Handbook

YOUnique Talent Management 4.0

SME on a successful way to a

Digital recruitment

of the best Talents from Generation Z

Authors

YOUnique4Europe - Mapping and presenting your unique personal and social competences for better employability in a digital world [Erasmus+ Programme, European Commission (Key Action: Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices; Action Type: Strategic Partnerships for vocational education and training)]

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Contents

Introduction

The present handbook is specifically directed to Enterprise staff. Within this handbook the authors aim to provide to enterprise staff, especially from Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), the necessary knowledge on digital recruitment strategies attracting the most valuable Talents in a changing world of work.

SMEs have a huge representation within the European Union (EU), generating two thirds of all jobs in the EU (OECD, 2007). Managing/working in a SME differs from managing/working in a large enterprise, as SMEs face specific challenges and difficulties when compared to large enterprises. These challenges (EU, 2012) include:

competition failures	greater transaction costs	asymmetric information	spillover effects
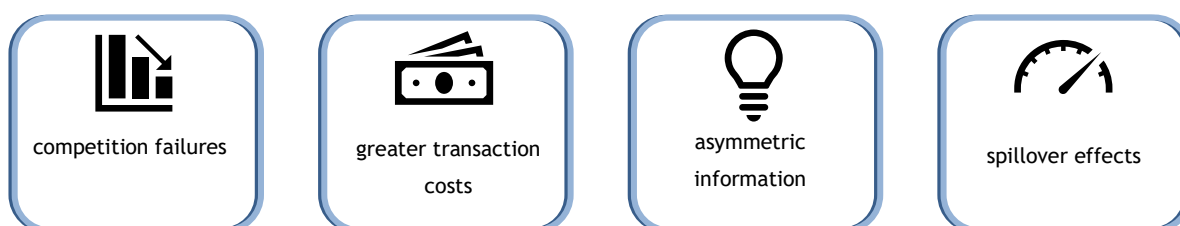
In 1992 Breaugh (1992: 4) defined recruitment as "those organizational activities that
(1) influence the number and/or types of applicants who apply for a position and/or
(2) affect whether a job offer is accepted".

The Web and the COVID-19 pandemic has gained significant influence on the digital recruitment of new employees which has even become the preferred recruitment method for companies. At the same time, the internet has changed how applicants seek new job opportunities. Whereas formerly job seekers were most likely to use the newspaper to search for open positions, they now use the internet as the most important job-related information source (Pfieffelmann, Wagner, & Libkuman, 2010). In many industries internet recruitment has already developed a "taken-for-granted" status, giving those companies not using the internet a competitive disadvantage in the recruitment process (Hausdorf & Duncan, 2004).

This rapid boost of internet recruitment is based on some distinct advantages over other recruitment methods. Advantages such as cost effectiveness, a global applicant pool, the ease of use for companies as well as applicants, or speed of hiring have been emphasized in previous literature (Chapman & Webster, 2003). Attracting the most valuable Talents by means of professional recruiting practices is a first step to win the 'war for talent'

A successful, carefully designed employer brand will help your organisation hire, retain and engage with the right talent. Digital Recruitment seems to be the most promising approach for companies to attract and maintain Talents from Generation Z to better deal with a fast-changing world and global developments like the Covid-19 pandemic, demographic and climate change, digitisation, automation, and globalisation.

This handbook has three integrated chapters:

– **I. Global Challenges for SME´s regarding recruit the right talents** – addresses the main challenges of SME regarding global trends, organisational changes and recruitment processes.

– **II. Digital Recruitment 4.0** – focus on the digital recruitment strategies, from the attractive web-based employer brand to the digital recruitment process.

– **III. Best practices** – presents examples of good practices in digital-recruiting, modern employer brand and talent management 4.0.

I. Challenges for SME´s regarding recruitment of the right talents

1.1 Global challenges: megatrends that shape our future

The Roland Berger Trend Compendium comprises six megatrends shaping the world between now and 2050. They encompass economic factors as well as social, environmental, technological, and geopolitical shifts. These megatrends have all had a major impact on people, businesses, society, and the economy over a sustained period of time. That makes them mega trends!

The Roland Berger Trend Compendium 2050 covers six megatrends that shape the future development of our world until 2050

1 People & Society	2 Health & Care	3 Environment & Resources	4 Economics & Business	5 Technology & Innovation	6 Politics & Governance
Population	Pandemics & Other Wildcards	Climate Change & Pollution	Globalization Revisited	Value of Technology	Future of Democracy
Migration			Power Shifts	Artificial Intelligence	Governance & Geopolitics
Values	Diseases & Treatments	Resources & Raw Materials	Sectoral Transformation	Humans & Machines	
Education	Caregiving	Ecosystems at Risk	Debt Challenge		Global Risks

Source Roland Berger

Roland Berger

Source:https://www.rolandberger.com/en/Insights/Global-Topics/Trend-Compendium/

Mega trends have different implications for different businesses and are bringing opportunities and threats that cannot be ignored. In this handbook, we are focused on Technology/Digitalization, People and Health & Care (COVID-19) and their impact on the recruitment of talented employees for SME´s.

> "Mega trends may be considered beyond our control, but it is within our power to understand them and take a proactive approach to considering the implications they may have on our businesses. Will they be disruptive? Yes, but they may also present opportunities." (source: salaw.com)

"We're in the midst of a fourth industrial revolution, which will become known as the digital revolution." says Klaus Schwab. The rapid advancement of technology, especially that of artificial intelligence and machine learning, is arguably at the centre of all megatrends.

In this technology-based world, companies need to be up-to-date and continuously adapt to technological innovations in order to attract and reach the attention of the new generation of workers and consumers –
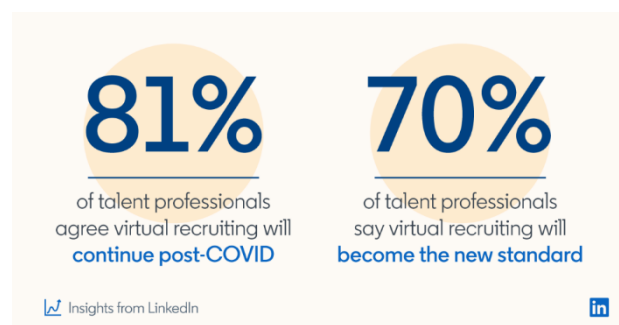
> McKinsey says "the trend is your friend"

Generation Z. To reach the attention of the Gen Zers – who were born and raised in the digital era – enterprises need to be connected online, highlighting their presence at social media and networks. This online connection includes the implementation of modern recruitment strategies (e.g., e-recruitment tools) that allow companies to attract the best talent.

