The effectiveness of online social networking term paper

Business, Company

IN RECRUITING NEW EMPLOYEES, NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE

Human Resources HR353

The Effectiveness of Online Social Networking in Recruiting New Employees, Negative and Positive

The introduction of the internet into the field of business has improved many of the traditionally done functions of the human resources department and one of them is recruiting new employees. Traditionally, recruiting new employees are done through mailed applications or walk-in applications then the applicant is called into a series of tests and a final interview. The procedure is longer as it would take months before companies would select the new employee. With this style of recruiting, not only does it cost a lot of money to continue reviewing applications but it also cost a lot of time for the company which they could allot for other kinds of activities. With the capacity of the internet to introduce new mediums and ways to entice applicants to the business, many have used this alternative instead of just concentrating on the traditional means. But how effective is the use of the internet especially the use of online social networking in recruiting? This paper discusses the negative and positive points of using online social networking in recruiting new employees.

Bondarouk, Ruel and Looise (2011) points out that online recruitment can be explained as the use of the Internet to attract new employees or applicants to a company through the use of the company website or commercial job

boards. Since the boom of social networking websites such as LinkedIn, MySpace, Facebook and Twitter; many have noted that it would also be an effective means to recruit new employees than the use of job boards. However, in terms of its effectiveness, many have cited that social networking sites are more efficient that job boards. This is one reason why social networking sites are a good means of recruitment today as it caters to the lapses given by job boards and offers an immediate solution in identifying which group they need to target. According to the study done by the authors, many companies have stopped using job boards to recruit given the unwanted applications they receive from unsuitable applicants, some have noted that they did not get much response to online ads and others have even pointed out that job boards are not cost-effective .

Rutledge (2008) explains that online social networking is very effective given the notion that many are enticed to use it despite the misconception that social networking is just for the young generation. Many have understood that with social networking, they can reach all types of possible employees and reach any demographic. Through the use of online social networking, companies and recruiters could immediately identify the applicants that have applied through their written profiles. In terms of making their presence known in the site, recruiters can actively market themselves easily through their business profile and the site’s advertisement board. Online social networking can also serve as a channel for recruiting companies to build up their connections despite the fact that candidates who connect to them are not exactly the people they need. Through these numerous connections, not

only can recruiters get the employee they want, they can also efficiently build up their reputation as a good recruiting company and enable a job pool for possible openings in the future.

Online social networking recruitment also enables HR departments to entice those who are known as passive applicants and those who may have the talent in the field whom they could seek out once the student has graduated. Most employers and recruiters know that despite the influx of applicants that they may get through social networking, there is always a possibility that the people they need are just a profile away and just bidding their time. Rutledge cites examples through the methods used today by the CIA, Ernst & Young, Google and even the Yuma Police Department. These companies opt to use both Facebook and video streaming such as in YouTube to catch the attention of the possible applicants who regularly visit the famous social networking sites. Through the use of uploaded videos, this would enable possible applicants and others to understand what these companies do and how exactly could they be a part of the company. In terms of their Facebook pages, companies can update their subscribers and even those who have liked the page with latest developments, openings and even tidbits about the company that applicants may need to know that would entice them to try out

Aside from the capacity of online social networking in reducing the costs of recruiting traditionally, spreading the name of the company and targeting their ideal employee, it is also a two-fold benefit for both the applicant and the employer. Strathee (2005) noted that through the perspective of the

employer, this reduces hiring errors and worker compliance. Social networking enables them to have a medium to immediately get results that can be both trusted and tested. Some companies also find it better to use online social networking to convey all of the company's requirements to the public without limitations. For applicants, online social networking enables them to access information about job vacancies which are not published in regular job advertisement boards and even get information about other types of work which is normally seen as impossible forms of work. Social networking sites also enable job hunters to find a concentrated portal of job openings for the region and read information pertaining to the company hiring and if they can be trusted.

