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5 Tips to Improve your Recruiting Metrics

SmartPost is a sourcing intelligence tool developed by Bernard Hodes Group to assist recruiters in developing effective online job-posting strategies. SmartPost has a robust set of business-driven metrics contained within easy-to-use dashboards, allowing recruiters to determine the best sourcing strategies for their jobs.

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When building great Human Resources metrics, it's easy to get mired in the details and lose track of your goals. The axiom "manage what you can measure," certainly holds true for all of us in HR. But when faced with the challenge of building a set of metrics for your recruiting organization, and, even more difficult, a dashboard summary for executives, there are some common mistakes we've all made. Below, we outline some of the more common issues in building great recruiting metrics.

1 Make your dashboard charts easy to read

Don't make a dashboard by pasting as much data as possible on one page. Experienced managers of data know that the dashboard is an instrument panel that will assist you (or your executive) when you use its gauges and indicators. You're designing an instrument panel for making decisions. Don't clutter it up with data not used in your decision-making process.

2 Choose the right cut of data when building a new report

As you create a report, you may have the right columns and the right rows, but err when selecting what slice of data to use. For example, your executives want to see a real-time view of all open requisitions. When you run the report, you select all jobs opened within the month. This, however, is vastly different from running all jobs currently open as of today's date. You may have only opened up 10 jobs in March, but it is important to consider the posts that carried over from other months that had yet to be filled. While this example is fairly obvious, others are difficult to detect. Here's a quick quiz to illustrate this point. Using the following cuts of the same data, what is the difference when you select all interview statuses where:

- Only jobs *closed* within the month are reported?
- Only interview statuses that *occurred* in the month are reported?
- Only jobs that were *opened* within the month are reported?
- Only jobs that are *open right now* are reported?
- Only the *final statuses of candidates* in closed jobs are reported?

If your head is spinning, you are not alone. All five choices answer very different questions. Reporting interview statuses on all closed jobs will give you a clear historic picture of how candidates wound their way through the interview process. This allows you to see average time in between important interview stages. Reporting on statuses that occurred within a month gives you a picture of the work a recruiter did during that timeframe. A "final status" report will reveal how your candidates looked at their last status; this could actually function as your applicant flow log.

The same report will have a very different meaning depending on what cut of data you select. So, before you run your data, make sure you know what you want the report to tell you. And then, check your query to ensure you're grabbing the right data.

3 Articulate a clear HR business problem that the metric will answer

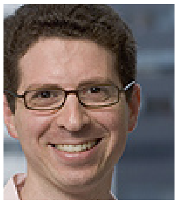
Each element on your dashboard must pose a relevant business problem that can be solved when the metric is run. Test this on your current metrics: If you can write down exactly what business question the metric answers, then you have a clear metric with a clear goal. Example: "I want to monitor learning and development expenditures in real-time. In this way, I can intervene before the month ends to ensure we didn't overspend on sales training and under-spend on management training." You can definitely build a metric around that articulated business problem. Avoid reporting on a metric merely because you have it available.

4 Keep the goals for your report reasonable

A surefire way to eat up valuable work time is to attempt to make one report do too many things. As you add columns, you many improve some data but hurt other data. We've all fallen prey to the quicksand of a reporting challenge, bogging us down further and further to fix the problem created by the last addition to the report. Spinning your wheels? Stop, back up, and re-approach your original goal.

5 Allow for shades of gray

Some of what you are going to report is not black-and-white data. For instance, Human Resources runs an ad for 15 different positions in 9 different departments. If you run a department-level cost analysis of recruiting expenses, you're going to need to decide how to divide up those expenses. And the way you divide it will only be an educated approximation of reality at the department level. Yet, as long as you can accurately describe your assumptions to anyone that needs to understand the data, you've done well.



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