The Covid-19 pandemic crisis brought a necessary reshape of the Human Resources practices in general, and recruitment and selection. Thus, the importance of implementing digital-recruitment tools has become even more evident after the pandemic crisis (Przytuła et al., 2020). Gen Z job seekers appreciate tech savvy organizations. Recent data suggests they will not even apply for a job with an organization if they think its recruitment methods are outdated. Businesses looking for top talent, even during this pandemic, will need to assure their brand messages cutting edge technology.

Recruiting today looks radically different than it did just a year ago. Accelerated by COVID-19 and the movement for racial justice, changes that were expected to take years are happening instead in months. Virtually recruiting remote workers is the new norm for many.

Internal mobility and upskilling programs are being built out, many for the first time. Diversity is finally being treated with the urgency and accountability it always deserved. Source: https://www.linkedin.com/business/talent/blog/talent-strategy/future-of-recruiting

81% of talent professionals agree virtual recruiting will **continue post-COVID**

70% of talent professionals say virtual recruiting will **become the new standard**

Insights from LinkedIn

1.2 Organisational challenges for SME – Labour market 4.0

During the transition to Industry 4.0, the change in production structure will surely have consequences. With regard to the working and professional world, according to the assumptions, work will become more challenging and have more informal qualification requirements such as the ability to act independently, self-organisation, abstract thinking-skills. (Forschungsunion & acatech 2013).

This also has an impact on the labour market 4.0, on the one hand the applicants need the right skills and competences and on the other hand companies have to adapt their recruitment strategies.

The whole topic of work 4.0 has been massively accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the COVID-19 pandemic period it became very clear for SME that digital solutions are needed to remain competitive. Nevertheless, the credo for medium-sized businesses must be:

> "If you don't keep up with the times, you keep up with the times".

Phrases such as "Our existence is currently more important than digitalisation" are partly justified, but only partly. SMEs must not now fall further behind in digitisation issues. Now it must be a matter of modernising their own company processes in a sensible and well thought-out manner in order to increase efficiency in their daily work processes.

As the digital age develops, talent attraction becomes not only more difficult, but also more important. In a world that constantly changes, HR departments are under pressure to navigate among new generations and techniques.

The internet has dramatically changed the whole pathway of recruitment process for both job seekers and organizations in employment practices. For example, CVs are sent through the internet and then scanned for keywords identifying the required knowledge, skills, competencies and experience. It is important to make sure your recruitment processes keep up with the times. Candidates expect recruiters to be more flexible now, and your team should respond in kind.

Good employees are a company's most valuable resource and crucial to its future. Well-trained specialists are becoming increasingly important in times of skilled labour shortages. This is why it's all the more important for companies to position themselves with their own employer branding so they stand out from the crowd and have the edge when it comes to recruitment. "SME´s and HR leaders have had to rethink their approach and meet the employees where they are, in the world wide web".

EMPLOYER   REPUTATION   VALUE PROPOSITION   RETENTION   RECRUITMENT   ATTRACTION
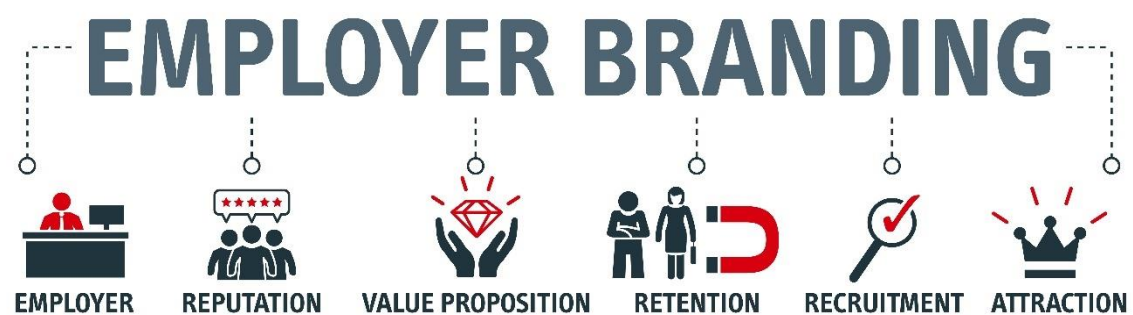
An attractive, engaging employer brand that lives on your career's pages will: help drive candidates to your talent pool, convince candidates to take the step to apply, and give the recruiter's a head start by getting candidates excited. You should leverage a variety of media, from videos to photos, to testimonials that help give candidates a picture of the company.

If your company's online presence leaves a lot to be desired, this can turn Gen Zers away. A poor user interface and buggy software can give Gen Z candidates the impression that your organization is out of touch and behind the times. So if your website is slow to load or not optimized for mobile, or your application process has a tendency to glitch out, it's time to give it a tune-up or else risk a high drop-out rate among this talent pool. Your social media strategy may also need an upgrade. Companies should consider diversifying the channels you use to source, post ads, and share employer branding content. If your company doesn't already have Instagram and Snapchat accounts, it's worth signing up.

1.3 Personal challenges: Generation Z

Generation Z is now entering the labour market and SMEs need to adapt and be prepared in order to attract and retain the best talent coming from their members. Born and raised in the digital era, Gen Zers present unique characteristics and skills that should be addressed by companies. For hiring Gen Z, companies need to know about who they are and what they want from a job — plus what they can bring to your company.

Generation Z, Gen Z or Zoomer is the term used to describe the successor generation to Generation Y. This includes all those born between 1995 and 2012 (variations possible). Generation Z will make up around 20% of the workforce and 40% of consumers by 2020.

