



Janice Bryant Howroyd

scale? **Scale. SCALE!**

Enterprise Talent Acquisition

ere.net/SD

SAN DIEGO APR 2-4, 2018

#ERERC

‘Entry-Level, Experience Required’: Seriously?

(<https://www.tlnt.com/entry-level-experience-required-seriously/>)

For recent college graduates, nothing is more frustrating than applying for entry-level jobs that require experience. With degrees in hand, an eagerness to perform and a willingness to learn on the job, these prospective hires could be making a significant impact in the workforce. Even with unemployment near historic lows, and six million jobs remain open, the “underemployment rate” among recent college graduates—those aged 22-27 who are either unemployed or in jobs that don’t require their degree—remains at over 40%

(<https://www.newyorkfed.org/research/college-labor-market/index.html>).

Unfortunately, employers are limiting their ability to hire a large group of high-performing entry-level personnel by setting the barrier of experience too high for many otherwise qualified candidates. This hiring strategy, which may help simplify the recruiting process by screening out more applicants, is holding back companies that need the best talent at the entry-level to stay competitive.

Experience is not the only predictor of success

Many companies hiring at the entry-level assume that candidates with even modest experience will be more beneficial for the company. However, that paradigm is being challenged by a new class of job-seeker: the high-performing entry-level employee (<https://www.tlnt.com/you-need-to-stop-hiring-only-elk-hire-some-wolves/>) (HPEL). These hires may lack direct work experience in a similar role, but they can bring other attributes, and less baggage, than their more experienced counterparts.

High-performing entry-level candidates are naturally more malleable to blend in with a company's culture but also bring fresh perspectives to the table that are informed by learning, listening and intuition, whereas experienced hires may be more likely to get "set in their ways." It's important to also consider the intangible benefits that HPELs bring, such as teamwork, resilience and problem-solving abilities, and how these exceptionally driven candidates can translate their skills into action on the job. Still fresh from their academic experience, these hires will be adept at acquiring new skills because of their extensive experience learning *how* to learn.

The value of retention

Writing for *Recruiter.com* (<https://www.recruiter.com/i/having-trouble-retaining-entry-level-employees-the-problem-might-be-how-you-hire/>), Emily Elder explains an important risk when experienced hires fill entry-level roles:

“(T)here seems to be a disparity between entry-level job requirements and the proficiency level actually required to complete the day-to-day tasks in these roles. In today's hiring market, companies tend to set high expectations, demanding significant qualifications and experience levels in their entry-level job postings. Once hired and

onboarded, these highly qualified new employees often experience their entry-level workloads as repetitive, mundane, and without purpose. Discouraged and disenchanted with the organization, they leave (<https://www.tlnt.com/the-firster-challenge-managing-first-time-employees-so-they-last/>). Failing to fully realize the potential of their highly-qualified employees, companies find themselves constantly recruiting for the same positions.”

Turnover is expensive — the all-in cost, including recruiting, training, and lost productivity, can be two to three times the annual salary (<https://www.tlnt.com/retaining-talent-is-more-cost-effective-than-hiring/>) for the position. To address this issue, smart companies are filling these roles with HPELs, which are a more natural fit with the positions. Given their desire to establish themselves and their resiliency, it’s reasonable HPELs would have higher rates of retention, promotion and professional success relative to experienced hires.

The businesses that continue to focus exclusively on experienced candidates when recruiting for entry-level positions run the risk of hiring technically-qualified candidates who may not be happy or last long with the company (<https://www.tlnt.com/shooting-ourselves-in-the-foot-its-not-an-effective-engagement-strategy/>). In addition, technologies like applicant tracking systems are prone to screening out HPELs when employers place too specific skill and experience requirements in a job posting. By thinking more expansively and inclusively about entry-level hiring, companies can improve résumé flow and connect with candidates who may not have otherwise been noticed.

Getting the “high performing” part right

How can companies ensure they are attracting the right kind of entry-level hires among recent college graduates? As the first line of contact with prospective hires, a company's message to entry-level job seekers starts with the job posting and job description (<https://www.tlnt.com/is-the-classic-job-description-an-endangered-species/>). The goal should be to attract as many candidates as possible that are interested in the company, regardless of major subject in college or work experience. The job posting should be based on required skills and competencies — some of which can be trained — as well as experience, while making it clear that all interested candidates are encouraged to apply.

Companies should also prepare probing questions about transferable skills for interviewing candidates without professional work experience (<https://www.tlnt.com/industry-experience-required-is-a-mindset-we-need-to-get-out-of/>). Interviewers should ask these candidates for real-life examples of how they applied these skills successfully in a non-professional position, volunteer setting or team-oriented activity. These skills are often a more accurate measure of a candidate's future success than work experience or even a college degree. Simply put, a lack of work experiences should not be an obstacle to hiring quality talent; the transferable skills these candidates possess more than make up for any downside. While classroom learning is an important capability, for the new grad with little-to-no professional work experience, it's life experience that counts. Employers that understand the value of non-professional experience will ask candidates about their success in sports, arts, leadership or entrepreneurship to gauge whether they possess the soft skills necessary for success in the workplace.

