



Strategic & Integrated Job seeker Management: A 360° analysis

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Executive summary

With Indian labor market booming and more companies setting up shops in India, the need for talent infusion has never been stronger. The recruitment industry, the job boards; recruiters; RPO organizations etc are focusing their efforts on the employer segment with little mindshare going towards job seeker. However, if the industry needs to keep pace with the growing demand, focused efforts should be directed towards the job seeker community. This will not only accentuate the talent infusion metrics but will also optimize the effort.

The advent of recent technology development and collaborative platforms that leverage Web 2.0 provide new found avenues to empower recruiters to provide a high quality of service to the job seeker segment.

The target audiences of this white paper are the flag bearers of the recruitment industry; people who are contributing countless hours towards making it happen from the Human Resource point of view.

The war for talent – Job seekers at a premium

According to a year long study conducted by a team from McKinsey & Co., a study involving 77 companies and almost 6,000 managers and executives, it was found that the most important corporate resource over the next 20 years will be talent – smart, sophisticated business people who are technologically literate, globally astute, and operationally agile. And even as the demand for talent goes up, the supply of it will be going down. The search for the best and the brightest talents will become a constant, costly battle, a fight with no final victory. Not only will companies have to devise more imaginative hiring practices; they will also have to work harder to keep their best people.

According to the annual industry survey conducted by NASSCOM, during 2005-06, the overall employee base of the IT-ITES sector rose to an estimated 1.3 million professionals. The NASSCOM study also indicated the following:

- The number of people employed by the export segment within the IT-ITES industry touched around 930,000, a year-on-year increase of 32 percent
- The IT software and services industry added over 120,000 professionals during 2005-06
- The ITES-BPO sector added 100,000 professionals on its rolls
- The Indian industry will require 850,000 IT professionals and 1.4 million ITES-BPO professionals by 2010
- The IT and ITES industry is slated to have a shortfall of around 500,000

Clearly, the war for talent starts and ends at the job seekers. It is also very evident from these data points that in contemporary times, job seekers come at a premium and not the employers. However, the entire recruitment landscape focuses on the employer segment with minimal attention and effort going towards the job seekers. The commitment towards providing a high quality of service, personalized attention, providing key metric and market information to candidate segment is far from ideal.

The recruitment stake holders still are far from providing a high quality of serviced to the job seeker segment. This focus segment will differentiate a successful recruiter and employer from the others and will help organizations achieve long term and sustainable growth in talent infusion activities.

Strategic services for the Job Seekers segment

Multiple surveys conducted with the job seekers of various backgrounds and levels indicate that lack of transparency, short term planning and lack of adequate technology infrastructure in recruitment sphere form the bottleneck in smooth case handling for the job seekers. A survey conducted with a representative group of qualified professionals indicated at the following items as critical elements in the recruitment process, for which support is needed by the candidate.

Sample Feedback chart from representative survey

Strong Career Management	Market updates on a regular basis	Critical facts about employers
Psychological Evaluation	Mock interviews simulating actual scenario	Resume tuning
Informal meetings with potential employers	Consulting/ Counseling sessions on the opportunities	Providing interface with actual matching jobs
Application status	Personal attention on the queries	Prompt and actual feedback
Offer negotiation and representation	Smooth background check and evaluation	Handholding during transition, On boarding and post joining follow up

Fig. 1: Issues where candidates need support from recruitment stakeholders

Emergence of a new segment: Next generation female job seeker

According to a recent NASSCOM study, the men- women ratio in the Indian software industry stands at 76:24. This ratio is expected to be 65:35 (men: women) by 2007. However, the percentage of women employed in the ITES/BPO space is far more-around 69 percent.

Primary reasons why there has been a rampant growth of female job seekers in this industry can be attributed to the following.

- Absence of gender dependent skills
- Riding on the strength of communication, women are intrinsically suited to work within the IT-ITES industry
- Women have been a part of the industry from the beginning which helps them attain an at-par status with their male counterparts

- Skills that come intrinsically to women, and are important in the industry are multitasking and collaborative team play
- The sector provides flexibility in working hours, and hence is friendly to women employees, who need to juggle with career aspirations and home

There have been a lot of initiatives from top organizations to balance the gender ratios in their setups. However, there is ample scope to capture this market segment as not a lot of recruitment stakeholders are focusing on this job seeker market.