The behavior of Generation Z is similar to that of Generation Y. Differences arise from Generation Z's more traditional and sensible behavior, e.g., a good career and financial wealth are no longer the top priorities, but rather self-fulfilment, personal freedom and time for family and friends. Generation Z is also characterized by its openness to the world, aspirations and a desire for intangible goods. Generation Z describes itself as loyal, thoughtful, compassionate, open-minded and responsible. Born in a world heavily dominated by digital and social media, the generation's character is shaped from an early age with fast-moving technology and a wealth of information.

Their character traits include courage, ambition, mastery and pragmatism on the one hand, but also traits such as practical, strong character, a tendency to anxiety and short attention span.

1.3.1.   Tipps from Linkedin TalentBlog about Gen Z

1. Gen Z is tech-savvy

Gen Z is more tech savvy than any other generation. After all, they're digital natives, so they feel perfectly comfortable using the internet as a tool for work, research, and connecting with others. They grew up learning online etiquette in the same way that previous generations learned table manners. In fact, a recent survey of 12,000 Gen Z teens revealed that 91% say the technology offered by an employer would influence their job choice if faced with similar employment offers.
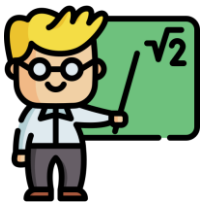
What this means for you as company:
Reboot your online presence

If your company's online presence leaves a lot to be desired, this can turn Gen Zers away. A poor user interface and buggy software can give Gen Z candidates the impression that your organization is out of touch and behind the times.

2. Gen Z is risk-averse

Gen Z is significantly more risk-averse than previous generations, likely stemming from growing up during a period of economic uncertainty and unrest. As a result, this is a generation that tends to look for employers who can offer stability, security, and opportunities for growth. One recent survey of 1,000 Gen Zers found that the top career goal among this group is to work in a role where they feel stable and secure, with 40% in agreement.
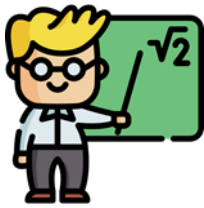
What this means for you as company:
Emphasize job security and growth opportunities

Talking candidly about their career path and helping them understand what learning opportunities are available can also build trust and help them envision a long-term trajectory at your company.

3. Gen Z is independent

Gen Z cares about autonomy and independence, and this mindset is reflected in the way they work. The internet has given them access to thousands of years of collective knowledge, and they're much more accustomed to Googling things rather than asking for advice. More than any previous generation, Gen Z also understands that alternatives to the traditional 9-to-5 job exist and are viable options. **The majority (84%) view a healthy work-life balance as a priority — but as you'll see in a moment, they're also willing to be flexible in return.** They want to advance their careers, and they'll work hard to make it happen.

What this means for you as company:
Focus on flexibility and ownership

Offering more freedom and flexibility in a job can be highly attractive to Gen Z candidates. Half of Gen Zers say flexibility is a priority when choosing a job, so be sure to highlight this throughout the hiring process and be open to remote work options. Since working independently is just as important to Gen Z as setting their own schedule, talk in depth about the kind of projects they'll have ownership over and show them the responsibility that comes with the role.

4. Gen Z is competitive

Gen Zers know what they want and are willing to work hard to get it. While the Millennial generation is extremely team-oriented, Gen Z relishes a little healthy competition — thanks in part, once again, to their experience growing up in a recession. Gen Z's competitive side doesn't just fuel their drive to receive promotions and raises. Feeling seen and appreciated in the workplace is something most Gen Z employees strive for. They seek out feedback **— with 97% saying they're receptive to receiving it on an ongoing basis —** and are eager to know what they can do specifically to improve their performance and advance their career.
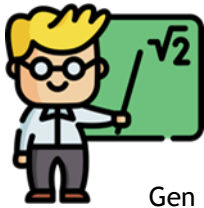
What this means for you as a company:
Recognize hard work and provide regular feedback

To retain this generation, recognition for hard work is a must. A 2019 survey of Gen Z and Millennials found out that an increase in recognition and rewards would make 79% of respondents more loyal to their employer — but **50% believe managers do not currently recognize** strong job performance.

5. Gen Z is open-minded

Major societal changes throughout Gen Z's formative years has also affected their disposition. As a general rule, this is a generation that's known for being open-minded and deeply invested in diversity and inclusivity. For example, one study found that 70% of Gen Zers strongly believe that public spaces should provide gender neutral bathrooms, compared to 57% of Millennials.

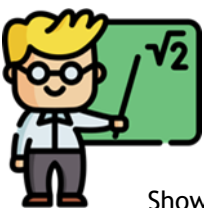### What this means for you as company:
Shine a spotlight on your diversity and inclusion efforts

Gen Z's open-minded outlook shapes their attitudes about themselves — and what they expect from an employer. They care about working for diverse companies that provide fair and equal pay and promotion opportunities, so companies that are lagging behind in these areas may lose their appeal.

6. Gen Z is focused on authenticity

Gen Z cares about ethical consumption, and they often avoid brands that are involved in scandals or that refuse to take a stand on important issues. The emphasis that Gen Z places on truth and authenticity also affects how they look at their workplace interactions. The top qualities they seek in a boss are honesty and integrity, with 38% in agreement. And even though Gen Z is highly plugged in to modern technology, 74% prefer having real, face-to-face communications with colleagues, placing a higher value on effectiveness than convenience.

What this means for you as company:
Be real, be honest, and be present

Showing the positive impact their work will have on society can be a big selling point for Gen Z when it comes to choosing a job. As with diversity, authenticity is key here, so if your company is working on improving but not fully there yet, highlighting these efforts can be very impactful. Authenticity should also shine through your job descriptions, career site, and employer branding content.

1.3.2. How to communicate and network with Generation Z

As mentioned, Generation Z has grown up with social media. They have been swiping on their tablet even before they can speak, they get a smartphone even in elementary school, and they are equating personal contacts with virtual ones. Generation Z is online up to 24 hours a day. When they get up in the morning, they first start WhatsApp and check their messages. Afterwards, they are checking Snapchat, Instagram and other social media channels. They are checking several times a day, preferably all channels at the same time.

