



5 tips for building an effective talent pool

Build a pipeline of qualified, high potential candidates

Time-to-hire is notoriously long for many global development organizations. It can take months to find, assess and fill a position. But there is a way you can successfully attract and engage your top-picks.

Leading development organizations, such as UNHCR, WFP and UNFPA, are turning to talent pools to build groups of ready-to-hire talent for key candidate profiles and accelerate the hiring process.

How can this work for your organization? Here are five tips on how you can build an effective talent pool.

Invest in targeted outreach methods

Create a targeted outreach strategy using various channels and mediums to find both active and passive candidates. Advertise on traditional job boards, do a big social media push, partner with professional associations or university alumni centers, or launch a recruitment marketing campaign. Research where potential candidates work, study, or congregate and reach out to them directly. Graphical ads, videos, online events or articles can also help bring to life your organization's values and communicate the kind of people you seek.



Build some buzz: Investing in outreach and advertising for a talent pool — which could result in, say, dozens of positions filled down the line — is more efficient than repeating the process again each time you hire.

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Create specific pools aligned to anticipated needs

Design your talent pools with ideal candidate profiles that align with your organization's overall long term strategy, including growth plans and attrition forecasts. Don't focus too much on detailed job descriptions, but rather the overall competencies and qualifications you want to attract. When promoting talent pools, think of it more as advertising your employer brand rather than a specific vacancy. In addition, don't overlook new expertise your organization may need in the future.



Strengthen your recruitment brand: Advertising for clearly defined profiles indicates your organizational expertise and future career growth opportunities to potential candidates.

Collaborate with your leadership team and hiring units to ensure you are building up a pipeline of talent they actually want and need.

Target underrepresented groups

Build a pipeline of underrepresented candidates, including women, program country nationals and hard-to-find expertise.

Since these candidates are often in high demand, waiting until you have an immediate vacancy will not provide the lead time you need to develop, invest in and execute a targeted outreach strategy.



Tailor your messaging: This can mean translating advertising to target languages, crafting your messaging to resonate with a specific culture or highlighting staff with similar profiles succeeding in your organization today.



Have voices from your organization in that [underrepresented] region that are...telling your recruitment story.



Kate Warren

Senior Director & Editor,
Recruitment and Careers, Devex

As quoted from this [Facebook Live](#).

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Think of your candidates as customers

Keep talent engaged throughout the hiring process by providing an excellent candidate experience. Regularly send organizational updates and check in on their interest in the role and availability. Keep track of these phone and email conversations so that candidates aren't being bombarded with repeat requests.



Streamline your communication:

Consider using technology platforms with features like automated reminders.



We are now a very transparent society. When you order something online, you can track the status of your package down to the minute and people expect that now. A lot of employers are giving candidates that experience even on the recruitment side.



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As quoted from this [Facebook Live](#).

Maintain a personal touch in your communication

Candidates in your talent pool may spend months waiting for an appointment that suits their profile. Think of them as valued customers who deserve a seamless end-to-end experience. Engage your candidates on an ongoing basis so that your organization remains top-of-mind. UNHCR's chief of talent outreach and acquisition, John Thomas, recommends assigning recruiters their own dedicated pool so they are responsible for nurturing their own candidates.



Empower your recruiters: Let your recruiters take ownership of nurturing their own pool of candidates.

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