Social Recruiting Paranoia
5 Worries That Are Holding You Back

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Introduction

Eleanor Roosevelt once advised the world, "Do one thing every day that scares you." The idea, of course, is that gradually and consistently confronting our fears can help us overcome them. And behind that idea is the belief that the final result will be worth it—that a person afraid of bridges, for example, will find greater benefits in crossing a bridge than in not crossing it.

But paranoia can be a powerful thing, especially in the world of social recruiting. Countless recruiters and hiring managers are too overwrought to get started, or they hesitate to take it all the way to fruition. Perhaps you're one of them. You're worried you might say the wrong thing, fail to realize value, or cast negative light on the company's brand. These are valid concerns—but refusing to address them only instills a false sense of security. The reality is that, in not crossing the bridge you fear, you're actually causing much larger problems. Moreover, you're missing the tremendous advantages that await you on the other side.

The use of social media is proven to be an effective addition to any modern recruiting strategy. Seventy-three percent of recruiters have made successful hires through social media[1] and 59% of recruiters think candidates found through social networks are of the "highest quality."[2] Not only that, but job boards and agencies can cost thousands of dollars, while posting a job on many social media networks is completely free. Bottom line? A solid social recruiting strategy can be the right prescription to cure your paranoia, giving you the ability to help you hire better candidates while spending less money. The key, then, is to get over the anxiety, and get in the game.

In this eBook, we'll look at five common apprehensions that drive social recruiting paranoia and the critical errors they can cause. We'll also outline straightforward measures you can take to confront your concerns directly, avoid serious mistakes, and improve your overall hiring success.

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[1] http://www.mediabistro.com/alltwitter/social-media-recruiting_b50575
[2] http://web.jobvite.com/rs/jobvite/images/2014%20Job%20Seeker%20Survey.pdf

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Worry #1: You have no clue where to start.

Admit it: You find the idea of launching a social recruiting channel a bit overwhelming. It's a new project, it seems daunting, there are so many options, and who knows where it will lead? Like an ostrich, your gut response is to stick your head in the sand and hope the problem disappears.

Bad idea. If you give in to the fear of getting started, you'll end up with no strategy at all—and now is not the time for inaction. As recently as October 2013, one study found that "92 percent of companies use platforms such as Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook" to recruit candidates.[3] Do you really want to be one of the last 8 percent? Will you even be able to compete for talent?

How to conquer the fear

- Take it one step at a time. This will ultimately be a long-term endeavor, but start by setting short-term goals. These bite-sized chunks are easier to manage and can help you increase your focus without adding stress. Try building one-, three-, and six-month plans.

- Familiarize yourself with the territory. Learn which candidates are using which networks and for what purposes (because they're not all the same). For example, according to Jobvite's 2014 Social Job Seeker report, Facebook is a favorite with social job seekers looking to share perspectives on a company, while LinkedIn is where people go to actually look for open opportunities. And Twitter is where candidates turn to ask questions and solicit advice.[4]

- Watch what other companies are doing. Visit various popular social networks and see how your competitors are recruiting—and determine whether their strategies seem effective. Are they engaging with candidates? Do they provide useful information? How often do they post?

- Listen to what others are saying about your company. Participate in social forums for recruiters, and see if you can get some practical examples from peers who have been there/done that.

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[3] http://www.mediabistro.com/alltwitter/social-media-recruiting_b5057
[4] http://web.jobvite.com/rs/jobvite/images/2014%20Job%20Seeker%20Survey.pdf

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Worry #2: You might post jobs incorrectly.

You know a good portion of any social recruiting strategy involves sharing available positions and leveraging networks and connections to get the word out. But what if you post inaccurate listings? Or you accidently duplicate a hiring manager's post? What if you forget to give candidates a way to respond? What if you post in the wrong places?

Relax. These types of challenges only arise if you act first and think later.

How to conquer the fear

Using the right format for the social network you're on is critical to earning respect and engagement.

- Start with a plan. Determine all the basics up front, including:
  - Which jobs will be shared on social media?
  - Who will be responsible for posting them?
  - How often will jobs be shared?
  - Which social networks will you target?
  - What do appropriate posts on those networks look like?
  - What will you ask interested candidates to do?
  - How will you communicate the plan within your organization?

- Don't forget to use the referral power of your company's employees! They can certainly share jobs to their networks, too, so make sure they understand how you're hoping to use social media, what they can do to help, and what incentives you might offer for referrals that lead to successful hires.