> "Gen Z are on their way, so it's time to get ready for them"

Generation Z prefers to use the mobile Internet in all situations, even while making phone calls. Gen Z is enormously capable of multitasking, switching between apps, channels or the virtual and real-world and filtering the most important information. Also, they can be distracted very easily. Studies found that the attention span is very short, just around 8 seconds. That's 5 seconds less than Generation Y. Companies need to be aware of this, especially when placing advertisements. Generation Z expects individualized content and entertainment. Advertising must reach the attention of young people within a short time. The conspicuousness of the advertising and its relevance to Generation Z plays an important role.

In observing Generation Z, it turns out that due to the overabundance of advertisements in social media such as Twitter, Instagram or Facebook, an immunity from advertising has developed. However, advertisements that Generation Z is interested in and wants to identify with, are an exception. What's important here is that the advertisements offer more visual applications than the written word. In this way, the perfect timing, aesthetics and expressiveness of the advertisement can be ensured within a short time and it does not appear obtrusive. The advertisement should contain a message or brand that is memorable and has recognition value.

The more Generation Z can identify with this message or brand, the more likely it is to stick in their minds. Particularly popular are ads which are placed on photo or video platforms, such as YouTube or Instagram and if they allow interaction or can be viewed together, e.g. augmented reality, sponsored lenses, filters, challenges or other voting options.

To the extent that an ad has piqued Generation Z's interest, young people want a variety of communication channels and a quick acknowledging response from companies to Generation Z's interaction. Important in acknowledging interaction, is respecting privacy, security, control and ease of use of Generation Z technology. In doing so, companies should interact honestly and responsibly; perfectionism is less well-received.

This is how you/the company reaches Generation Z:

- Is the company on social media channels?
- Does the company make short and exciting advertisements?
- Have you uploaded an interesting video on your social media channel?
- Does the company have a message with recognition value?
- Have you ever taken a poll on your Instagram Story?
- Has the company used other interactive buttons like Q&A?
- Do you reply (on weekdays) within the next two hours/ relatively quickly?
- Does the company use more than one social media channel?

1.3.3. The way SMEs should interact with Generation Z to build trust WITH GEN ZERS TO BUILD TRUST

Figure out what these new employees will be looking for and how to get the most out of your teaching/working relationship with them. Tailor your messages and communication style to reach and build trust with Gen Zers.

To raise the interest of Gen Zers in your company you should…

Have a website as well as be present on different social media platforms and keep them active.

See your company's image as a curate composition. Through social media, curate how you communicate your brand, the content your company shares and the image it presents (online).

Apply the art of content creation in curating targeted appropriate content and messaging for specific channels. Getting the right message on the right platform at the right time will be the key to make it through Gen Zers' fast filters. Mind that they decide in less than 8 seconds if they're interested in your content. Hence, find a way to win their attention helping them understand what the content is about, why they should and how it will help or entertain them. Consider that one-way "messaging" alone will not work and that keeping those messages consistent is also important (Lundin, 2018).

Understand and respect their desire for privacy to be able to connect with and manage Gen Zers, as they are concerned with it as well as with security and control (IOT records, 2018; Lundin, 2018; Quillen, 2018).

Create an authentic brand/product with values they can get behind. Sustainability, embracing diversity and inclusivity are driving values for Gen Zers. Display how you're making the world a better, more inclusive, and welcoming place to all. For example, on your website you can display your commitment to social responsibility and humanitarian caused by, for example, placing a symbolic badge for it, or explaining your company's sustainable strategies like sustainable reduced packaging and recycling or calculating the company CO2 emissions, or that you're welcoming all (Guenther, 2018; Lundin, 2018).

Use intuitive communication solutions and get to the point as quickly as you can, be direct and concise as often as possible (Guenther, 2018).

To build trust and communicate with Generation Z…

If you've been trained to not self-disclose much this could bump up against what you feel comfortable with, however, try to be more authentic about who you are and what you believe in. So, don't be afraid to show your flaws and imperfections and take full advantage of displaying beliefs and values that you're comfortable sharing. They don't like polished perfectionism. **Be a real person**

Try to be engaging. While what you do is serious business, as it should be, it doesn't mean you can't insert some levity now and then. Laughter can be very powerful. Adding humour will allow you to stand out and connect with them. So, take a chance and be creative. Try to think outside the box when connecting with Gen Zers. Your attempt, even if it's not the funniest thing ever, could attract some younger employees who resonate with your energy. **Be creative and fun**

Use gender-neutral pronouns, value equity and commit to finding sustainable solutions. Go global. CSR is a plus. You better use video, videocalls, physical meetings than texting as they prefer face to face meetings (Morin, 2015). For messaging they prefer WhatsApp to emails. **Reboot your online presence**
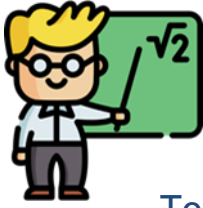
To **keep** Gen Zers engaged in the workplace…

Provide them with interesting challenges and opportunities to learn and evolve (Lundin, 2018).If you don't deliver what you promised, this cohort will walk away.

Clearly explain that the time put into a certain activity can have a huge impact in gaining personal success in life, it will resonate with them.

Give these young employees space and autonomy to shine as they are driven to work hard, so let them do that in their most productive way. They are independent and entrepreneurial; they don't necessarily seek traditional work; they are eager to go for alternatives (Lundin, 2018; Sholz, 2015).

Make them feel they're part of something bigger than a wheel of the system. They're change-oriented because they're tired of the status quo and the majority wants their jobs/role to make an impact for the better on the world (IOT records 2018; Lundin, 2018; Quillen, 2018).

Either you can create a welcoming environment for them or become their competition. Be prepared to offer autonomy, flexibility, and fair financial compensation as part of your terms of employment if you want to have any hope of enticing these workers to your business (Lundin, 2018; Sholz, 2015).

Gen Z is pragmatic and careful with their money. Make the value you offer very clear if you want to hire them or expect to make a sale (Lundin, 2018).

II Digital-recruitment

The necessity of digital recruitment has now been explained, at this point we would like to give you further interesting information to this strategic topic.

Digital recruitment, sometimes called social recruitment or online / e recruitment, occurs when human resources professionals use technology as a tool to attract and hire the best talent for an open job listing.

