

6 CONVERSATION STARTERS ABOUT RECRUITING FOR YOUR NEXT EXECUTIVE MEETING

Now that we're halfway through the year, I assume a big planning session is on the horizon. I want to arm you with ways to start meaningful discussions about hiring and recruiting. **Ultimately, these conversation starters should help you discover: consensus on strengths and weaknesses; ways to recreate success; opportunities to improve the process; and how executives can be catalysts for change.**

How do we feel things are going?

"We need more candidates," or "The market is really tough right now," are answers you will hear. What is said, and by whom, reveals: which executives care about or are impacted about talent acquisition, and the executive group's awareness about "in the weeds" hiring challenges.

Your group has the ultimate power to make changes. If you don't think things are going well, it stands to reason your hiring managers feel the same. Use what comes out of this dialogue to talk your leaders about finding recruiting solutions.



What insights can we glean from our data?

- Do you have data about hiring activity readily available?
- What information does your company track? Examples include job ad performance, candidate engagement, referral sources, submission-to-interview conversion, compensation, interview and onboarding timelines, and declined offers.
- Does this data provide insight into where there are opportunities to improve hiring and recruiting?

There is a certain amount of intuition that goes into hiring. After all, we're talking about people not widgets. However, relying on feelings will not create the big picture changes you may need. Analyzing data on hiring activity and seeing recruiting trends starts to build long-term talent acquisition strategies.

What are our success stories?

Have you seen the "Welcome to Our Team!" posts on social media? A new hire is a success story, but you can't stop there. Think about how each hire can build upon one another to create success. Share hiring success stories companywide. Challenge teams to accomplish this with their openings. Tell managers to walk away from situations that don't measure up.



What are our hiring challenges ahead?

This is a goal oriented, workforce planning question.

- How do you define challenges? Is it based on candidate volume, creating roles, expanding hires into markets, etc.?
- What do you want to accomplish? More real recruiting, greater diversity in your sourcing, or better integration/synergy/best practices among teams?

Remember, what you care about is ultimately what your hiring managers will focus on and how success will be judged.



Is what we're doing working?

Recruiting is likely not your area of expertise. That's okay; there are plenty of people internally and externally you can utilize as subject matter resources. The way to understand this question is from the lens of subjects you do understand — finance, sales, and operations. It's easy to apply those principals to talent acquisition.

- Finance: We have \$X allocated to a recruiting budget. Do we have a ROI expectation for each resource? Is our spend in certain areas out of control?
- Sales: Are we falling behind on our recruiting goals? Do we get enough 'at bats' with candidates and win head-to-head battles with competitors?
- Operations: Do we have the right people and processes in place? Do we ask hiring managers to be too involved in recruiting? Is HR overwhelmed with open job requisitions?

Remember, your passion, care, and commitment makes a HUGE difference whether those on the front lines — human resources, operations, department managers, and employees — are happy and engaged in recruiting. This ultimately determines if your company's talent acquisitions goals can be accomplished.

"Ask the Insurance Recruiter" is a monthly column written by Mary Newgard, Partner, and published in partnership with **Insurance Journal Magazine**. Visit Insurance Journal Magazine's website for a complete list of previous articles.

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What do people think when they hear that our company is hiring?

Have you read reviews before making an online purchase? Job seekers do the same before they apply for a job. This question is about self-reflection and the answers could be hard to hear:

- What information has been written about us on Google and Glassdoor?
- How do candidates find our job openings? What's working on social media, job boards, our Careers page, and LinkedIn messages — and what's not?
- What percentage of our hires are sourced by referral — employees, market connections (carriers, vendors), and past applicants?

This question is about engagement, i.e., how you communicate with people when they apply; how you keep in touch with candidates during the interview process; and how you communicate and foster a candidate database.

