



INTRODUCTION

For years, executives have struggled to attract the right talent for their business. Human capital challenges are considered to be among the top global concerns for CEOs, according to The Conference Board 2016 CEO Challenge Survey. Most CEOs understand that a talented, engaged, and properly motivated workforce must be in place in order to increase operational excellence, drive innovation, and improve customer relationships. Additionally, today's generational differences are introducing workforce dynamics that organizations must learn to manage to satisfy and retain their staff.

HR organizations are best positioned to enable companies, strategically and operationally, to successfully navigate these current talent struggles. Previously, ScottMadden explained the importance of “[Workforce Planning](#)” and how organizations should address anticipating worker retirements, using contractors and outsourcing, and establishing required skill sets. In this article, part two of the “Talent Struggles” three-part series, ScottMadden will explain the importance of attracting the right talent and related best practices. Finally, [part three](#) will address managing the generational gap.

Attracting the Right Talent

As the competition for talent rages on, some companies are starting to think outside of the box. For example, in many industries, analytical skills are in high demand but are hard to find. Companies in search of these skill sets are starting to look at non-traditional fields and positions, such as a clinical trial analysts, epidemiologists, and research scientists. Using non-traditional searches will help in nearly all career fields.

Second, the Millennial generation is growing in the workforce. To attract younger workers, companies, their practices, and their cultures must be appealing to Millennials. With companies finding it difficult to fill critical positions and Millennials not finding jobs that meet their needs, this does not seem to be the case. ScottMadden believes there are ways to resolve this imbalance by building the right talent, enhancing the employee value proposition, and thinking outside the box.

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Building Talent—Not Just Hiring It

Many companies search for candidates that possess specific skills and competencies. What companies often miss in this search, however, is whether an applicant is a fit with the company's culture. Base-level competencies (i.e., problem solving or communication) should be given more attention, instead of focusing strictly on specific job skills. Employees that fit a company's culture and have base-level skills can be trained and developed on job-specific competencies. Hiring for fit and developing skills can be achieved through utilizing assessment center interviewing and creating multiple paths to allow for skill development prior to hiring (i.e., internships, co-op programs, Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) high school programs, alliances with community colleges and technical schools, onboarding

training programs). Applying these methods can help the search for qualified candidates and yield better results.

When it comes to hiring Millennials, it is important to offer employees a value proposition that emphasizes flexible work opportunities, technology improvements, social and environmental involvement, and career growth options for all position types. Re-energizing the company brand, recruiting materials, and employing culture to portray a fun, vibrant, and challenging work environment is appealing to Millennials. The latest recruitment methods, such as apps, video interviewing, and onboarding portals, are additional tactics that are recommended for improved Millennial talent acquisition.

Thinking outside the Box

Recognizing constraints in workplace environments that make “having fun” a difficult thing is critical when it comes to recruiting and retaining top talent. Thinking outside the box to improve company culture should be a priority when corporate environments are lacking a positive and fun atmosphere. Several ways to improve workplace culture include, but are not limited to:

- **Implementing** friendly competitions
- **Developing** employee recognition portals
- **Encouraging** young employees to contribute
- **Fostering** a workplace environment where employees are empowered
- **Building** cohorts of new hires who work and play together
- **Providing** internal resources and opportunities to grow and develop

A growing need for attracting the necessary talent is a natural byproduct of success. Overall, recognizing areas of improvement in the workplace, enhancing the value proposition, and helping new hires grow are three critical changes a company must undergo if it wants to bring in and retain the right talent while assuring employees that the company meets their needs.

In the [final article of this series](#), ScottMadden will highlight the importance of preparing for the exit of significant talent and suggested practices for managing the generational gap.

ABOUT SCOTTMADDEN’S CORPORATE & SHARED SERVICES PRACTICE

ScottMadden has been a pioneer in corporate and shared services since the practice began decades ago. Our Corporate & Shared Services practice has completed more than 1,500 projects since the early 90s, including hundreds of large, multi-year implementations. Our clients span a variety of industries from entertainment to energy to high tech. Examples of our projects include business case development, shared services design, and shared services build support and implementation.

ABOUT SCOTTMADDEN’S ENERGY PRACTICE

Since 1983, we have been energy consultants. We have served more than 400 clients, including 20 of the top 20 energy utilities. We have performed more than 3,000 projects across every energy utility business unit and every function. We have helped our clients develop strategies, improve operations,

reorganize companies, and implement initiatives. Our broad and deep energy utility expertise is not theoretical—it is experience based.

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