TextRecruit

Transform Your Hiring:

9 Ways to Improve Candidate Engagement

MONSTER

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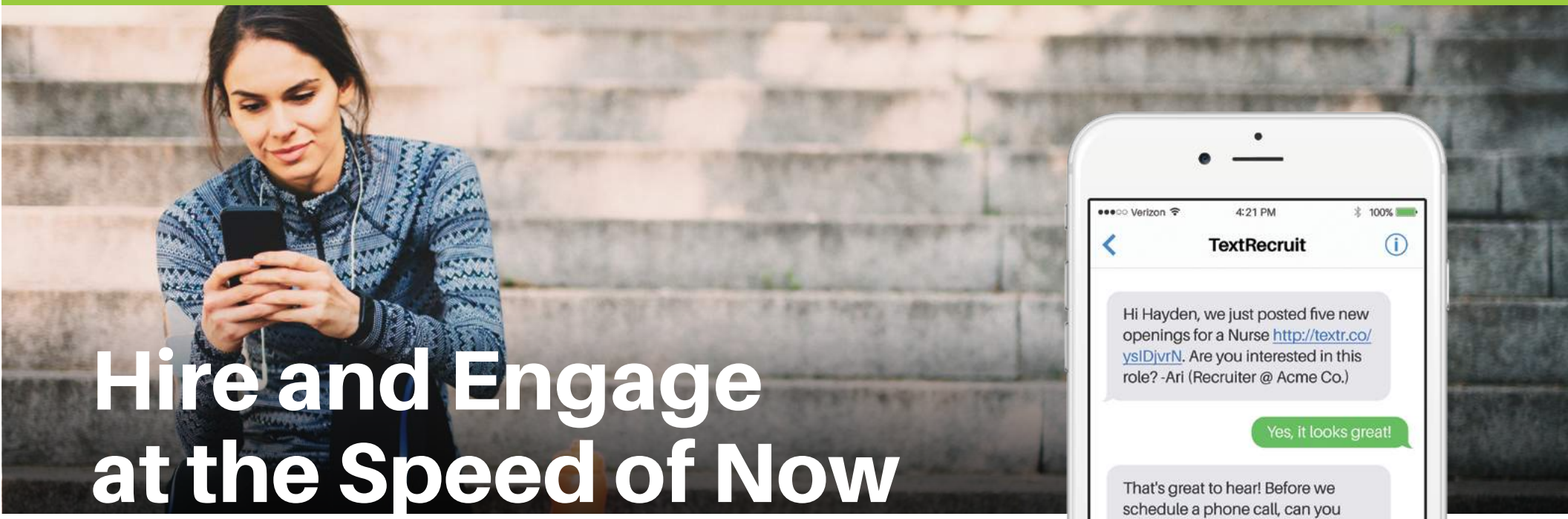
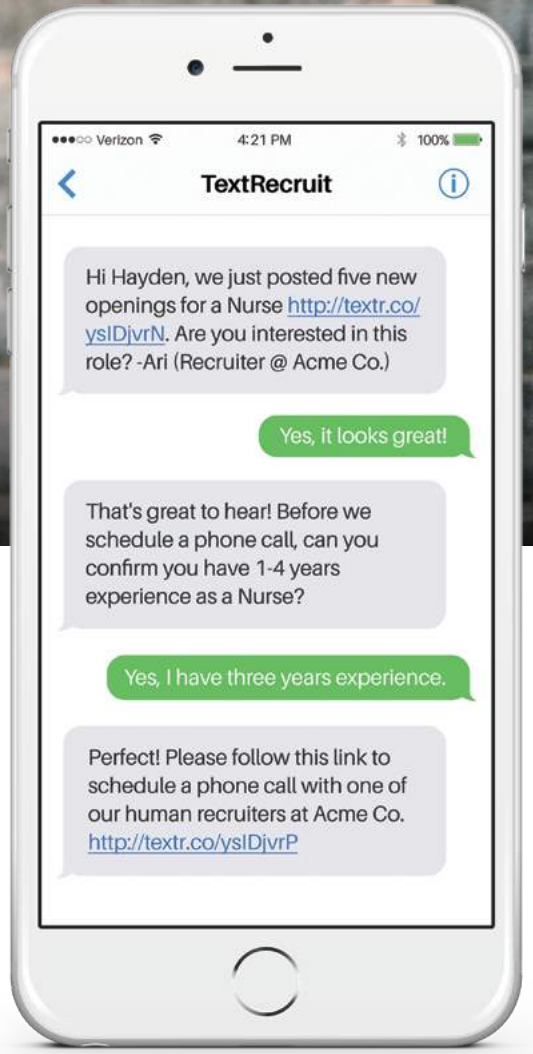