- Be savvy about social media etiquette. Using the right format for the social network you're on is critical to earning respect and engagement. For example, keep posts short and sweet on Twitter (140 characters max, or use a shortened link to read more detail) and post only photos or short videos on Instagram. And when candidates engage or ask questions, always respond promptly.

- Use metrics to refine and build best practices for posting jobs. As your plan rolls out, track and measure its progress. Are your posts receiving a high level of interest? Which networks and posts are getting the most positive response? As you come to understand what works well (and what doesn't), refine your plan and create best practices that guide you and your team to optimal success.

Worry #3: You'll misrepresent your employment brand.

Employment brand is top of mind for most recruiting teams these days—and part of creating and maintaining that brand is using social media as a communication channel. But branding can be tricky. It's the crux of what your company wants to convey about its employees, its work culture, and its vision. If you say the wrong thing, you fear you'll alienate candidates or irritate managers. You don't want to be responsible for a PR nightmare!

The problem, however, is that your employment brand exists on social media whether you work to build it there or not. That's because other people are talking about what it's like to work for your company—everyone from current and former employees, to competitors, to customers, to jobseekers you've never even met. The less you show up to reinforce your employment brand with real information, the more others will do it for you. And you might not like what they're saying.

Establish employment brand standards.

Building an employment brand on social networks is marketing, pure and simple. You have to market your brand if you want to attract candidates, just like you have to market products in order to sell them. Effective marketing of your employment brand will establish your authority and help contradict any inaccurate information that's been floating around. And, over time, you'll cultivate respect and greater interest in your company—the kind that drives quality talent to apply for jobs.

First, of course, you have to know and understand the employment brand you want to convey.

How to conquer the fear

- **Establish employment brand standards.** Perhaps these already exist in your organization, but if they don't, get on the task right away. It's your job to know your company's vision for its work culture. Here are a few ways to get started:
  -Talk to employees. You're trying to answer the question, "Why work for us?" You'll get the truth from the people who already do just that.
  - Determine what tools you can use to define and communicate this vision, including employee testimonials, photos, and videos. Don't have these things created? Add them to your to-do list.
  - Craft boilerplate text that helps people throughout your organization understand the language you want to use when discussing your employment brand.
  - Involve leadership. This is not a small undertaking, nor is it one that is ever really complete. You need approval, insight, and ongoing support in order to keep your employment brand a strategic consideration for the company at large.

- **Set the right tone.** When you're engaging with candidates, partners, or other recruiters online, you don't have to write long descriptions or get into heated discussions in order to convey your messaging clearly. Sometimes, communicating your employment brand is as simple as posting a few

pictures or a "Day in the Life" story that showcases a specific team. Figure out the right tone for the forum in which you're posting, and have tools ready to meet your needs. And make sure all your employees have access to these tools as well.

- **Give people a fun way to share your brand.** Create a unique hashtag or two that your team and other employees can use when posting about the advantages of working for your company. You'll not only give them a mechanism for spreading your message, but you'll have a way to track who's talking about you.

- **Take control.** Keep tabs on what people are saying about what it's like to work for you, go through your interview process, the benefits you offer, and so on. Sites like Glassdoor make it easy for people to submit anonymous reviews, so be sure to check them out. Address any questions or misconceptions about your employment brand, so that you can remain in control.

Worry #4: You'll drown out other company messages on social media.

Your company already posts on Facebook and Twitter about products and webinars and partnerships. Will you detract from their messages if you start adding recruiting posts to the mix? Will your job listings overtake the CEO's blog? Or will your posts get lost in the shuffle? You're afraid you'll step on the toes of other departments if you try to join in.

Newsflash: Don't use the company's primary social media accounts. Job seekers don't want to weed through 40 product-related tweets before they find one related to your current openings. You need to set up dedicated recruiting profiles on each social network, with dedicated channels through which you funnel only recruiting-related inquiries or applicants. Not only does this prevent mixed messages, but it also helps candidates get straight to what they're looking for, without confusion. You'll increase your reach, while making it substantially easier to engage with talent.

How to conquer the fear

- Be unique and easy to find. When creating recruiting accounts on all the social networks you'll be using, stick with usernames or page names that are familiar and that make it clear you're dealing with jobs. For instance, if you're working for Acme Company, and the overall corporate twitter account is @AcmeCo, you can set up @AcmeCoJobs.

- Be personal—to a point. It's perfectly fine (and, in fact, encouraged!) to share job opportunities on your own personal social accounts. But don't turn a profile that's also used for personal affairs into your sole platform for social recruiting. Your employment brand needs to be larger than just one person. What would happen if you left the company?

