E-Recruitment Technology: The Effective Source of Recruitment

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ABSTRACT

The emerging of new technology innovation has form an evolution to the organization process including human resource management. In order to compete in an ever-changing global environment, organizations need to attract and retain highly talented workforce with the assistant of so call electronic human resource. Electronic human resource (eHR) systems including web-based job sites, portals and kiosks are utilized to attract job applicants as to facilitate the recruitment process. E-recruitment as part of EHRM refers to adding recruitment pages to organizational websites, developing interactive tools for processing applications and using online screening techniques. This online strategy for brain gain is crucial to encourage an influx of qualified and skillful employees. This paper tries to identify the insights of e-recruitment. Its objectives are to consider the effects of e-recruiting practices on applicants' attraction to organizations, review the findings of recent research on the topic and include the advantages and disadvantages of e-recruitment.

KEYWORDS: E-Recruitment, Brain Gain, Internet, Human Resource Management, E-HR

INTRODUCTION

Recruitment is one of the most important stages in human resource management. It is the process of attracting individuals on a timely basis, in sufficient numbers and with appropriate qualifications to apply for jobs in an organization [37]. Previous studies have highlighted on the impact of technology on business by exploring the effects of new technology development and implementation on the efficiency of business, including its effects on human resource practices [14, 15, 17]. In general, organizations' adoption of the web as a medium has been faster than any other medium in history [8]. Online recruitment which also known as e-recruitment has become one of the universal fads for human resource (HR) functions [9]. The internet speeds up the hiring process of employees, especially where long distances are involved [21]. The increased competitiveness in the recruitment market as to get the best employees has led the organization into spending more on developing recruitment strategies. The brain gain has been identified as strategic human resource and recognized as a significant role for the corporate HR function, especially in the global firm [44-45]. In [34] claims that as the knowledge economy continues to develop, the value of outstanding talent or brain gain will remain distinguished.

E-RECRUITMENT PROCESSES: WHAT'S USED IN PRACTICE?

Normally, the e-recruitment process involves practically searching the Internet speculative applications resources for prospective applicants. There are a lot of e-recruiting activities and processes specifically online job posting such as on corporate websites or job portals, receiving of applications over the Internet, storage of these applications, screening applications, online tests, response and status management [46]. According to [28], this virtual brain gain approach is more generally involves the following basic steps:

- employ search engines and keywords to recognize potentially related sites (e.g. an industry site correlating to the position)
- identifying a contact that may lead you to a group of potential applicants (e.g. someone involved in an industry chat group);

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- actively aiming individuals categorized as qualified in certain areas, which may involve going 'behind the firewall' of other companies.

Online application methods vary greatly in their level of sophistication. The most basic use of the internet to facilitate the application process is simply receiving e-mailed curriculum vitaes (CVs) and application forms rather than paper versions. More sophisticated approaches involve specially designed online application forms, which collect and store specific information about candidates. It often has the facility to automatically rate or categorize candidates on the basis of certain responses to questions.

E-Recruitment technology is employed by organizations due to numerous reasons including attracting candidates, informing benefits about the organization and assessing applicants' knowledge, skills, abilities and other requirements (such as personalities). For instance, software called Resumix is used by some firms to scan applicant résumés for key words and stipulate them with instant response about whether they are suitable for jobs. Certain organizations like Price Waterhouse Coopers and JPMorgan Chase use online aptitude tests, personality inventories or simulations to gage candidates' critical thinking and decision-making skills. Not to say that there are firms which ask candidates to submit video clips in their application and even conduct interviews online. Research shows that about 12% of organizations use e-recruiting systems to test applicants' knowledge, skills and abilities. These systems allow a huge number of applicants to be screened rapidly and efficiently [10].

E-RECRUITMENT AS A SOURCE OF APPLICANTS

An estimation of one in four job seekers uses the internet to search for job opportunities [47]. In [31] found the rising use e-recruitment to advertise positions vacant by the Fortune 100 companies, as listed in the 2003 Fortune magazine. The e-recruitment technology could in time ensure greater diversity of job applicants, and thus may increase the effectiveness of the recruitment process by reaching large numbers of individuals with unique talents and skills including those in international labor markets [10, 21] and streamlining burdensome administrative processes. It is believed that the adoption of e-recruitment would improve the shortlisting process and boost candidate confidentiality. E-recruitment also provides the facility to search for specific competencies of candidates.