Thanks to the internet and mobile device usage, reaching the most skilled and proficient candidates today is easier than ever.

No longer are companies restricted to a local newspaper or bulletin board for attracting the best talent; rather, businesses can recruit around the world for job listings from the comfort of their own office.

The Covid-19 pandemic crisis brought a necessary reshape of the Human Resources practices in general, and recruitment and selection in particular. Thus, the importance of implementing digital-recruitment tools has become even more evident after the pandemic crisis (Przytuła et al., 2020).

Recruiting today looks radically different than it did just a year ago. Accelerated by COVID-19 and the movement for racial justice, changes that were expected to take years are happening instead in months.

> **Digital recruiting remote workers is the new norm for many.**

2.1 Digital-recruitment at a glance

The process of digital recruitment can be defined as a way of leveraging technology to source, assess, attract, select, and recruit candidates for open positions. It includes everything like career websites, digital job offers from companies, leveraging job boards, recruiting through mobile, social media, video interviews and online assessments.

Recruiting and retaining employees is a major concern for most of the employers these days. Digital recruitment can make the overall process of recruiting much easier. It is because it is highly useful for online recruiters to search employee profile, assess them for experience and skills and send them a quick response asking them for a chat or about a novel opportunity.

Tipps for an successful Digital recruitment strategies:

1. Mobile-Friendly Career Websites:
2. Adopt Digital Tactics in every Step of Recruitment:
3. Utilize the Power of Social Media:
4. Number of digital platforms is not Always the Best Way to Go
5. Employ Customized Digital Strategies
6. Couple It with the Latest Technologies
7. Different recruiting strategies have to work in harmony.
8. Keep Into Consideration the Future Requirements

Digital recruiting represents a complete process, from the search for potential candidates to personnel selection, to communication and administration of the application process. In the best case, electronic recruiting involves all parties equally, not only applicants and personnel managers but also supervisors and decision-makers from the departments that must fill a vacancy.

Digital recruitment, as a general process, is job-specific and offers computer-assisted screening interviews and statistical prediction to aid in reducing recruiting costs, time-to-hire and employee turnover.

Digital recruitment is a strategic way to increase firm in competitiveness via utilizing computer-mediated technique in human resource management, moreover, this competitive weapon is more demand in today's market, uncertainties and changes that necessitate organizational ability to adapt and cope with market dynamism, in addition, e-recruitment has facilitated recruitment decision-making and creation of value for Human Resource Management.

The COVID-19 pandemic certainly sped up technological adoption in the recruitment space, but it was also a result of a growing trend when it came to recruiting digitally. Hybrid recruitment and especially the digital e-recruiting is essential because it allows maximum flexibility, and it allows talent acquisition teams better manage their processes in far less time. In general, centralizing the recruiting process online when it makes sense, and doing things in-person when it doesn't, allows teams to do things on their terms, develop more agile processes, and generally save time and effort when it comes down to finding the right candidate.

The full lifecycle of recruiting involves all the stages that help find an employee and hire them. There are six generally recognized steps that make up this all-important process:

1. Preparation
2. Sourcing
3. Screening
4. Selecting
5. Hiring
6. Onboarding
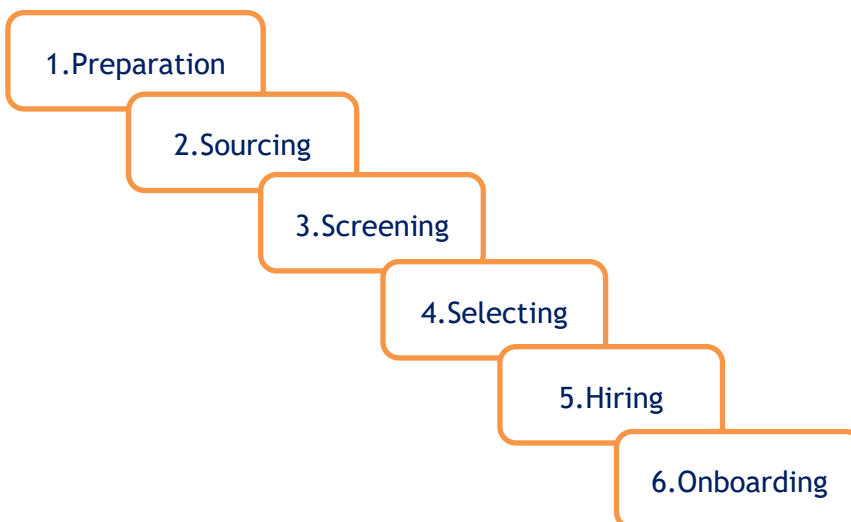
The thing about digital recruitment is that it opens up variance in each one of these steps. So, at any point in the recruiting life cycle, you could take the process and make it digital. While you might immediately think of finding candidates on social media or interviewing them via Zoom, it also extends to the hiring process (like including e-signatures), or onboarding in a fully remote setting.

Smith and Rupp (2004) assert that recruitment offers a wide range of efficiencies for both job seekers and employers and specific abilities of e-recruitment system include variety of features as:

- the ability to initiate interview requests and order background check,
- unlimited cost information tracking for all activities associated with hiring procedure,
- customized email notifications for both active and passive candidates,
- improved integration of communication activities,
- dynamic creation of employers' job page and informing job seekers,
- multiple language support for multilingual and multicultural societies,
- extensive abilities to personalize skills and experiences,
- tailoring job offerings.

Apart from these values in case of outsourcing, overall costs can be reduced but competitiveness and efficiency decrease; therefore, in the other taking alliance, merger and acquisition into strategic considerations need more capital and technical capabilities. It is argued that this paradigm can also be used by SMEs executives in development of their recruiting policies and formulating their human resource strategies.

