

# Secrets to Winning the Race for Top Talent



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Recruiting and retaining the best talent is no easy task. Gone are the days when companies could attract great job seekers with a simple “NOW HIRING!” sign. Workforce attitudes are shifting and employees now have the upper hand.

Need help navigating this new environment? In the next few pages, we’ll share insights on what today’s talent environment means for your company and what you can do to position yourself for success.

## What we’ll cover:

1. Today’s talent environment
2. Why culture matters
3. Building an intentional culture
4. Using culture to retain and recruit
5. Revamping your strategy



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# Today's Talent Environment

In today's talent environment, we see two main challenges.

1

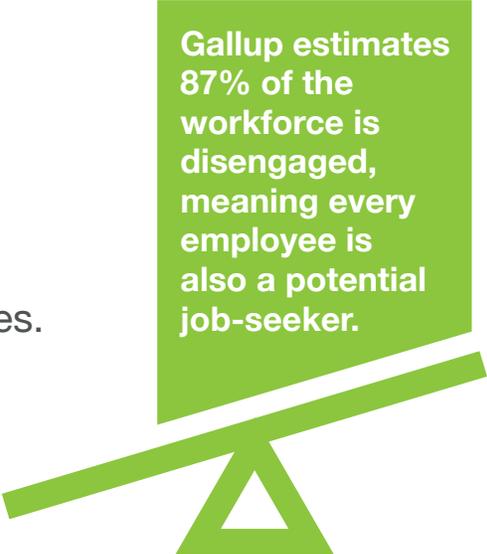
## Organizations are experiencing both recession AND recovery.

In many companies, some departments are booming and have a desperate need for new talent, while other departments are shrinking. Furthermore, as the economy recovers, skill gaps and talent shortages are creating competition among employers. In fact, 37 percent of IT and retail employers cited retaining top talent as their main staffing concern. It's now more important than ever to "sell" to recruits and employees. on the value that you offer.

2

## Workforce attitudes are shifting.

Discerning employees (and candidates) want to balance their personal and professional lives. They are seeking meaning in their work and searching for companies that align with their personal values and preferences.



Gallup estimates 87% of the workforce is disengaged, meaning every employee is also a potential job-seeker.



# What's Culture

**Corporate culture is defined as the set of pervasive values, beliefs and attitudes that characterize a company.**

Your company has a culture even if you aren't actively shaping or defining it. Either you are being intentional about fostering the culture that you want, or random forces will create a weak or even negative culture.

Culture is not a box to be checked. It's not a framed mission statement in the lobby. And it's not just office decor. While your office environment should definitely reflect your culture, it won't drive it.

Instead, culture is something that's woven throughout the organization. It plays a key role in HR - from recruiting the right people, to designing a benefit plan that supports your mission and values. It informs performance expectations, employee and customer communications and day-to-day interactions. And it allows employees to operate from a place of passion and empowerment, rather than numbness and bureaucracy.

## Why Culture Matters

Your company culture has a direct effect on your bottom line. An intentional culture can increase employee engagement and retention, boost service quality, and as a result **help to increase sales and profits.**



# Building An Intentional Culture



Once you've defined your company culture, it's important to be intentional about building it. Intentional companies incorporate elements of their culture into processes and systems to ensure culture drives behavior. Here's what it might look like in practice:

- **Align culture to corporate strategy.** Identify your company's top priority, such as efficiency, quality, innovation, customer service or reputation & brand and then consider the type of culture that would support that. For instance, if efficiency is your top priority, is it a clear and effective structure that utilizes data-driven assessment? Or if it's innovation, is there support for risk-taking with a bias for action and consistent recognition of new ideas?
- **Start weaving.** Based on your strategic business priorities, take the key components of culture and decide how they inform various functions, from workforce planning to compensation and rewards.
- **Hire for cultural fit.** It's hard to resist a great resume, killer accomplishments, an intriguing background and an engaging person. But if someone doesn't embody the company culture, they're going to have a tough time succeeding at the job. It's not uncommon for someone who's a great cultural fit (but maybe lacking experience) to easily ramp up and accomplish great things.

# Keeping Culture Alive

As with any relationship, culture requires constant nurturing and realignment. It's a continual effort to ensure that culture is driving how business is done. As priorities change and strategy shifts, culture must follow suit. A few keys to ensuring your culture stays vibrant and relevant:



## Listen to the people.

Create two-way communication channels where employees can weigh in on what's working and what they'd like to see change. Email and town hall-type meetings are great, but you can also make shifts on a dime with weekly polling services like TINYPulse.



## Create a direct line of communication between HR and senior executives.

As an HR leader, your team is the "face of the company" to employees. Make sure you're continually in the loop on strategy shifts, key decisions and critical initiatives. This prevents unwanted surprises and creates an agile environment so that you can quickly and easily adapt as needed.



## Appoint the C-Suite as Cultural Ambassadors.

Similar to aligning culture with strategy, you also need to align senior leaders with culture and make sure they embody the values that you create for your company.



