



# **Practice Recruitment Strategy**

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## Why is a Structured Recruitment Strategy Important?

The recent shift in the employment market is requiring a strong shift in perspective from employers. Today, recruitment must be approached much differently to accommodate the current employee-driven climate. Now, more than ever, your ideal candidate/avatar has more career opportunities. You will be competing for top talent and must adjust your recruitment strategy accordingly.

An open position with your organization can cost you thousands of dollars each day that it sits vacant. It is imperative to take this lost opportunity into consideration when strategizing how aggressively you will recruit, onboard, and retain top talent. Quality matters a great deal. The success of your organization weighs heavily on having the right people in the right positions to ensure everything runs efficiently. Your recruitment and team member selection process should start with a clear understanding of not only your objectives and KPIs as an organization, but also your core values and culture.

The right candidate should both be able to effectively execute their job responsibilities and meet established KPIs for their position and understand and align with the organization's core values and culture. Your recruitment strategy must also outline how to target and engage these types of candidates.

## The Proof is in the Statistics

- Talent shortages in the United States have risen to historic levels with 69% of employers having difficulty filling jobs
- 75% of candidates will research a company's reputation before applying for a job opening
- Companies with a strong employer brand see 50% more qualified applications and hire one to two times as fast
- 79% of job seekers will consider a company's mission before applying
- The average cost of a bad hire is around 30% of the employee's first year earnings

- 51% of respondents would be more attracted to a company that had job postings with visual elements (images or videos) than to a company that didn't
- Job postings with videos have a 34% greater application rate
- When it comes to onboarding, 87% of new hires say that buddy programs boost proficiency

## Steps to Successful Recruitment

### 1. Determine Your Ideal Candidate/Avatar

The current employment market is now requiring that practices or DSOs not only ask what they are looking for in an ideal candidate, but, more importantly, what that candidate is looking for in a position.

Once you determine who it is that you are looking for, step into the mindset of that ideal candidate and create all recruitment campaign assets to speak to this avatar.

First, determine who it is that you are looking for by asking yourself the following questions:

- What skills should the candidate possess?
- What tasks will be involved with the job?
- What responsibilities will be involved with the job?
- What qualifications and experience are needed for the position?
- What kind of personality are you looking for?
- How should your ideal candidate embody your core values?

The next step is to analyze what your organization is offering and determine if it is truly appealing in comparison to your competition. If you were the

candidate, what would make you apply to your practice and not another practice in your area?

WORKSHEET: [What makes my practice appealing to potential candidates?](#)

## 2. Evaluate & Establish Your Employer Brand

Your employer brand speaks to how you present your organization to job seekers. A strong employer brand clearly communicates the core values of your organization, its culture, and raises awareness of what the organization offers.

- **Analyze any reviews from employees on listing sites** such as Glassdoor
  - It is important to respond to both negative and positive reviews when the option is available
    - Know your response will be judged just as much or more than the initial review, remain fair and objective
    - Encourage former and current employees to leave reviews, making sure to space out posts over time
- **Understand your reputation and create counter-branding** that addresses concerns, it is important to be self-aware and realistic
  - Did bad reviews result from previous hires that did not integrate well with your culture and brand?
  - Encouraging current team members to leave a positive review
  - If you are unable to offer the best benefits consider counter-balancing with more time off or a flexible schedule
- **Know that your website, social media and online patient reviews** will often be analyzed by candidates
  - Flesh out your LinkedIn profile so that it is engaging and represents your brand and core values
  - Keep your social media pages active
  - Candidates look at patient reviews to get an idea on how smoothly your internal operations flow

### 3. Write A Clearly Defined Job Description

Currently, competition for qualified candidates is so intense that a well-written job description is an essential asset to your recruitment strategy. The job description should be focused on what THEY are bringing to the position and ultimately what THEY are getting in return from your organization.

The job description must also clearly outline responsibilities involved and provide a detailed description of the position for potential candidates. Your goal here is to dial in on exactly what you want the role to look like without over-explaining, so that you can have a focused, successful hiring process.

Keep in mind your avatar from **Section 1**. This job needs to appeal to them!

When defining the role, start by **asking for feedback from current team members**. They can provide valuable insight and help you understand any elements of the position that you might not be familiar with.