Hire and Engage at the Speed of Now



TextRecruit

TextRecruit is a candidate and employee engagement platform that leverages text, chat, and artificial intelligence to optimize your hiring funnel. Powered by analytics, personalization, campaigns, and integrations, this is the most effective engagement software for HR on the planet.

Learn more at **Monster.com/TextRecruit**

Introduction: Why Candidate Engagement Is Critical

HR and recruiting pros are well aware of the dismal employee engagement numbers in the U.S., with roughly two-thirds of employees not engaged at work. What gets less prominent billing in industry publications is the equally important problem of *candidate engagement*. This lack of attention is troublesome for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the fact that candidate engagement is a critical precursor to employee engagement.

Candidate engagement is the act of engaging candidates. By "engaging candidates," we mean getting candidates interested in, excited for, and passionate about your company and the open role to which they are applying.

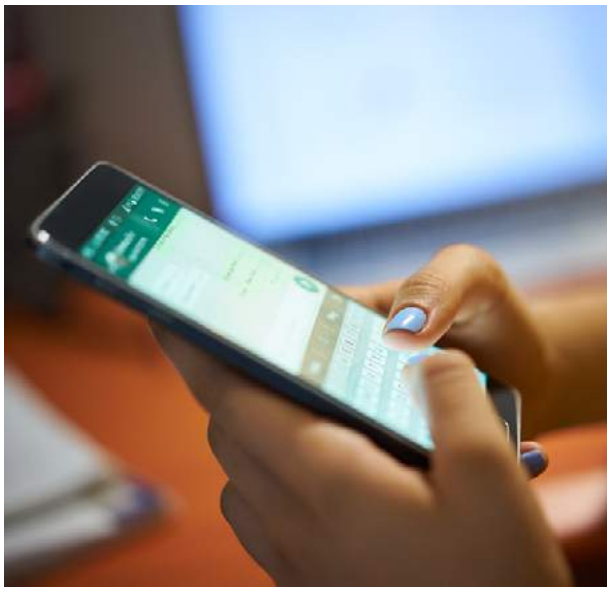
Why does this matter? At the most basic level, creating an engaging candidate experience is a great way to attract talent. In today's job market, job seekers call the shots. Talent has a lot of options, but they're most attracted to opportunities that excite them. If your organization can offer an engaging candidate experience, qualified candidates will vie with one another for a chance to join your operation.

Moreover, new hires who started out as engaged candidates are more likely to be engaged employees. According to *Harvard Business Review*[1], organizations with high levels of engagement are 22 percent more

1 https://hbr.org/2013/07/employee-engagement-does-more

productive than their less engaged competitors. Engaged employees also stick around for longer, with companies reporting turnover reductions between 25 and 65 percent. Highly engaged companies face 48 percent fewer safety incidents and 41 percent fewer product/service quality incidents.

On the flipside, candidates who aren't engaged can actively hurt your future recruiting efforts[2]: 64 percent of candidates say they'd share negative recruiting experiences with friends and family, and 27 percent say they'd actively discourage others from applying to an organization that treated them poorly during the recruiting process.