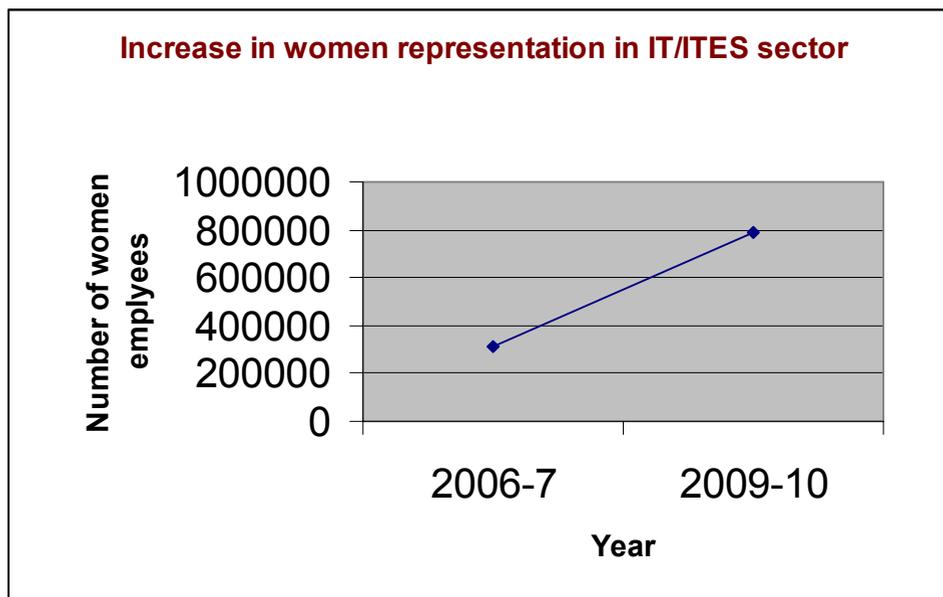


Fig2: Women representation in IT/ITES industry over 3 years

Servicing the web savvy Gen 2.0 job seeker

Ten years ago, leading companies identified that the habits of their target audience were rapidly changing. The Internet, once an exclusive haven for techies and geeks, was now becoming an indispensable resource for everyone from college students to experienced professionals. This shift enabled a virtual revolution in recruiting, with large recruiting teams, high costs, and long hiring cycles giving way to faster, more agile recruiting departments that could do much more with less and more quickly.

And now comes “Web 2.0.” Terms like user-generated content, tags, social networks, contextual targeting, and mass customization have emerged. Sites like MySpace, YouTube, Meebo, Blogger, Flickr and Digg have become overnight sensations. There are 50 million blogs, with two new blogs getting created every second.

More important for recruiting is that the audience is changing. They're using the Internet in entirely different ways than the original Web generation did. Some of the changes happening with this new generation include:

- **The Web is a hub of social interaction**
- **Privacy is no longer an issue**
- **More time spent online than watching TV**
- **The Web is always on**
- **Better medium to communicate as traditional marketing attracts cynicism from the Gen 2.0**

Job-seeker behavior and expectations are also beginning to change. The implications on how companies find and connect with people will be significant. While some of the old habits of previous unwired generations carried through to the first generation of Internet users (i.e., writing a great cover letter will get you that job!), the new Web generation will completely redefine the job search and bring new expectations to the workforce.

Here are a few examples of the changes underway:

- Because they don't trust marketing messages, the "culture section" of the website or the employee testimonial will no longer add much insight into the work experience. Instead, candidates prefer web logs and networks to gain valuable information about the potential employer
- Leverage of technology for the presentation of the organization forms a corner stone in the overall sales pitch to the job seekers today. Companies with bad websites and user experiences are perceived as broken and not worth working for.
- Many job seekers, growing up in the level playing field that is the innovation economy, will often expect to be judged by their ideas, not their experience. Resumes will become irrelevant (or at best, a meaningless formality that describes your work history, not who you are).
- Job seekers today are commenting on blogs, in user forums, on social networks, in niche sites, and are reachable via opt-in and permission-marketing techniques. This concept has been successfully been implemented by numerous organization and include the likes of Microsoft, Yahoo! Etc.
- Organizations can no longer control or restrict information. People will blog about it, comment on it or IM others about it.

Recruiters can use these new paradigms to their advantage by providing gateways to job seekers to ensure better connectivity; communication and CRM.