Then you'll need to:

- **Determine the most accurate job title**
  - Make sure it reflects the nature of the job and the duties being performed
  - It clearly reflects ranking order with other jobs in the organization
  - It is self-explanatory for recruitment purposes and can be easily found in online job searches by your ideal candidate
  - Research other job postings for similar positions and titles, it will give you an idea of keywords to use, and what is searchable
- **Create a list of duties and responsibilities**
  - Optimize your list and make it as short as possible while still clearly communicating expectations

- Fight the urge to over-explain the position by focusing on higher level responsibilities and tasks. It is easy to overwhelm candidates with minor details
- **Create a list of skills and competencies**
  - Make it very clear what skills and competencies are required for the position versus what are preferred or nice-to-haves.
    - **Skills** are activities that the candidate can perform based on what they have learned in the past or from qualifications they have obtained
    - **Competencies** are traits or attributes that you expect the candidate to display in the role, such as leadership, flexibility, communications and initiative
- **Ask: is there anything that stands out about this job?**
  - If so, be sure to include that in the description
  - This can help your future job posting distinguish itself from the competition

Once you have your draft job description, share it with the same team members you originally asked for input. Get their take on it: does it sound right? Is it missing anything?

After the description is finalized, you'll be ready to move forward with the process of creating job postings and putting them up online.

#### **4. Create A Recruitment Page Or Website For Your Organization**

A designated recruitment page or even a stand-alone website (for DSO recruitment) will increase your employer brand awareness and bring in more qualified candidates.

This depends on the size of your organization. If you have one to three locations, you need a recruitment page on your practice websites. For larger

organizations with four plus locations, a separate DSO recruitment website is more effective.

Along with acting as a landing page or digital homebase for linking any recruitment ads or job postings, it can help propel your job postings to rank on search engines, placing your career opportunities in front of more candidates.

An effective recruitment page or website will also engage and convert top-notch candidates by providing them transparency into the culture and mission of your organization. Structured correctly, this page/website creates an additional filter for potential candidates to learn more about your organization and make the determination if it is the right fit before submitting their resume. It will also allow for development of retargeting campaigns that can later encourage candidates that have visited your page and have yet to apply.

Today's candidates are searching for stability, as many were laid off due to the pandemic. Presenting your practice or DSO as a large and stable organization will assure candidates that a position with your practice will be a safe and responsible choice as their next career move.

Just as your website engages and converts new patients for your practice, your recruitment page or website should engage and convert new team members with opportunities to click-to-apply as a call-to-action through the entire scroll of the page/site.

- Recruitment page or website must-haves
  - **Culture:** in the form of videos and pictures of fun team activities and behind the scenes of your team connecting as a work-place family
  - **Your “why” and core values:** state your core values and your mission as an organization

- **Community involvement:** provide pictures and videos of your team out in the community, partnering with local nonprofits and giving back
- **Team testimonials:** video and written testimonials speaking to opportunities for growth, work life balance, benefits, and anything that would differentiate your practice from others in your area
- **Benefits:** list out any dental, health, retirement savings, vacation and paid time off benefits
- **Open positions:** keep job postings up-to-date and listed on your career page

## 5. Utilize Video To Engage Your Target Candidates/Avatar

Today's consumers crave video content, with one-third of all online activity being video consumption, it is easy to understand how video can be an integral part of your recruitment strategy.

Adding video and engaging imagery to any page on your website will help increase its search ranking and visibility, this is the same for videos on your recruitment page. It is proven that web pages with a video element can see up to an 80% increase in conversion. This means a recruitment page/website with video will ultimately see more applicants!

VIDEO: [Using Video for Recruitment](#)

For maximum impact, tell the story of your practice through multiple short videos and images that highlight your culture and benefits

- Cultural video (2-3 mins)
  - Interviews and b-roll that speaks to your organizational mission statement and core values
- Team testimonials (1-2 mins)
  - Focused on the positions you are seeking to fill
- Social media video posts (:30 - :60 secs)

- These can be clips from the cultural video or testimonials
- Professional still photography
  - Doctors
  - Team members
  - Location/office
  - Patient interaction

Because the quality of your videos will convey the perceived quality and overall stability of your organization, it is important to carefully consider your investment; video is truly a case of 'you get what you pay for.' When you choose a team to tell your story, keep in mind that not all videographers are alike.

*You may get a better deal on a friend's nephew that films weddings on the side, but this deal may cost you later with lack of conversion due to low-quality assets that don't effectively tell your story and engage your target avatar.*

**When selecting your videographer and team, consider:**

- Does this team understand the technical aspects of lighting, filming and editing specifically required for my industry?
- Does this team possess the needed industry knowledge to guide interviews and extract important details to compile a complete and engaging story?
- Does this team understand your ideal candidate/target avatar and have the ability to emotionally connect with them and inspire them to take action?

**6. Establish & Monitor Your Recruitment Campaign Budget & KPIs**

When considering your recruitment campaign budget, take into consideration how much the loss of production from each particular open position is costing

your organization. Knowing this impact will help in justifying the cost of finding a well-qualified candidate.