Online recruitment will target on candidates who have access to computers and have the skills needed to use this technology. Thus, e-recruitment may likely attract applicants who are well educated, have the ability to navigate the Internet, and are searching for relatively high-level jobs. As argued by [36], online systems entice candidates with higher achievement, drive and persistence levels than conventional recruitment sources. E-recruitment also broadens to more interactive recruitment tools as to build relationships between job seekers and organizations [38, 42]. This includes the ability for organizations to instigate background checks, take on interviews, create customized e-mail notification of recruiters for passive and active candidates, stipulate multiple language support, psychometric testing, interactive application forms and other assessment mean [3, 4, 15, 21, 47]. Those sophisticated internet recruitment tools are actually preferred by companies in an attempt to reduce the size of applicant pools efficiently [32].

E-recruitment enables external applicants to apply for specific jobs via the careers page of the company's web site. The system is capable of the volume recruitment campaigns. Recruiters would have direct access to the CVs of qualified and selected candidates. Moreover, the CVs of interview candidates can be digitally filed and called up in only a couple of seconds. Candidates can update their CVs online. The recruiter can know the number of CVs he or she has sourced for each position and can track the various stages of interviews. Mails can be sent via the system to the interview panel and candidates. Interview feedback can be laid into the system, either by the recruiter or by the interview panel. The interview feedback can also be sent by e-mail to the candidate. Selection becomes simpler and job offers can be recorded in the system without much delay. The e-recruitment system decreases the cycle time [13].

All job applications are now channelled through the careers portal. Organizations will gain huge savings in terms of costs, time and effort, especially in recruitment costs [10]. Moreover, the system is helping human resource managers to play a more strategic role in the firm as it enables the organization to evaluate the success of the recruitment strategy [48]. In order to establish a performance-driven work culture, staffing should be aligned to business goals. In e-recruitment, the recruitment function will be integrated with other key IT systems like mail, finance and payroll. As such, the system is scalable to meet future business needs.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

E-recruitment is the process of personnel recruitment using electronic resources, specifically the internet [49]. The word e-recruitment has been intimately associated with online recruitment, cyberuiting or internet recruiting

that represents the formal sourcing of jobs online [21]. This famously used HR functions has tremendously grown to be a trend and utilize by both related parties namely the recruiter (the hiring company) and also the job seekers (potential workers) [9].

By using database technologies, online job advertising boards and search engines, employers can now fill posts faster. This made the process of recruitment improves better and may save the employers' time as they can rate several candidates independently. It is well known that the internet reaches a large number of people and can therefore obtain immediate feedback. It has become the major source of potential job candidates or also called recruitment or e-recruitment. Nevertheless, it may not increase the diversity employees and contribute to brain gain since the tendency of generating many unqualified candidates is high [43]. The capability to attract and retain skilful and superior employees can lead to a sustained competitive advantage for organizations [51]. The organizations will be in jeopardy if they routinely attract, select and retain homogenous employees in the workplace. This situation could occur through the enduring dependence on conventional recruiting sources (e.g. newspapers) and selection methods (e.g. face-to-face interviews only) in which organizations confine the range of characteristics possessed by selected candidates [7]. Therefore, it is crucial for organizations to ensure their recruitment and selection strategies are regularly reviewed in sourcing brain gain and a diverse array of quality employees within an intensifying global competitiveness [25].

The Internet has made an impact on human resource management [9] as it has completely changed the recruitment function, from the organizational to job seeker's perspective. The conventional recruitment process is time-consuming with high costs and limited geographic reach. Organizations worldwide has increasingly relied on computer technology in their recruitment efforts. A distinguish area is in recruiting via the internet, which known as e-recruitment [39]. E-recruitment provides global coverage and speed due to the internet's unrivalled communications capabilities. The terms of e-recruitment, online recruitment or internet recruiting implies formal sourcing of jobs online [21] which includes job advertisements, receiving resumes and fabricating human resource database. In reality, e-recruitment has the potential for brain gain strategy in which the internet is used to entice high quality candidates, vetting of appropriate profiles, simplifying the application and selection process [52].

Nevertheless, there is an argument by [6] saying that e-recruitment need to be used in combination with other techniques. They added that e-recruitment should not replace traditional recruiting but must be implemented together. In [14] also supports that e-recruitment should not be a stand-alone tool as it can be assimilated into a general recruiting and selection strategy.