- Stay focused. Once you've launched these dedicated social network accounts, keep your content focused on recruiting, and be sure to provide useful features that job seekers want. Post job openings, provide a way to apply directly, and offer an option for candidates to stay in the loop and join your talent pool. That might mean including a sign-up for an opt-in newsletter or RSS feed to your blog, or it could mean feeding their social profiles directly to your candidate relationship management system. Jobvite offers tools that make it easy to capture talent and resumes.
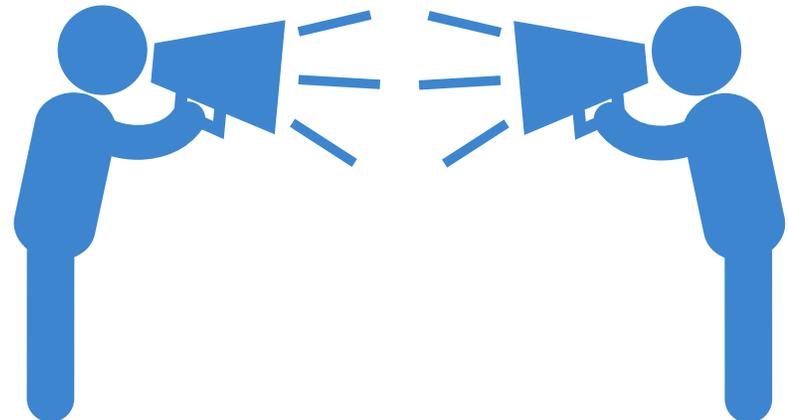
Worry #5: You're too busy to give this the real attention it deserves.

You already feel like you're being pulled in 10 different directions, so you're wary of taking on any new project that threatens to take up more hours. How are you supposed to post on and monitor social networks all day? Automation seems like the only rational approach, but it doesn't feel right to just re-use content and auto-post everything for the sake of expedience. Won't that look…fake?

Yes, it will. Continuously re-used and robo-posted content only shows prospective applicants that you're too busy or distracted to put real effort into your social connections, which can threaten the success of your entire recruiting strategy.

While it's great to use automated scheduling tools to simplify the posting process, you have to be careful of appearing robotic. Today's social job seekers want to work for companies that are genuine and transparent. In fact, according to a recent Glassdoor survey, 95% of job seekers expect openness and transparency from any company they are evaluating.[5] You can meet that expectation without killing your schedule.

How to conquer the fear

- Balance automation with authenticity. You want to share real words that speak to real people, not some job requisition number and a bunch of acronyms. Plan a week's worth of content for every network in advance, and then let your technology worry about posting on your behalf. In other words, it's okay to use automation tools that deliver your pre-written posts according to a defined schedule, but avoid content that looks like it was spat out of a computer. (Jobvite has tools that can help.)

- Always be honest. Remember that—whether they're actively looking for it or not—your prospects want a dream job. As one Fox Business contributor recently advised, "Provide job seekers with an accurate view of your company: its core values and why people love working there. Corporate culture is something that the new generation of workers value above all, so be sure to clearly communicate it with extreme honesty."[6]

- Provide useful content and meaningful actions. Maybe you can't post as often as you like. Maybe you aren't dropping job listings and witticisms every hour like some companies. That's okay. If you always give candidates information that matters—valid job opportunities, glimpses into teams and typical work days, descriptions of perks and benefits, ways to keep in touch—then they will become increasingly engaged, and you will present your company in a positive, genuine manner.

… according to a recent Glassdoor survey, 95% of job seekers expect openness and transparency from any company they are evaluating.

[3] http://www.glassdoor.com/press/glassdoors-opencompany-program-reaches-150-employers-commitment-workplace-transparency
[4] http://www.foxbusiness.com/business-leaders/2014/07/11/7-strategic-tips-to-recruit-on-social-media/

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Conclusion

Allowing your social recruiting paranoia to fester can clearly do more harm than good when it comes to hiring strong talent. In today's highly competitive job market, you can't afford to be behind the times because of fear and hesitation. To stay ahead of the game, you need to actively participate in the latest trends—particularly those that are proven to help you succeed.

Overall, remember to:

- Investigate your site from a range of mobile devices, and see how you stack up. Is your

- Have a social recruiting plan, and take it slowly.

- Know your social network etiquette.

- Build and communicate employment brand standards.

- Set up separate recruiting accounts.

- Be genuine and meaningful.

Hopefully, these tactics will be the "medicine" you need to cure your paranoia, and give you the courage to forge ahead with a more complete and modern recruiting strategy.

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