Understand that a well-targeted posting board may require more of an up-front investment, but will ultimately provide more qualified candidates and make for less work on the end of your hiring manager or HR professional.

Establish and continually monitor recruiting KPIs for your campaign

- Number of well-qualified candidates by a certain time
- Staying in or under established budget

WORKSHEET: [Recruiting KPIs Template](#)

As you move forward through the rest of the recruiting process, take time to circle back to review your expenditures. Be sure to document ad performance and compare the results you're getting from across different job boards.

- Some job boards perform better than others depending on your region, the position you are posting for and recruitment budget
- Keep a log of where your best hires have come from in the past

## **7. Determine The Best Place To Advertise For Your Ideal Candidate**

Know where your ideal candidates are searching. It is important to understand where to reach and engage your target audience when searching for a candidate. Try utilizing a new job board for each posting and see which works best for your needs.

Consider establishing an employee referral program. Just as patients that come from word-of-mouth referrals tend to make for higher quality patients, candidates that come from word-of-mouth tend to make for higher quality teammates.

### **Associate doctors and specialists**

- Industry specific online job boards
  - Dentalnachos.com
  - Groupdentistrynow.com
- Local and national networking groups and associations
  - Study clubs
  - Specialty associations
- Dental schools and specialty programs
  - Send an email or letter introducing your practice and your city to program leaders
  - Have your associates reach out to their alma mater
  - Offer mentorship and case-studies
- Clinical supply sales representatives
  - Supply reps are “in the know” about what is happening at each office in your area and may be aware of candidates looking for new opportunities
- Recruitment and consulting agencies

### **Clinical and administrative candidates**

- Job posting boards
  - Indeed
  - LinkedIn/Glassdoor
  - ZipRecruiter
  - Google Jobs
  - AngelList (only for tech-focused positions or practices with a start-up mentality)
  - Idealist (only for practices operating in the non-profit space)
- Local programs and colleges
- Networking groups and word-of-mouth
- Social media pages
  - Local networking groups
  - Current employees pages, have your team share the post

## 8. Create A Job Posting & Digital Recruitment Ads

Research your local competition and create a posting that positions your DSO or practice well against competitors so that it lures top talent.

In order to attract the best candidates, who may be more discerning, you'll want to create a job posting that is as clear and thorough as possible. Potential new hires need to know what they will be doing, what skills they need to bring to the table, and why they should be excited to come work for you.

Your listing should include:

- **Your core values** as an organization. What drives you and your team?
- **Thorough description** of the position. What are you hiring for?
  - Duties and responsibilities
  - Skills and competencies
- **Salary range** along with any bonus opportunities and benefits; health, dental and vision insurance, flexible spending accounts, life insurance, retirement savings, and paid time off.
  - Job listings that include a salary range get 75% more clicks than job listings that don't.
- **What sets you apart** from your competition and why a candidate would choose to work for your practice. Understand that candidates may choose one position over another for:
  - A more flexible schedule
  - An aggressive team member growth plan
  - Opportunity for mentorship
  - An attractive bonus structure
  - A work culture that aligns well with their personal beliefs
  - Availability of more up-to-date technology
  - A well-established marketing plan and proven patient flow
  - Continued education and tuition reimbursement
  - Practice ownership opportunity
  - Location

- **Include photos or videos** that clearly demonstrate your culture. If possible, provide video testimonials from some of your current team members.
- **If targeting candidates from out of town**, include things that stand out about your community. For example, let candidates know if you are close to beaches, professional sports teams, highly-rated schools, museums, or other attractions and if your community has benefits like an affordable cost of living or great weather.
- **End with a call to action.** Let potential candidates know that you sincerely want to hear from them.

Remember the 5 “E”s:

- **Establish** a consistent tone.
- **Eliminate** assumptions. Tell candidates WHY you are different.
- **Explain** your goals and how they fit in.
- **Elaborate** on the opportunity.
- **Emphasize** their impact.

A great job listing should make potential hires feel excited and think to themselves, “This is it! This is the one I’ve been looking for.”

Once you’ve got a great job posting, you’ll be ready to put it out there. Make sure to proofread and preview formatting before setting the listing live. It should be easy to read and skimmable.

Now you’re ready to go live:

- **Post on all the job listing sites** you identified in Section 7 (Indeed, LinkedIn, etc).
- **Engage on message boards and social media.** Put up your job listing on your practice’s social media accounts, and encourage your team members to do the same on their personal accounts.
  - You can also reach out to some of your more active followers and ask for referrals.