BENEFITS AND POTENTIAL CHALENGES IN USING E-RECRUITMENT

The most obvious benefits would certainly be the time and cost savings to the hiring company [29]. The traditional methods like newspaper advertisement may took from a day to a month to pool the suitable candidates while using e-recruitment it may has immediate response if the candidates comes across it. On average, the e-recruitment stages is 70% faster than traditional hiring methods with recruiting process is speeded up at every stage from posting, to receiving CVs, to filtering it, managing the contacts and workflow [27]. E-recruitment provides shorter recruiting cycle time because recruiters can easily identify candidates who have applied previously and create consistency in the recruitment process with standardized processes, templates and guides. The recruiting administration will be lowered by as much as 50%, thus more time available for other HR initiatives. This shows that the administrative burden of the HR department can be diminished [28]. In [1] said that in the case of an HRIS (Human Resource Information System), it is proven that with such integrated development, both the administrative load of work and the costs for the recruiting activities are significantly reduced. At the same time, e-recruitment may reduce firm's reliance and costs on recruitment agencies [12] since employers can post vacancies automatically onto their own branded website and external job boards besides increasing brand awareness by attracting candidates to the website

E-recruitment allows companies to share talent globally with a single system and use this data to target and track the passive job seeker [24] and reach a wider range of applicants [12]. It streamlines communication between company and qualified candidates. Therefore, the firm will build their own talent pool to source for future job opportunities-sophisticated talent relationship management tools that allow companies to build a database of suitable candidates from past applicants or from previously identified targets. The internet has instigated the major transformation in the recruitment process in the past decade acting as a linkage between employers and job seekers. In [41] highlights that online recruiting assists in the reduction of unqualified candidates and lays more opportunities for smaller companies. The system is less intrusive [30]. The candidates are young, educated and computer literate, thereby showing interest in the recruiting company [21]. These groups of job seekers are willing to spend more time searching for jobs online because the process is become much easier and faster than traditional systems [11].

Besides providing global coverage on a constant basis [2, 35] online recruiting, company can measure success with a comprehensive set of reports including reports on key performance index (KPI)'s such as the average cost per hire, agency performance tracking reports, etc. E-recruitment gives the company a more up to date image [12] and a chance to focus certain labor market [50]. Pre-eminently for firms searching for specific or high-qualified knowledge, it is crucial for them to attract a sufficient number of potential candidates to choose from [26, 16]. This system can be used to prepare data for HR balanced scorecards and benchmarking. Hence, e-recruitment has become visible as a substantial part of the recruitment strategy.

Some potential challenges of e-recruitment includes discrimination between internet users and non-user [20], enormous volume of unqualified and low quality candidates [21, 40], user unfriendly tools [19] and lack of personal touch. The Internet has changed the way of recruitment from both perspectives, i.e. organizations and job seekers [18]. A continuous perfection in understanding the technological issues related to e-recruitment is recommended. There is an argument that e-recruitment is needed to be used with other techniques. According to [6], internet based recruiting will not substitute conventional practices in recruiting but a well implemented e-recruitment strategy can help the recruitment process become more worthwhile. In [14] also reinforces that e-recruitment is not treated as a separate tool but is incorporated into a whole recruiting strategy.

In [33] highlight the problem of data security and suggest the maintenance of secure and reliable database free from hacking organization should concentrate on the presence of firewall at operating level. Timely updated antivirus software based supportive system are valuable for E-recruitment oriented organizations. While from a management perspective, there is challenges faced by organization on how to prove the financial benefits of e-recruitment, which was seen as key to building confidence internally and to secure ongoing investment. A supporting business model, increased internal education and fit for purpose technical solutions can help address these current limitations [1].

DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH

Previous studies on e-recruitment mention that organizations use online recruiting to track "passive" job-seekers [21, 23, 47]. These "passive" job seekers are generally those who, dare not vigorously source and apply for jobs, provide details of their resume and work history through a personal website, or who have information on their company's website which is reachable by other organizations which may approach and attempt to poach them for an alternative position [5]. The organization has to perform its online recruitment system to achieve its goals [22]. Therefore, it is recommended that research attempts to reveal the magnitude that organizations utilize the internet to source passive job seekers and their quality as an applicant as opposed to job seekers actively searching for positions. Such research area is becoming increasingly crucial to practitioners as the labor market becomes more competitive as organizations worldwide are targeting on brain gain strategy.

In terms of job seekers, it is suggested that exploration on the use of the internet by different employment groups to source and apply for positions undertaken. For instance, applicants searching for jobs classified in the professional employment group are more likely to use the internet than those looking for positions in the academic employment group. Moreover, research can also be conducted by focusing on the corroborated benefits and limitations; using empirical tools such as time-studies and document reviews.

CONCLUSION

The adoption of e-recruitment is not simply taking on technology; it is about the online recruitment strategy for brain gain as to attract the right talented candidates, the selection process being based on sound and credible criteria and the tracking process being able to integrate with existing systems. Most importantly, e-recruitment comprises of cultural and behavioural changes in recruitment function and at management level. Human resource managers have to regard staffing as an uppermost process so that e-recruitment can provide remarkable benefits in terms of efficiency and cost. All in all, an incessant improvement in understanding the technological issues related to e-recruitment is highly recommended.

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