Article Continues Below

SPONSORED CONTENT



Build Up Your HR Career. Don't Put It Off.

Prove your professional commitment, grow your responsibility and help influence the bottom line with HRCI® certifications – credentialing designed for those looking to outperform their competition and transform organizations. Earn yours today.

LEARN MORE ([HTTPS://WWW.HRCI.ORG/WHYWAIT?UTM_SOURCE=TLNT&UTM_MEDIUM=SPONSORED](https://www.hrci.org/whywait?utm_source=tlnt&utm_medium=sponsored))

Finally, hiring companies should not automatically dump résumés that don't tick every box of the job description and requirements for the position. There are many other indicators of future success (<https://www.tlnt.com/dont-overlook-candidates-because-they-have-an-alternative-education/>) besides work experience, coursework and a diploma. Companies should look beyond the usual and expected résumé fodder and consider how these HPELs can contribute.

The cost of inflexibility

Refusing to adapt to a changing hiring economy, particularly at the entry-level, and failing to cast a wide net in a competitive job market can have serious impacts on companies that desperately need to hire new talent. By taking a more expansive approach, companies can make their workplaces sought-after destinations for entry-level candidates.

Putting the “experience myth” to rest is the first step toward a new hiring paradigm, one that is here to stay as long as the need for long-term, sustainable talent exists.

0 Comments

EREMedia

1 Login ▾

♥ Recommend

🔗 Share

Sort by Best ▾



Start the discussion...

LOG IN WITH

OR SIGN UP WITH DISQUS ?

Name

Be the first to comment.

ALSO ON EREMEDIA

Google Hire Making Moves Again – Launches Candidate Discovery in Beta

2 comments • 7 days ago



Glenn Gutmacher — very interesting, though I would've thought there'd be mentions of Google Hire integration

How to Ensure Top Talent Won't Ever Turn Down Your Salary Offer

8 comments • 19 days ago



Steph — I'd love this, but I have yet to find a company willing to be transparent about salary. A great follow up would be getting

Thinking like a Navy Seal Sourcer

6 comments • 2 days ago



Dan Piontkowski — Yup, you set tiny little milestones for yourself. Don't think too far ahead. Ok, I woke up, now I just need to

The Truth about Innovation in Recruitment

1 comment • 3 days ago



Greg Hawkes — Probably don't want to pair SKY with NET or trust anything a Hal 9000 tells you, I'd shut that down right

✉ Subscribe

🔗 Add Disqus to your siteAdd DisqusAdd

🔒 Privacy

(/)

ERE ([HTTPS://WWW.ERE.NET](https://www.ere.net))

([HTTPS://WWW.SOURCECON.COM](https://www.sourcecon.com))

([HTTPS://WWW.SOURCECON.COM](https://www.sourcecon.com))

([HTTPS://WWW.SOURCECON.COM](https://www.sourcecon.com))

ADVERTISE

TLNT ([HTTPS://WWW.TLNT.COM](https://www.tlnt.com))

([HTTPS://WWW.SOURCECON.COM](https://www.sourcecon.com))A

([HTTPS://WWW.EREMEDIA.COM/ADV](https://www.ere.com/advertise/)

ABOUT ERE MEDIA

ERTISE/)

([HTTPS://WWW.TLNT.COM](https://www.tlnt.com))

([HTTPS://WWW.EREMEDIA.COM/ABO](https://www.ere.com/about/)

TERMS OF SERVICE

UT/)

([HTTPS://WWW.EREMEDIA.COM/TER](https://www.ere.com/terms-of-service/)

([HTTPS://WWW.TLNT.COM](https://www.tlnt.com))SOURCECON

CONTACT

MS-OF-SERVICE/)

([HTTPS://WWW.SOURCECON.COM](https://www.sourcecon.com))

([HTTPS://WWW.EREMEDIA.COM/CO](https://www.ere.com/contact/)

ERE FOUNDATION

NTACT/)

([HTTPS://WWW.EREMEDIA.COM/FO](https://www.ere.com/foundation/)

([HTTPS://WWW.SOURCECON.COM](https://www.sourcecon.com))

PRIVACY POLICY

UNDATION/)

([HTTPS://WWW.SOURCECON.COM](https://www.sourcecon.com))

([HTTPS://WWW.EREMEDIA.COM/PRI](https://www.ere.com/privacy-policy/)

VACY-POLICY/)

EDITORIAL ETHICS

([HTTPS://WWW.EREMEDIA.COM/EDI](https://www.ere.com/editorial-ethics/)

TORIAL-ETHICS/)



([HTTP://TWITTER.COM/TLNT_COM](http://twitter.com/TLNT_COM))



([HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/TLNTCOM](https://www.facebook.com/TLNTCOM))



([HTTPS://WWW.LINKEDIN.COM/GROUPS/3102416](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/3102416))



([HTTP://FEEDS.FEEDBURNER.COM/TLNT](http://feeds.feedburner.com/TLNT))