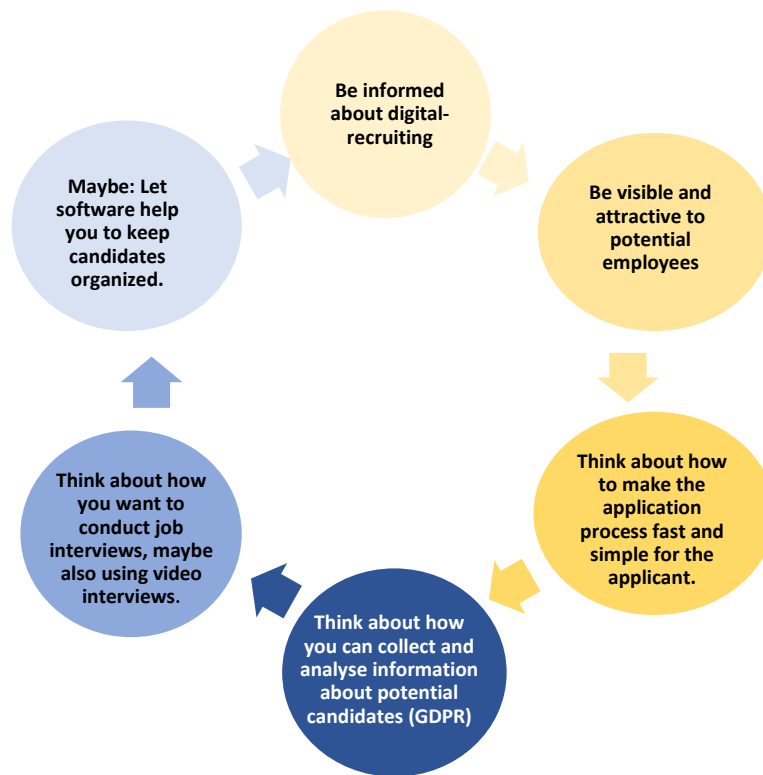Digital recruiting ideally pursues three core objectives:

➡ **Simplification.** This point applies to both applicants and companies. Job seekers want to submit their applications as simply and straightforwardly as possible, which can be achieved by using the appropriate e-recruiting forms. At the same time, a simple application system increases the number of applicants, which gives employers a larger and better selection.

➡ **Acceleration.** Time is money, but a traditional application process requires a lot of it. Sifting through all the documents alone is an enormous effort. Digital recruiting can ensure greater speed by, for example, making a pre-selection and using standardised forms to facilitate analysis and comparison.

➡ **Improving quality.** In the end, recruitment is always about finding and hiring the best possible candidate for a position. This is exactly what digital recruiting promises by providing electronic support in selecting a suitable candidate.

Recommendations about digital recruitments

Be informed about digital-recruiting

Be visible and attractive to potential employees

Think about how to make the application process fast and simple for the applicant.

Think about how you can collect and analyse information about potential candidates (GDPR)

Think about how you want to conduct job interviews, maybe also using video interviews.

Maybe: Let software help you to keep candidates organized.

Be informed about digital recruiting.

This way you know which approaches and digital tools can make your life easier, and of course simplifies the application process for the applicant. Small scale tools can be checklists, for example, provided by your public employment service.

Further reading: Recruiting methods FAQ: A guide to terms and strategies

1. **Be visible and attractive to potential employees.**

   In the war for talent, having a strong brand can help the organization attract and retain the most talented employees. Candidates want to work for employers with great reputations, who are known for fairness, flexibility, independence, strong leadership and opportunities for growth. Planning Employer Brand communication is essential for attracting talents and ensuring they stay in the company. Your company should be easy to google which means to position yourself as an employer on the internet, for example by managing your Google Business Entry, creating landing pages for your vacancies and or consider search engine optimization of your website content. Become the company people dream of working for; build your brand as a top employer. **Further reading:** The employer Branding Podcast

2. **Think about how to make the application process fast and simple for the applicant.**

   Make sure every step can be done on a personal device, not just a computer or laptop, depending on your resources. You might want to go for emailed resumes or offer an online application form to fill in.

   Further reading: MightyRecruiter

   This online software supports publishing and distributing job offers through different channels, makes the process of candidate management and ranking easier and offers quick analytics and reporting. Mightyrecruiter has an easy set-up and offers to build a career site in only a few steps.

3. **Think about how you can collect and analyse information about potential candidates.**

   Tool: Social Media, examples are career networks such as XING in Germany/Austria and LinkedIn but also Facebook. LinkedIn is the No. 1 ally for Employer Branding and Talent Acquisition Manager. A professional platform of nearly 700 million users worldwide, 13 in Italy alone, which grows at a rate of 2 profiles per second.

   Further reading: https://business.linkedin.com/de-de/talent-solutions/recruiter

4. **Think about how you want to conduct job interviews, maybe also using video interviews.**

   Further reading: Video on How to conduct a job interview

5. **Maybe: Let software help you to keep candidates organized.**

   All their data and documents could be saved in the system for you to review. If this is too big for you, at least improve your existing system so that you need less time to keep track of all information and processes around recruiting.

   Further reading: The value of ePortfolios in recruitment and human capital management processes

> **Don´t forget the GDPR regulations !**

2.2 Benefits regarding digital recruitment

An employer, besides searching into a resume, also thinks of skills assessments to measure whether a candidate has the attributes to perform the job successfully. Hard skills are best assessed through certificates revision and/or binary tests that directly measure specific proficiency or have a right and wrong answer. Soft skills instead are better assessed through thoughtful (video) interview questions that require candidates to pull from their personal experiences in the workplace. Digital application processes make it easier to carry out video interviews and to focus on soft skills.

You can use different tricks to assess soft skills:

- Looking at the wording used in the CV
- Using structured interviews based on a predefined list of interview questions (and follow up questions): asking open-ended situational or behavioural questions (using the STAR response technique: Situation, Task, Action, Result)

Examples of these questions include:

- What is the most difficult change you have encountered in your educational life and how did you manage it?
- Tell me about a time when you failed in a school or internship setting. What happened? How did you handle the situation? What did you learn about yourself?
- Tell me about a time you had to admit that you had made a mistake to others. How did you handle it?
- You could also add in specific questions that relate to the role being filled. For example, a candidate being interviewed for an accounting position might be given a situational question to uncover soft skills, such as "How would you inform a customer that he did not settle the invoice for the third time by now, which you did not consider as basis for future cooperation?"

2.3 First steps towards a successful digital recruitment

One part of digital recruiting is online recruitment. At first glance, it does not seem to be that different from face-to-face recruitment. You probably have been attracting new employees or trainees already online and now you simply do the interviews on a video platform.