And yet, despite all the good that candidate engagement can do for a company, very few employers are keeping tabs on their candidate experiences. About 75 percent of employees say they have never been asked by organizations about their experience as candidates.[3]

It is time for this to change: Employers must start investing in improving the candidate experience at all stages of the recruiting and hiring process, from attracting talent to onboarding new employees.

Thankfully, new technologies are emerging to help employers do exactly that. Text, chat and artificial intelligence in particular, make it easier for recruiting and hiring pros to share more information with candidates, be more responsive to their needs, and build more trusting

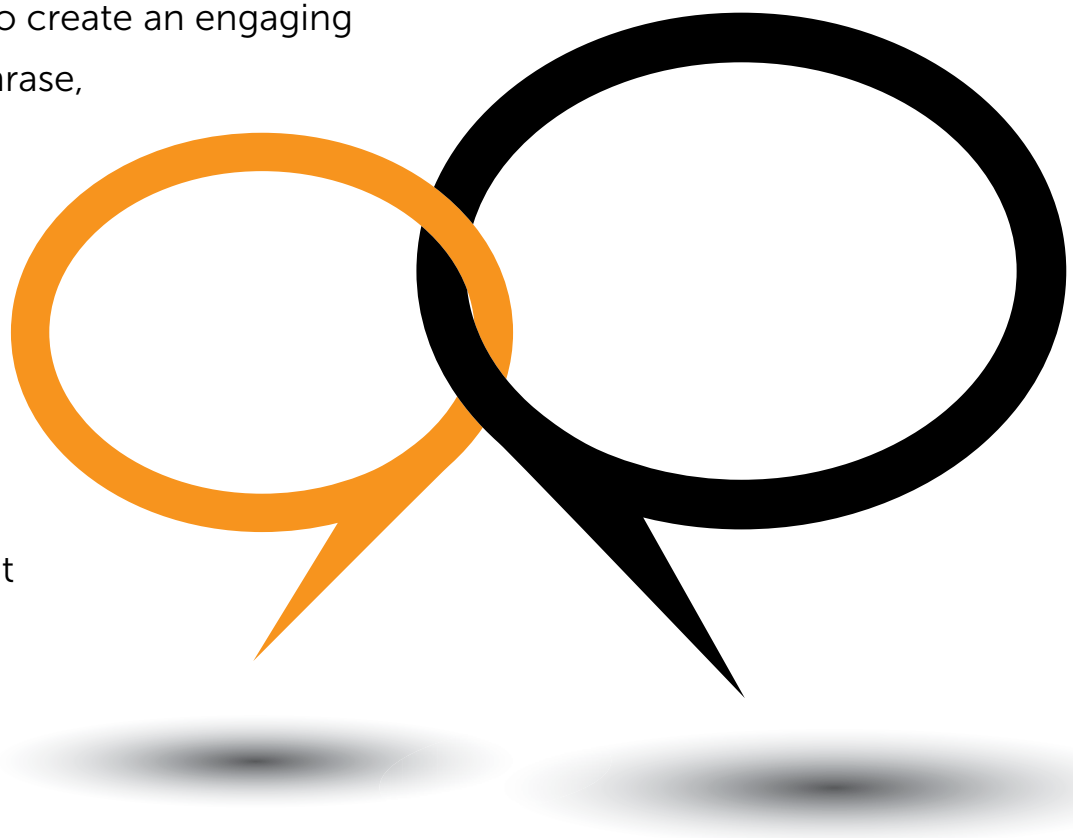
2 https://www.officevibe.com/blog/12-recruiting-stats
3 http://recruitingdaily.com/the-state-of-candidate-experience-in-10-statistics/

relationships. Combined they can be invaluable in the quest to build a more engaging candidate experience.