Through online social networking, Strathdee adds, existing employees can help their companies in seeking out those whom the company needs through the contacts they have built up over the years. It is very unlikely that these employees would recommend people who are not worthy of the position as this would not only endanger their position in the company and damage their reputation to their employers. For those who have been recommended, this is a humbling opportunity and they would not waste the opportunity in being selfish and stubborn about their performance and entry to the company. They can even reciprocate this same opportunity to their friends whom they find worthy of any job opportunity that may open up. Existing workers can also serve as a leverage to make sure the new employees they have recommended perform well. They are given the opportunity to teach the new workers and teach them about the rules of the company. Networking enables companies not only to provide new jobs to reliable applicants but it could

continuously built up their connections through both new, existing and searching applicants .

Although the benefits of the use of online social networking in terms of recruiting new applicants and employees are promising and efficient, there are still some negative and questionable effects that it brings up especially due to its nature that it is all done through the use of the internet and digital media. Mathis and Jackson (2010) points out that there are legal implications that must be understood and answered especially by the companies to guarantee to its applicants that they can be trusted and they are of legal nature. Some of the noted concerns of the authors is how the screening is done especially with the applicant turn out they get through the use of social networking sites. With the thousands that have applied, it would also be like partaking into the traditional method of recruiting if a person has to check each resume one by one. Was the screening process done without bias and with justifiable grounds? How exactly do they do it?

Another question that comes to mind especially with this type of recruiting is how the company analyzes each data from each client and how it does enter in the online recruiting process. It may seem illogical that the company would disregard all information once the recruiting stage is over. There is a possibility that the company would keep the information but is it legal? The implications of confidentiality breach would be hard to prove should the applicant find the company draining sensitive information from the applicant’s computer. This is a visible disadvantage of this type of recruiting since everything has to be set to public. Information must always be shared given that the applications would have to be traced back to its applicants

and even share that information with the national government. One important danger that can be seen with social networking profiles is the fact that any posted information may violate legal policies set by the national government and even be a cause of immediate denial of the application even if the applicant is the one suitable for the opening. This can even spell disaster for employers as some companies often turn down applicants because of their racial backgrounds, gender preferences and even because of what they believe in. Many employment lawyers see this as a ground for discrimination and termination lawsuits that could jeopardize the company to the world.

Another disadvantage and negative effect of the use of online social networking in recruiting is the amount of work that must be done to efficiently continue getting more publicity and interested applicants at any given point and at any given advancement of the company. Since the social networking community gives the company a broader exposure to their target audience, the HR staff must continuously maintain online job post applications, resumes must properly be checked and reviewed, e-mails must be sent out to applicants and social networking site owners, blog entries must be written regularly and finally, the staff must be able to continuously fund a special software that would track down all applications, feedback and forms sent to the company. Despite the internet to be one of the most cost-free mediums a company could use, the company must continuously pay for the extra hours the staff would have to use to maintain their profile and website so it would always be up-to-date.

Finally, recruitment through online social networking has a negative effect

especially if the goal of the company is to get the passive and yet perfect employees that they would need to fill the job position. There are still applicants today that only have a limited access to the Internet given their socio-economic background and some may even be from racial and ethnic groups that have a history of being oppressed by the public because of it. Since they cannot regularly check updates and eventually lose the slot the company has given to them since they took a while to reply back. This defeats the purpose that the company hires someone they really need rather than someone in the middle. There are even some cases that some applicants only apply but they don't really want the job at all as they just want to test if they can get inside the company. What happens next is something they would decide onto once it happens. Not only would the company be affected by hiring mediocre employees, they would lose talented applicants that they did not seek out personally once they have gotten their applications .

The effectiveness of online social networking especially in the field of recruiting new applicants is dependent on the application and the strategy enacted by the company to entice and educate the people. If the company used a weak strategy and campaign, they would not get the expected turnout they have estimated with the use of online social networks. However, if the company used a strategy that would enable them to catch the attention of both active and passive applicants, not only would the turnout be more than what is estimated, the company may even locate the people they need without much problem. Without a sound strategy, a well-targeted

campaign and target applicant group; online social networking recruitment may turn out to be just a normal style of traditional recruitment.

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