At a closer look, digital recruitment as a whole means to adapt to new situations and processes. It certainly requires thinking differently, asking yourself the following questions:

- How can digital recruiting help me? If I represent a stable SME with not many people I will apply for digital recruiting differently than a company seeking to grow quickly and as cheaply as possible. In this case, I might need the help of recruitment consultants, do I have the budget for this?

- Who will do the recruiting? For that, it is advisable to assess your company and your capabilities. Will I be responsible, or one of our managers/HR professionals or an external recruiter?

- Digital recruiting requires considering information about the applicant beyond traditional application documents: Questions might occur, such as how do you evaluate digital badges? Imagine your applicant brings along fifteen different badges from five different training organisations. How do you get an overview? At least you can be sure that this person has picked exactly the knowledge he or she wanted to have and can create his learning paths.

- Recruiting also requires understanding of what can be expected of trainees or young employees. What have they been taught in a VET programme or at university? What kind of practical experiences can they show? How can I describe the kind of hard and soft skills needed for a specific job incl. its roles and will there be applicants, who can fulfil this role?

- At what day and time should I do the job interviews? Which time of the week and day could be best for the candidate? A video interview should be planned carefully as recruiters also need to get used to video recruiting, in terms of sound, technical issues etc. In the end, it all comes down to create a proper e-recruiting environment.

- What about the general technical equipment and digital competences which are needed?

Tipps for an attractive job offer

1. Apply the TASK model

For creating a good job description, you could resort to the TASK-Model. TASK stands for:

T – RUST	**A** – TTITUDE	**S** – KILLS	**K** - KNOWLEDGE

Every employer seeks to find the right people with a fitting attitude. By covering these aspects in the job description, you make sure to also focus on personality apart from vocational requirements for a certain position. Here again the kind of workplace determines what you are looking for in applicants. Will they need to work in an environment close to other people in presence or at home? How many relations with the outside world will they have? Who will be the person they interact with and in what way?

2. Work with pictures

Include authentic pictures from the company, trainee or trainer (recognition value).

3. Include short videos of trainees or employees at work

Those videos, embedded to your online job description page, can enhance the experience of job seekers, convincing them of you to be a promising employer. Two to three minutes can be a good length.

4. Include a written statement from your apprentice or employee to your job advertisement

5. Find out where do young people search for apprenticeships and jobs.

It might be Chamber pages and homepages of companies, maybe not via an employment agency. For apprenticeships it was found that girls search more on Instagram, whereas boys look on YOUtube, at least in Germany. Keep in mind possible gender preferences.

6. Advertise what your company offers, particularly the specifics of the vacant position, with expectations not formulated too high. *The order of information in job description could be:*

- Who are we?
- What do we do?
- What are the basic knowledge and skills we require for this position?
- What would be nice of a potential candidate to have in terms of special soft and technical skills? What is most important (no skills that are obvious anyway such as reliability) specifically for this position and therefore cannot be left apart?

Considering applicants' expectations of digital recruiting

Digital recruiting suits many applicants and makes a lot of things easier. However, job seekers are not simply satisfied, but have high expectations of the electronic application process.

The most important point that companies must therefore take to heart:

Above all, digital recruiting should be fast. This point already applies to the creation of the application. Job seekers want to take a maximum of 30 minutes to enter data, and the majority even want to take a maximum of 20 minutes. Afterwards, the process should continue as quickly as possible.

Ideally, a first confirmation of receipt should be sent immediately after sending the application, but at the latest after a few days one would like to know whether the application has been received successfully. Only then does the most strenuous phase come for many applicants: the waiting.

It is clear that things cannot go fast enough here. Candidates find between two and three weeks appropriate, but it should not take longer than that to find out whether or not they have made it to the next round of the application.

Some hints specifically for apprenticeship vacancies

Formulate comprehensive, easy to understand and precise apprenticeship descriptions, also mentioning what formal knowledge is required from school and which occupation-specific competences are requested.

Do not hesitate to also speak about special highlights or add-ons during the apprenticeship programme, for example, that trainees can complete a short part of their training abroad.

In times of crisis, such as a pandemic, mention that the training will take place despite the pandemic to make applicant feel secure about their choice.

Sympathy and speed are important to trainees: sympathy in the interview and speed in the decision-making process.

After the apprenticeship contract has been signed, try to bind the young person already to your company until the actual apprenticeships starts, for example by already giving some minor tasks, something to read, keeping in touch informally or distributing the companies' newsletter.

2.4. Latest Trends in Digital Recruitment

1. Virtual Reality:

Using VR let a candidate know that the business practice innovative and cutting-edge technologies. It provides positive images even if it is expensive and timely to integrate into the recruitment strategy.

2. Artificial Intelligence AI:

Artificial Intelligence is playing a great role in the way of finding new talents. It considered recruitment as one of the challenging jobs that modern businesses hold. AI can alleviate a bigger proportion of hard work.

3. Video Interviews:

No matter where a candidate lives, dragging him/her down to the interview room is no more an advanced way of hiring. It is a waste of money and time for the company as well as the candidate if it does not seem suitable. It is a great way to save time and removes the less suitable candidates from the screening process. This way, you can bring only the top selection candidates to your table. This is highly useful if the potential candidate stays aboard.

4. Social Media:

Social media can be an excellent place to head towards recruiting. Whether it is Twitter, Tumblr, Facebook, Instagram or other professional networks like LinkedIn, you can find them all and use them in order to recruit the best talent. This is one of the most effective recruiting techniques that are effective to target millennial and next-generation who use social media to meet all their requirements.

5. New Techniques of Interviewing:

Just like new recruiting techniques, there are new interview techniques as well. Presently, candidates prefer interview sessions, which are less informal. For this reason, even some companies invite candidates to a coffee in order to know them better.

6.Open-Ended Posts:

The way job descriptions are being defined and portrayed has also changed. Recruiters are always trying novel tactics like leaving off the job titles or leaving off other specifications.

6. Glassdoor:

Along with job searching, one more thing emerging is reviewing the company platform. Now current, former, or other staff can review a company online. Definitely, this can result in some disgruntled workers leaving a company at a low scale. This website Glassdoor, is gaining high popularity and offers young workers a great sense and insights about a company. This way, it is possible to know many flaws about a company right before joining.