- Consider emailing friends and colleagues in the industry and asking them as well.
- **Direct web traffic to the recruiting landing page** or your recruitment website. You can do this by running ads on LinkedIn or other platforms that promote your job listing and link back to your website.
  - This will be your first impression on many potential new hires, so be sure that your recruiting page (and the rest of your site) is in great shape before you start running ads.
- **Employ retargeting techniques.** When a potential hire visits your landing page, your team can collect the IP address so that your recruiting ads appear on other sites they visit.
  - This will strengthen their awareness of your brand and make them more likely to consider your position.
- **IMPORTANT: Keep monitoring performance.** Maintaining your job postings and ads is an ongoing process, not a one-time thing. Keep a close eye on your KPIs, both internal and through the data provided by posting platforms like Indeed or LinkedIn.
  - Check the performance of your ads daily, with a more thorough review on Monday mornings
  - You'll need to tweak your ads based on performance
  - Consider running A/B testing to help you make adjustments
  - Continually monitor your competition. Take what you learn and use it to improve your own postings
  - Use the worksheet below to help keep track of your progress along the way

WORKSHEET: [Recruiting Ads Checklist Template](#)

## 9. Manage Your Candidates

Once you have a stream of candidates responding to your postings and ads, you'll quickly be overwhelmed unless you're already prepared to manage the flow. Work with your HR team to establish a clear funnel for potential new hires.

- Consider utilizing an HR software program such as [Breezy](#) or [Bamboo](#) to establish a database of resumes and previous qualified candidates
- Determine if you would like to administer a personality test; [Disc](#), [Myers-Briggs](#), [Kolbe](#), [Predictive Index](#), etc.
- Create a file for candidates that you do not immediately hire, but still want to keep in touch with in order to reach out to for future opportunities
  - Create a strategy to stay in touch with these candidates and keep them engaged with your organization utilizing:
    - LinkedIn
    - Newsletters
    - Mentorship
    - Networking organizations

## 10. Make A Competitive Offer

It is highly likely that your ideal candidate will have multiple offers on the table. Understanding the personal preferences of each candidate will help you create a customized offer that will outshine all of the others!

Circle back to how you first appealed to this candidate and ask yourself how you can deliver what was promised in the initial hiring phase. This is a good chance to incorporate what you learned throughout the interview process.

Consider questions like:

- What is the candidate looking for in a position?
- What are their personal career goals and aspirations?
- What are their priorities outside of work?
- Are they money driven or crave more time with their family?

Also, **remember the worksheet you completed in Section 1** about appealing to your ideal candidate or avatar.

Be open and willing to negotiate. Keep in mind that a well-qualified candidate may be worth some flexibility on your end with budget and current benefit standards. Also, expect the unexpected. Candidates may come back with requests that are not focused solely on financials.

**Basics to include in each offer:**

- Job title
- Start date and time
- Non-compete clause
- Competitive salary
- Attainable and motivating bonus structure
- Benefits and timeline of when they become effective
- Sign-on bonus
- Growth plan
- Expiration of offer

**Additional benefits to include for specific positions:**

- Associate Dentist
  - Practice partnership/ownership schedule
  - Relocation package
  - Mentorship and learning opportunities
  - Learning/CE credit allotment
  - Uniform allowance

Take a moment to consider where your potential new associate is in their career. Are there additional factors like a clear runway to retirement or help with student loans that you may be able to offer?

- Hygienist/Dental Assistant/Administrative
  - Flexibility and freedom to select schedule
  - Paid time off with increase for tenure
  - Learning and CE credit allotment
  - Uniform allowance
  - Anonymous employee feedback program

Stay in communication with your candidate and follow up on the offer. Think of this part as a conversation or a dialogue. The more willing you are to participate and meet candidates in the middle, the more likely you'll be to land a great new hire!

## **11. Provide Structured Onboarding**

An established onboarding process will set-up your new team members for success and will benefit your organization's bottom line.

Onboarding is your opportunity to introduce new hires to how you do things and help get everyone on the same page from the beginning. It's also an important step towards helping new team members feel confident and comfortable diving into and participating fully in their new roles.

It's important to have a plan here. Before a new team member's first day, work with your existing team to develop a training schedule, assign mentors or training buddies, and prepare necessary materials.

Remember the little stuff too. Make sure they'll have a company email account ready to go, and access to charting, scheduling, or any other software they'll be using. Do they need a parking pass or an ID badge?

The work you put in ahead of time will pay off when the new hire steps through the door. Companies that make use of strong onboarding practices have close to triple the revenue growth of those that don't. Meanwhile great onboarding can almost double a company's retention and productivity rates.

WHITE PAPER: [New Team Member Onboarding - New Hire Journey](#)