## Create culture-building initiatives.

Sometimes you need to overtly engage employees. A great way to do this is through initiatives that communicate company values, celebrate success and foster respect. At Limeade, we give each employee a dog tag when they are hired and inscribe one of the five company values that resonates with them most.

# Using Culture to Retain and Recruit

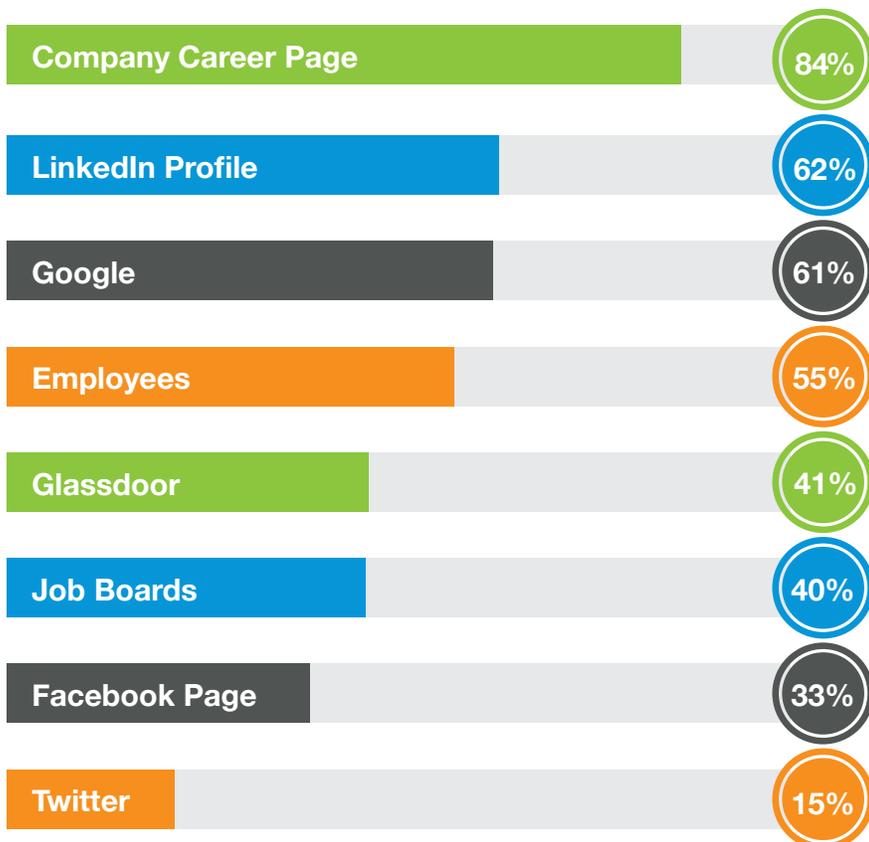
Companies want to hire candidates that are the best FIT for the company. While most companies have nailed the process to find someone with the skills they need, or at a rate they can afford, interviewing and recruiting with culture fit in mind is a bit more difficult. That's why it's critical to incorporate your story, your culture and your perks into your recruitment marketing materials.

Brand is what your customers (& employees) say about you when you're not listening.

When you invest in recruitment branding with a focus on culture, you kick-start employee engagement before a candidate even clicks "Apply."

## Revamping Your Strategy

Here's where most job seekers are looking for information:



Brands are built every day by every employee, in every customer and prospect interaction, and at every touchpoint. It's hard to predict when the best (or worst) parts of the brand will go viral.

As you review your recruitment marketing strategy, dig deep into what job seekers are seeing, hearing and learning about your company at every touchpoint before they even apply.

# Where to focus your recruitment marketing efforts

**Company website and careers homepage.** This is likely the very first place prospective candidates will look and it's essential to showcase your authentic employee experience. You can do this with "day in the life" posts, recaps of events or an explanation of your company values.

And remember: treat candidates like customers and provide details, not euphemisms. If you value work-life balance, explain what you really mean - do you allow employees to work from home a certain number of hours per week? Do you let them make their own hours? The more detail, the better.

**Candidate communication.** Engage candidates before they apply and beyond. From the first time they hear about your company, to the first day they start on the job, all communication should be consistent, on-brand and aligned with your culture.

**Social media.** You may focus your social media efforts on your customers or acquiring leads, but your social sites are also a great place to showcase your culture. Don't be afraid to give an insider glimpse into your company with links to blog posts, photos of events and quotes from executives. This will help paint a full picture of what it means to work at your company.

**Your goal: be who you are and attract people that truly belong.**

Are you ready to hit the ground running? Here are four key things to keep in mind:

- Audit the full application process as a candidate
- Listen to your employees talk about your culture
- Deliver programs that build your brand in intentional ways
- Build your brand and become a talent magnet

And remember, we're here to help!



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Limeade is an enterprise engagement, wellness and incentives company focused on building happy, healthy, high-performing workforces.

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