Let's take a look at nine ways that employers can boost candidate engagement when attracting talent, actively recruiting talent, and onboarding new hires:

Boosting Engagement at the Talent Attraction Stage

The first stage of any recruiting process is to get job seekers interested in your company and the jobs you have open. To create an engaging candidate experience during the attraction phrase, keep these three things in mind:



1. Timeliness and Responsiveness

Whatever you do, avoid the "black hole." When job seekers reach out, whether to apply or to ask questions, you need to make sure they get an answer in return. Radio silence can be even worse than outright rejection in the recruiting process.

One way to be more responsive during this phase is to integrate a chat tool into your job

posts. That way, candidates can get in touch with recruiters and HR pros at your company more quickly and directly than they could via email or phone. Because of the ease and speed of a chat platform, recruiters and candidates can have actual, two-way conversations, rather than the stilted back-and-forth of email communication. This means that job seekers not only get their questions answered, but also begin to form meaningful relationships with the employer *before they've even submitted an application!*

2. Convenience

Job seekers want it to be easy to access company representatives when they have questions. The more hoops they have to jump through to get in touch, the less interested they'll be in working for your company. Think of the tone it sets: If a candidate finds it hard to make connections when the company has the pressing matter of an open role to fill, they can't help but wonder how hard it will be to reach out to higher-ups when they're actually working for the organization.

Again, an integrated chat function can help here. Setting up text message communication between interested job seekers and recruiters can also help, as text messaging is one of the most convenient and widely used forms of communication available today.

Another important thing to remember: Your application process should be convenient, too. Sixty percent of candidates[4] say they've abandoned job applications in the past when they took too long. Don't lose out on top talent for the silly reason that your application process is too arduous. Make the application easy to access, easy to fill out, and easy to submit.

4 https://www.officevibe.com/blog/12-recruiting-stats

3. Simplicity

It takes an average of 27 days to make a hire, but the best candidates are often snapped up and off the market in 10 days.[5]

You want to make your recruiting process as short as possible, and that can be achieved by simplifying things.

The attraction stage should move quickly. Candidates shouldn't struggle to figure out how to reach you. Instead, conversations between candidates and recruiters should be as similar as possible to the conversations candidates have in their everyday lives. The more intuitive your recruiting process is, the simpler it will be and the less time it will take to fill roles.

One great way to make sure candidate-recruiter conversations resemble everyday conversations is to implement text-message-based communication methods. Virtually everyone knows how to text and uses text messages to communicate on the regular. Plus, text messages have much higher response rates – as high as more than 40 percent – than email and phone calls, and most candidates respond to text messages in less than half an hour[6]. This keeps the recruitment process moving along swiftly, decreasing the chances that a competitor will come in and scoop up a great candidate before you can.

5 https://www.officevibe.com/blog/12-recruiting-stats
6 http://www.textrecruit.com/textapply-product/

Boosting Engagement When Actively Recruiting/Sourcing Talent

Whereas the attraction phase is all about getting talent to come to you, active recruiting and sourcing are all about recruiters and HR pros putting in the legwork to reach out to promising prospects. Here, too, there are important opportunities for creating a more engaging candidate experience. Some things to keep in mind:

4. Automation and A.I.

Automation is a key saver of time and resources for today's recruiters. Many recruiters are expected to do more with less as budgets and departments shrink, and it's tempting to cut corners. However, doing so will only lead to less engaging candidate experiences – which, in turn, will led to fewer high-quality hires. Automation, especially through the use of artificially intelligent chatbots, can take the burdens off of recruiters' shoulders without sacrificing quality of candidate experience. Artificial intelligence can automate up to 80 percent of early-stage candidate engagement efforts. A.I. chatbots can accept applications, answer candidates' questions, screen candidates for necessary qualifications and skills, and conduct a number of other critical recruiting activities. This frees up recruiters to focus on tasks that require more of the human touch. With an A.I. that can handle the basics and a recruiter who can build trust, cultivate passion, and make genuine connections with candidates, you'll see candidate engagement levels skyrocket.

