to review my resume and do further research, but have not even responded with a simple "no thanks". (Author's note –

I'm not going to say who, but if you're interested in how you are more than welcome to follow up with me) Suffice to say, these are probably companies that I am less likely to consider doing any business with in the future as a customer or candidate versus ones that have communicated in some way with me.

Wow! Imagine treating your business customers the way we often treat candidates – “We're not sure if we can make that shipment of the product you need by the end of the month, if we can we'll let you know sometime in the next two weeks, but if not we'll try to let you know sometime after that, but we may not be able to because we're really busy”. Probably not a supplier that would leave a good impression in your mind. In fact, in many cases these days, job applicants are in fact customers as well – making it even more important to ensure that the recruitment brand and CRM (candidate relationship management) commitment is equal to or better than that of the company's business commitments and customer relationship management.

Alright – small rant done. You know what? I've been on the corporate side of that! I know how busy recruiters get. I know how hard it can be to stay in touch with hundreds or thousands of candidates. Now, let's do something with this new found knowledge and link it all together...

Big companies, large recruiting “machines”, inefficient processes (not good at recognizing top talent within a database/pool of average performers), CRM that needs improvement. While talent may not be plentiful, but is still available in 2006, companies can get away with this sub-optimized processes. Active candidates may be willing to jump the hurdles but will become weary, passive candidates will not tolerate them. However, as we approach 2010 and beyond, the only companies that are going to be able to survive the “talent wars” are the ones who figure out Recruitment 2.0 (not an original term coined by the author, but it's use is springing up more and more). Think of Recruitment 2.0 as the interactive aspects of Web 2.0 versus the original internet. The ones who figure out how to maintain relationships with top talent, how to get beyond the resume, how to have the cream rise to the top of the database are going to be staffed with that same top talent and be industry leaders. There needs to be a HUGE shift in the recruitment mentality over the next 3 years. Technology and business processes need to keep up. You either achieve those dreams now, or face the nightmares in 3-5 years.

I'm glad I've gone through this experience and seen things “from the other side”. It has helped put things in perspective for me and will be invaluable as I move forward at light speed in the HR world. I hope to be at a company who recognizes these insights and is able to realize the benefits of “Recruitment 2.0” to be successful in 2010 and beyond.

My follow up entry can be viewed at <http://www.iqd2.com/gm/archives/00000006.html> for more insight on this topic and further personal experiences.

**Bio:**

Geoff is a former HR Manager at Xstrata (formerly Falconbridge Ltd) and has also held past roles at various notable companies. Geoff's background combines a unique blend of recruitment, organizational development, HR systems and project management to support all functions of HR and the business in managing the lifecycle of an employee beyond hiring. Geoff devotes his energy at present (and in the past) to developing and delivering processes to support employee onboarding, learning, development, performance management and compensation. He can be found online at [www.iQd2.com](http://www.iQd2.com) .