III. Best practices

The identification of the different approaches that are performed worldwide on modern recruitment strategies may enable the transfer of good practices to different countries or SMEs.

Across this third chapter, examples of best practices of modern recruitment strategies will be presented. These best practices were selected from the existing examples that are performed in different EU countries.

Best Practices			
Name	Description	Country	Company
How to use personal relations to find and choose a suitable candidate	1) Use internal knowledge: spread word among co-workers and encourage them to suggest suitable candidates for an open vacancy. 2) Invite future co-workers to the application interview. 3) Use personal channels first to search suitable candidates among co-workers' networks, as a second step involve staff responsible for recruiting.	Germany	Company: Original Bootcamp, **Link to one of their landing pages for a job vacancy as personal trainer**
Digital recruiting days	With mydays you realise successful recruiting in the digital space. On our platform, you have the opportunity to bring all the players together on one day, conduct all the necessary interviews between applicants, HR and specialist departments and even integrate virtual experiences as a soft skills test.	Germany	DIGITAL RECRUITING DAYS (DE) https://b2b.mydays.de/international-clients/

EURES **EUROPASS 2.0**	Platform to post your vacancy at European level for hiring workers from other countries. The threefold checklist will give you an idea of the steps you need to take before, during and after recruiting abroad.	EU wide	https://ec.europa.eu/eures/public/en/advertise-a-job?lang=en&app=0.19.0-brexit-build-0&pageCode=advertise_job Checklist: https://ec.europa.eu/eures/public/en/hints-and-tips-emp?lang=en&app=0.19.0-brexit-build-0&pageCode=recruiting_abroad
Mondora srl	Video – Hiring in Mondora	Italy	Mondora srl
Speed Recruitment	Annual event where the participants may visit the registered organizations' stands, and apply to the existing job opportunities. The event includes speed interviews between the candidates and the registered organizations. The 2020 edition occurred exclusively online.	Portugal	Oporto Municipality https://speedrecruitment.pt/
Virtual Job Fairs	Virtual job fairs allow employers to reach to a large number of potential candidates from a wider geographical area. It lets them interact with job seekers at a virtual level without the expensive and time of travel. Moreover, it reduces waste and cut pre-screening time and helps to email suitable prospects for the scheduled interview.	Germany	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=orElLxEkDUI https://virtuelle-berufsmesse.com/ https://messe-hwk.fachkraefteportal-brandenburg.de/
Online Recruitment Websites	These are the most familiar sites of digital recruitment methods, but they offer improved services every day. For example, Monster is a leading provider of online recruitment and career resources, committed to linking organizations in every market segment with individuals at every level of career. Using such platforms can help recruiters to search and match a perfect candidate, establish a social recruiting presence, and enhance the job posting with targeted advertising.	Online	https://www.monster.de/ https://de.indeed.com/recruiting www.xing.com
Company Web-Sites	Job offer on company web sites and social media (!!!Search engine optimization (SEO) !!!)		

IV. Conclusion

The latest trends in digital recruitment include the use of mobile applications, company websites, social networking sites, blogs, resume scanners by employers to search for the most suitable candidates and also by candidates to search for the best matching open vacancies (Okolie & Irabor, 2017).

The implementation of digital-recruiting tools has been increasing in the last years, as it presents several advantages, namely reducing time and costs associated with the process of recruiting, promoting a more positive and corporate image of the company, reducing the amount of administrative work and promoting a better match between the job vacancy and the candidate (Bhupendra & Swati, 2015; Kerrin & Kettley, 2003; Kim & O'Connor, 2009; Maurer & Liu, 2007).

In order to attract the best talent, companies need to create profiles on social networks, namely Facebook or Linkedin, use job portals, or contact online recruitment agencies to advertise their job vacancies (Okolie & Irabor, 2017).

Digital recruitment also encloses several challenges, both for employers and for candidates. For employers, the main challenges include, among others, dealing with the failures that may occur in the completion of job profiles, lack of face-to-face interaction or receiving a large number of applications without the required profile (Okolie & Irabor, 2017). On the other hand, candidates may face challenges regarding privacy issues, outdated job offers or lack of feedback from companies (Okolie & Irabor, 2017).

The challenges of digital-recruitment tools may be even stronger for SMEs that have less resources than large enterprises. Due to their more limited resources, it could be more challenging for SMEs to use sophisticated and costly digital-recruitment tools or to deal with the large number of applications resulting from the digital-recruitment process (Kim & O'Connor, 2009).

Also, as SMEs are smaller than large enterprises, their recruitment needs will be less frequent as well, providing unique and specific characteristics to their recruitment process. Additionally, SMEs may be less familiar to job candidates due to their more limited presence in the labour market (Storey et al., 2010). The identification and recognition of these major challenges and specific characteristics of the digital recruitment of SMEs is crucial in order to adopt the best strategies for an effective and successful e-recruitment process.

It is important to retain that digital recruitment goes beyond the use of technology, as it aims to attract the best suitable talent, based on clear and credible criteria (Okolie & Irabor, 2017). In fact, more than a technology shift it comprises an important cultural and behavioural shift for the companies' mindset (Okolie & Irabor, 2017). The continuous transformation of society suggests that digital recruitment will continue to be in the spotlight, and thus, companies should invest their time and efforts on the adaptation and quality improvement of their recruitment strategies (Okolie & Irabor, 2017).

Why Digital Recruitment Process:

- It is an efficient and cost-effective solution that save a lot of time. Further, it eradicates all hassles of traveling distances within the recruitment process

- It is an excellent solution that allows companies to schedule and conduct video-based interview sessions online

- Digital recruitment also involves many automated features such as sending emails to notify the end of an interview

- The present world is technology-driven, and hence, companies need to adapt advanced solutions that can help them conduct more efficient and lucrative recruiting

- Skilled workers / specialists can be recruited worldwide

Considering the latest trends and opportunities/challenges of recruitment strategies, this handbook was particularly designed for trainers working in companies, providing them the best knowledge on how to use the modern recruitment strategies and, particularly, on how to reach Generation Z attention.

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