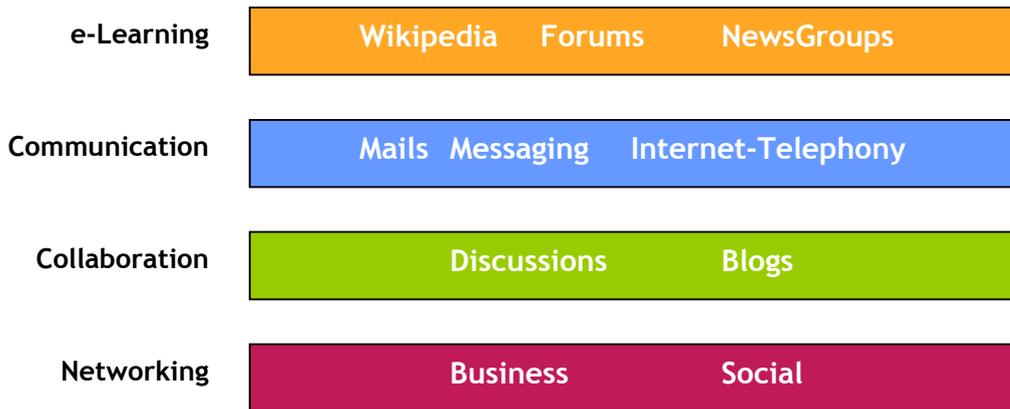


Fig. 3: Web products for that can be leveraged for better candidate management

Recruiters can leverage the following technology solutions to enable a seamless, 24 | 7 and personalized candidate management service.

Web product	Leverage
You Tube	Video resume; Reference checks
LinkedIn; Hi5; Orkut	Reference generation; Background checks
Voice2Mail; Messenger2Phone	Seamless communication
Skype; Gtalk; Y! Voice	Communication across time zones
Blogger; Yahoo 360 ^o	Blogging
Meebo; Gtalk	Online browser based collaboration

Fig. 4: Online products that enable a seamless customer experience

Forging a life long relationship with a job seeker

The recruitment community needs to realize that their long term sustainable benefit lies in forging a strong relationship with the job seeker community. An active participation, career management approach, cradle to grave perspective will be the only differentiator in the long run. Strategic investment into activities like CRM, technology infrastructure development and other value additions like regular counseling sessions, networking meets etc will have a lasting impact on the grand scheme of business propositions. Organizations must move through the quadrants to move their way up to the value chain.

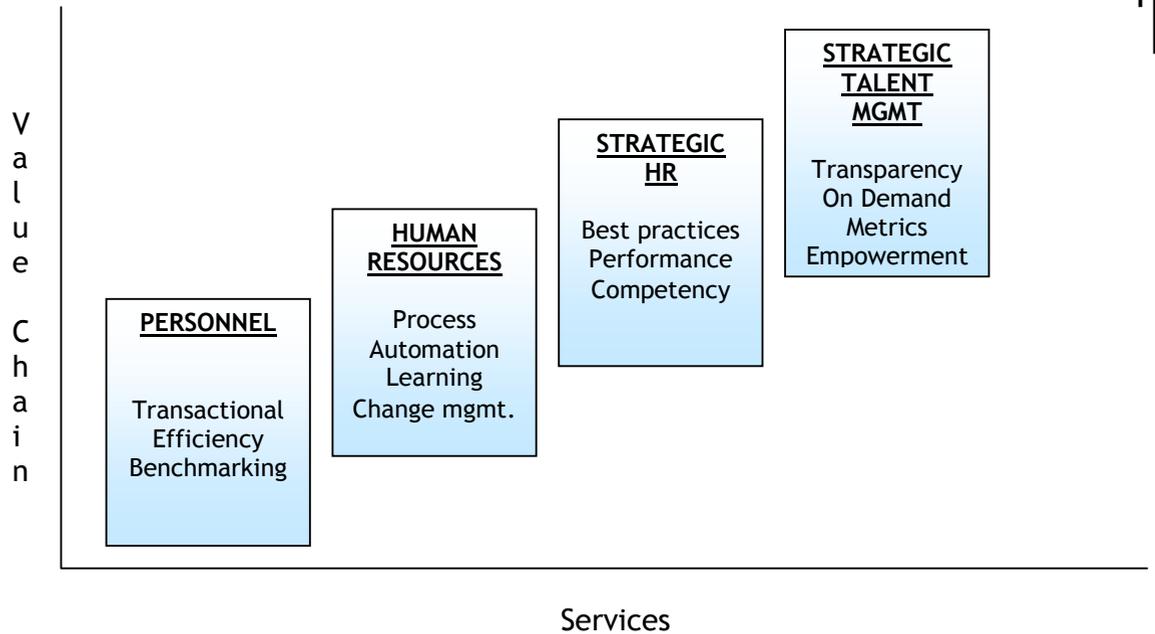


Fig 5: Value chain of services towards job seeker management

The final word

All the signs say that the next generation leader in the recruitment landscape will be the one that will have special focus on the job seeker community. With a variety of new candidate segment coming up, the onus rests squarely in the recruiter's court to seize the initiative and provide value to the seeker community. Right from the campus to the executive level, personalized service with a career management orientation will indeed bring respectability, long term business and will open new vistas for this people starved industry.

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