5. Personalized Outreach

Before you send a message to that promising prospect, stop yourself and ask: "Is this going to be an exciting, engaging, personalized message, or am I just tossing out the same old template email I send to everyone?"

Whether you're cold-emailing a brand new prospect or sending a text message to a candidate who has been in your talent pipeline for a while, your communication should always be as personalized as possible. Try using a candidate communication platform that allows for easy customization of messaging. Candidates will be much more receptive to messages that are clearly targeted toward them rather than fired off into every possible inbox.

6. Tracking Communication History

In addition to customizable messaging, your candidate communication platform should also keep track of communication histories and gather information about how each candidate likes to converse.

Recruiters and HR pros are often juggling tens, if not hundreds, of candidates at once. No human being has the brainpower to remember every single detail about every single conversation with every single candidate. With a communication platform keeping track,

however, recruiters and HR pros can use th information gathered to further tailor their conversations toward each candidate. This takes personalized messaging – and candidate engagement – to a whole new level. Pretty soon, candidates won't even feel like they're talking to a company rep. Instead, they'll feel like they're building authentic relationships with the organization – and they will be.

7. Opt-Out Options

Remember that stat from back in the intro? The one about 64 percent of candidates saying they'd tell other people about their negative candidate experiences? One way to really tick off top talent and make sure they spread the word is to keep messaging them even after they've asked you to stop.

When communicating with candidates, you can't stop at giving them the option to opt out of your conversations. What you need is a platform that will track those opt-out requests and make sure you don't permanently damage a relationship with a candidate by continuing to pester them once they've said "No, thanks."

Of course, a trustworthy opt-out function is more than a matter of candidate experience. It's also a matter of compliance. You don't want to earn your company or client a reputation as a spammer thanks to your faulty opt-out system, so get a communication platform you can rely on.

Boosting Engagement at the Onboarding Phase

You've made the hire! Your engaged candidate is about to become an employee! Don't rest on your laurels just yet. If you want to ensure your candidate stays engaged as an employee, you'll need to keep them engaged during the onboarding process. Here are two important things to keep in mind while onboarding employees:

8. Consistency of Communication

Up until this point of the recruiting and hiring process, you've been using text messages and chat tools to keep candidates engaged. Why stop now? Instead of switching over to email for the onboarding process, keep the chat and texts going. Doing so will not only allow you to continue your conversations with candidates as they become

employees, but it will also allow you to keep the onboarding process as a high-touch as possible. The convenience and quick response times of chat and text means new hires can ask questions easily and get answers when they need them.

This, in turn, cuts down on the overall time the onboarding process takes from start to finish. Given that, on average, it takes about eight months for a new hire to reach full productivity, it's a good idea to take every step you can to speed up the process.

9. Keeping Track

One way you don't want to speed up the onboarding process is by skipping important steps, like filling out necessary documents or attending important training sessions. Text and chat tools can help here as well.

It's easy to share documents and schedule training sessions via text and chat when you have the right communication platform undergirding your efforts. You won't have to worry about critical compliance info being lost in anyone's inbox or a new hire missing a training session because no one told them when and where the session was.

As with every stage of the recruiting and hiring process, you want it to be simple and convenient for new hires to complete the necessary steps of the onboarding process. New employees should be digging in and getting excited, not fretting over paperwork all day.

Conclusion: For a More Engaging Candidate Experience, Find the Right Communication Platform

By now you've likely noticed that the nine tips presented above all have one important theme in common: communication.

So much of candidate engagement hinges on communication – on making it simple, easy, more personal, and more accessible. That's why finding the right candidate communication platform is such a critical component of creating great candidate experiences.

If you're ready to take your candidate engagement to the next level, it's time to check out TextRecruit. TextRecruit offers a candidate engagement platform that leverages text, chat, and artificial intelligence to optimize your hiring funnel.

The choice is yours: Communicate better with your candidates, or lose out on today's talent.

We know you'll make the right decision.

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